

Numbers 26:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up together with Korah, when that company died, what time the fire devoured two hundred and fifty men: and they became a sign.

Analysis

The description of how 'the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up together with Korah' graphically memorializes divine judgment on rebellion. The phrase 'when that company died' emphasizes the comprehensive nature of judgment—not just leaders but all conspirators faced consequences. This census inclusion of judgment accounts served pedagogical purpose, teaching each generation that opposing God's appointed order brings destruction. The specific mention that fire consumed 250 men makes this historical record function as perpetual warning.

Historical Context

The earth's opening to swallow the rebels (16:31-33) was supernatural judgment, not natural disaster. This dramatic event became proverbial in Israel's memory (Psalm 106:17, Jude 11). The dual judgments—earth swallowing some, fire consuming others—demonstrated God's varied means of executing justice. This census record, taken decades later, shows how historical memory of judgment should shape community identity and discourage future rebellion.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 – God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does remembering historical judgments help prevent repeating ancestors' sins?
 2. What role should divine judgment accounts play in teaching subsequent generations?

Interlinear Text

וְתַּפְתַּח	אֶת	רֹא	בְּאַת	פִּיֶּךְ	עַתְּבָל	אֶת	מִ	וְאֶת
opened	And the earth	H853	her mouth	and swallowed them up		H853	H854	
H6605	H776		H6310		H1104			
בְּרָה	בָּמָ וְתָ	הַעֲדָה	לְאַכְלָה	שָׁבָא	בְּרָה			
together with Korah	died	when that company	devoured	what time the fire				
H7141	H4194	H5712	H398	H784				

H853 **and fifty** H2572 H3967 H376 H1961 **and they became a sign** H5251

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 16:38 (Parallel theme): The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar: for they offered them before the LORD, therefore they are hallowed: and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel.

2 Peter 2:6 (Parallel theme): And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly;

Jeremiah 29:22 (Parallel theme): And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The LORD make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire;

Ezekiel 14:8 (Parallel theme): And I will set my face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

Numbers 16:2 (Parallel theme): And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown:

1 Samuel 2:34 (Parallel theme): And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them.

Jude 1:7 (Parallel theme): Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.