

Numbers 33:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Aaron was an hundred and twenty and three years old when he died in mount Hor.

Analysis

Aaron was an hundred and twenty and three years old when he died in mount Hor—The specific age (123) emphasizes the completion of Aaron's life and ministry. He had lived long enough to see God's faithfulness through the Exodus, Sinai covenant, tabernacle construction, and wilderness trials, yet not long enough to enter rest.

The number resonates with symbolism: Aaron was three years older than Moses (Exodus 7:7), who died at 120 (Deuteronomy 34:7). Both men lived extraordinary lifespans, yet both fell short of Canaan. This teaches that even the most privileged service to God doesn't exempt us from mortality or consequences. Yet Hebrews 9:11-12 shows Christ's high priesthood surpasses Aaron's—Jesus entered not an earthly promised land but heaven itself.

Historical Context

Aaron's tenure as high priest (approximately 40 years) established the Levitical priesthood that would serve Israel for 1,500 years until Christ. His sons and descendants maintained the sacrificial system, making Aaron's legacy one of the most enduring in biblical history.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does Aaron's long life but ultimate exclusion from Canaan teach about the relationship between faithful service and personal holiness?
2. How does Aaron's incomplete journey point forward to Christ, the high priest who did enter God's rest on our behalf?

Interlinear Text

וְאֶהְרֹן	בֶּן	שָׁלֹשׁ	וְעֶשְׂרִים	וּמֵאָה	שָׁנָה	בָּמָתָו
And Aaron	old	and three	and twenty	was an hundred	years	when he died
H175	H1121	H7969	H6242	H3967	H8141	H4194

בְּהָרִי	הָהָרִי
Hor	in mount
H2023	H2022