

Numbers 33:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they departed from Kibroth-hattaavah, and encamped at Hazeroth.

Analysis

And they departed from Kibroth-hattaavah, and encamped at Hazeroth.

Moving from the "graves of craving" to Hazeroth marks transition from judgment to continued journey, demonstrating God's faithfulness despite Israel's rebellion. Though thousands died at Kibroth-hattaavah, God did not abandon His covenant people but led them onward toward the Promised Land.

Hazeroth (חֶזְרוֹת, Chatseroth—"courts" or "villages") served as the site of another significant rebellion—Miriam and Aaron's challenge to Moses's unique prophetic authority (Numbers 12). Miriam's leprous judgment and subsequent healing demonstrated that even covenant leadership must submit to God's appointed order. The name may indicate an oasis with settled enclosures or courts, providing temporary respite in the wilderness.

The progression from Kibroth-hattaavah to Hazeroth shows that one act of divine discipline doesn't exhaust human sinfulness. Israel's complaints about provision (chapter 11) were followed by leadership rebellion (chapter 12), revealing the pervasive nature of sin even among God's people. Yet God's patience persisted—He judged sin but continued leading His people. This pattern anticipates the greater patience God shows believers in Christ, who bore our judgment so we might journey toward heavenly Canaan.

Historical Context

Hazeroth was located in the northern Sinai wilderness, though its precise site remains uncertain (possibly modern 'Ain Khadra). The encampment witnessed Miriam and Aaron's rebellion against Moses (Numbers 12:1-16), resulting in Miriam's temporary leprosy and seven-day quarantine outside the camp. This event demonstrated God's unique validation of Moses as His spokesman, whom God spoke with "face to face" (Numbers 12:8). The incident delayed Israel's journey for seven days while Miriam remained excluded from camp. Archaeological surveys have identified numerous ancient wells and oases in northern Sinai that could correspond to biblical Hazeroth. The name suggests some kind of settlement or established encampment area, perhaps with multiple court-like enclosures.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does God's continued guidance after Kibroth-hattaavah's judgment demonstrate the perseverance of His covenant faithfulness despite human failure?
2. What does Miriam's rebellion at Hazeroth teach about the danger of challenging God's appointed authority, even from positions of spiritual privilege?
3. In what ways does Israel's pattern of repeated sin followed by divine patience foreshadow God's long-suffering toward believers in Christ?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּסְעוּ	מִקְבְּרֵת	הַתְּאֵי הַ	וַיִּחַנוּ	בְּחֶצְרֹת:
And they departed	H0	from Kibrothhattaavah	and encamped	at Hazeroth
H5265		H6914	H2583	H2698

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 11:35 (Parallel theme): And the people journeyed from Kibrothhattaavah unto Hazeroth; and abode at Hazeroth.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org