

1 Samuel 15:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

Analysis

And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

Samuel recounts the mission: 'the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.' Three elements emphasize completeness: 'utterly destroy' (charam), 'fight against them,' and 'until they be consumed.' The Amalekites are labeled 'sinners' - their destruction was divine judgment, not arbitrary violence. Saul's role was executioner of divine verdict. The command left no room for the selective obedience Saul practiced.

Historical Context

The Hebrew charam ('utterly destroy' or 'devote to destruction') described holy war where everything was dedicated to God through destruction. Captured spoil belonged to the LORD, not the victors. Taking spoil from charam warfare was stealing from God.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does understanding commands as divine judgment affect our willingness to obey completely?
2. What is at stake when we modify clear divine instructions?

Interlinear Text

וּשְׁלָחְךָ יְהוָה בְּדֶרֶךְ וַיֹּאמֶר יְיָ וְהִחָרַמְתָּהּ
sent **And the LORD** **thee on a journey** **and said** **and utterly destroy**
H7971 H3068 H1870 H559 H1980 H2763

אֶת הַחַטָּאִים אֶת עַמֵּלֵי קַ וְנִלְחַמְתָּ בּוֹ עַד
the sinners **the Amalekites** **and fight**
H853 H2400 H853 H6002 H3898 H0 H5704

כָּלֹתָם אֹתָם:
against them until they be consumed **them:**
H3615 H853