

Numbers 33:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the LORD had smitten among them: upon their gods also the LORD executed judgments.

Analysis

The Egyptians burying their firstborn 'whom the LORD had smitten' while Israel departed demonstrates that God's judgment and redemption occur simultaneously. While Egypt mourned, Israel celebrated. The additional note that God 'executed judgments also upon their gods' teaches that the plagues were not just natural disasters but theological judgments against Egypt's false deities. The Reformed understanding that God's salvation inherently involves judgment on sin and falsehood is powerfully illustrated here.

Historical Context

Each plague had targeted specific Egyptian deities—the Nile (Hapi), the sun (Ra), etc. The death of the firstborn struck at Pharaoh himself, considered a god. The plagues demonstrated that Egypt's gods were powerless before Israel's God. While Egyptians buried their sons and mourned their gods' impotence, Israel marched free, vindicated by the true God's power.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does God's judgment on false gods demonstrate His exclusive claim to worship?
2. What does simultaneous judgment and redemption teach about God's holiness?
3. In what ways does the gospel include both deliverance for believers and judgment for unbelief?

Interlinear Text

וּמְצַאֵּ בָּם	מִקְבָּרִ יָם	אָשָׁר	אָתָּה	הִנֵּה	הִנֵּה	יְהִי הָ
For the Egyptians	buried	H853	H834	had smitten	also the LORD	
H4714	H6912		H5221		H3068	
כָּל בָּהָם	בְּכָר	בְּכָר	בְּאָלֹהִים	בְּאָלֹהִים	עָשָׂה	
H0	H3605	H1060	among them upon their gods	executed	H6213	
all their firstborn						
also the LORD	judgments	H8201				
H3068						

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 12:12 (Judgment): For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.

Isaiah 19:1 (References Lord): The burden of Egypt. Behold, the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.

Exodus 18:11 (References God): Now I know that the LORD is greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they dealt proudly he was above them.

Zephaniah 2:11 (References God): The LORD will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen.

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