

1 Samuel 14:48

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them.

Analysis

And he gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them.

The specific mention of Amalek - 'he gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites' - prepares for chapter 15's fatal failure. The note that he 'delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them' uses salvation language (natsal) typically reserved for divine action. Saul functions as God's instrument for deliverance, fulfilling the king's role as protector. This positive assessment makes his subsequent rejection more tragic: he had capacity for faithful service but failed in obedience.

Historical Context

The Amalekites were hereditary enemies of Israel since the wilderness period (Exodus 17:8-16; Deuteronomy 25:17-19). God had decreed their eventual destruction. Saul's initial campaigns against them preceded the complete destruction commanded in chapter 15.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does this positive mention of Amalek victory set up the tragedy of chapter 15?
2. What does Saul's capacity for faithful military service make his disobedience more or less tragic?

Interlinear Text

וְיִשְׁרָאֵל	וְיִעַשׂ	וְיִלְלָא	וְיִתְבָּשֵׂעַ	וְאָתָה	וְעָמֵלְךָ	וְאָתָה	וְאָתָה	וְאָתָה
And he gathered	an host	and smote		H853	the Amalekites	and delivered		H853
H6213	H2428	H5221			H6002		H5337	

יִשְׁרָאֵל	מִיָּד	שְׁפָחוֹת						
Israel	**out of the hands**	**of them that spoiled**						
H3478	H3027	H8154						

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 17:14 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

Deuteronomy 25:19 (Parallel theme): Therefore it shall be, when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it, that thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven; thou shalt not forget it.