

Numbers 16:48

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.

Analysis

Aaron 'stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed.' This powerful image captures the mediator's position—halting judgment's advance through atoning sacrifice. The phrase emphasizes Aaron's positioning: he literally placed himself at the boundary where death ceased its progress. Yet 14,700 died (v.49), showing that while intercession halts judgment, it cannot prevent consequences of persistent rebellion.

Historical Context

This event vindicated Aaron's priesthood after Korah's challenge and foreshadowed Christ's greater mediation. Where Aaron's intercession temporarily stayed physical death, Christ's sacrifice permanently conquers spiritual death for believers.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Aaron's positioning between dead and living illustrate Christ's mediatorial work?
2. What does the death toll despite intercession teach about the seriousness of sin's consequences?

Interlinear Text

וַיַּעֲמֹד אַבְרָהָם בֵּין הַמְּتַהַיִם וְבֵין הַזֹּהֲבָרִים וְהַמְּגַפֵּה: וְהַמְּגַפֵּה:

And he stood between the dead and the living was stayed

H5975 H996 H4191 H996 H2416 H6113

and the plague

H4046

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 24:25 (Parallel theme): And David built there an altar unto the LORD, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. So the LORD was intreated for the land, and the plague was stayed from Israel.

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