

# Numbers 16:33

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation.

## Analysis

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All Israel 'fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also.' The fleeing crowd feared corporate judgment, recognizing their own vulnerability to God's wrath. Yet this terror-induced reverence proved temporary, as they rebelled again the next day (v.41), showing fear-based obedience produces no lasting transformation.

## Historical Context

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The visible, audible judgment created momentary sobriety throughout the camp. However, within 24 hours Israel again accused Moses of killing God's people, demonstrating how quickly fear fades without heart change.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. Why is fear of punishment insufficient to produce genuine faith and lasting obedience?
2. How quickly do you forget God's demonstrated power when facing new temptations?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיֵּרֶד וְ		וְכָל		אֲשֶׁר	לָהֶם	
They and all that appertained to them went down		H1992		H3605	H834	H0
H3381						
חַיִּים	שָׂא לָהֶם	וּתְּכֹס	עֲלֵיהֶם	וְעַל		אֶרֶץ
alive	into the pit	closed	H5921	and the earth		
H2416	H7585	H3680		H776		
וַיֵּאבְדוּ		מִתּוֹךְ		הַקְּהָל:		
upon them and they perished		from among		the congregation		
H6		H8432		H6951		