

Psalms 106:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore he lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness:

Analysis

This verse records God's oath of judgment. 'Therefore he lifted up his hand against them' describes taking an oath—hand-raising symbolized swearing (Genesis 14:22; Deuteronomy 32:40). 'To overthrow them in the wilderness' declares the sentence: the generation would die during 40 years of wandering. This fulfilled God's word in Numbers 14:28-35. Divine oaths are irrevocable—when God swears judgment, it will certainly come. The lifted hand emphasizes the solemnity and certainty of the decree. This teaches that persistent unbelief and rebellion eventually result in God's fixed judgment, beyond which there is no reprieve for that generation (though individuals like Caleb and Joshua were excepted).

Historical Context

Numbers 14:26-35 records God's oath that everyone 20 years old and upward (except Joshua and Caleb) would die in the wilderness. The nation wandered for 40 years—one year for each day the spies explored Canaan. This generation's corpses fell in the desert while their children eventually entered. The oath's fulfillment demonstrated God's word of judgment is as certain as His word of promise. Hebrews 3-4 uses this as a warning to Christians about the danger of hardened unbelief.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does God's irrevocable oath of judgment teach about the seriousness of persistent unbelief?
2. How does Hebrews 3-4's application of this event warn contemporary believers?
3. At what point does God's patience with rebellion turn to fixed judgment?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּשָּׂא	יָדוֹ	לְהִיבִיחַ	לְהִיבִיחַ	אֶתָּם
Therefore he lifted up	his hand	H1992	against them to overthrow	H853
H5375	H3027		H5307	
בַּמִּדְבָּר:				
them in the wilderness				
H4057				

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 20:15 (Parallel theme): Yet also I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands;

Hebrews 3:11 (Parallel theme): So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.)

Psalms 95:11 (Parallel theme): Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

Exodus 6:8 (Parallel theme): And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD.

