

Deuteronomy 12:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land;

Analysis

Warning against Canaanite practices: 'When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land.' This acknowledges God as agent of conquest—He 'cuts off' (קָרַע, yakhrit, destroys) the nations. Israel will 'succeed' (יָרַשׁ, yarash, inherit/dispossess) them, taking possession. The sequence—God destroys → Israel possesses → Israel settles—establishes divine initiative followed by human participation. This sets up the critical warning in verse 30: victory over enemies doesn't guarantee immunity from their spiritual influence. Physical conquest must be matched by spiritual vigilance.

Historical Context

Joshua 1-12 narrates partial fulfillment—many Canaanites destroyed, but Judges 1 reveals incomplete conquest. Israelites failed to fully drive out inhabitants, leading to generations of syncretism. The very cultures they conquered spiritually conquered them through idolatry. Prophets repeatedly condemned Canaanite religious practices Israel adopted: Baal worship, Asherah poles, child sacrifice. Physical victory without spiritual purity led to apostasy.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 – Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How can we experience victory over external challenges yet succumb to spiritual compromise?
2. What conquered 'enemies' in your life might still exercise spiritual influence if not vigilantly resisted?
3. How does complacency after victory create vulnerability to compromise?

Interlinear Text

פִּיכְרִית	יְהִי הָאֱלֹהִים	אֶת הַגּוֹן	אֲשֶׁר
H3588 shall cut off	When the LORD	thy God	H853 the nations
H3772	H3068	H430	H1471
אֶת הַבָּא	שֶׁמֶה	וַיִּרְשֶׁת	אֶת מִרְצָת
H859 thee whither thou goest	H8033	them and thou succeedest	H853
H935		H3423	
מִפְנֵי יְהָוָה	וַיִּרְשֶׁת	אֶת מִשְׁבָּת	בְּאֶרְצָם:
from before	them and thou succeedest	they and dwellest	in their land
H6440	H3423	H3427	H776

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 23:4 (Parallel theme): Behold, I have divided unto you by lot these nations that remain, to be an inheritance for your tribes, from Jordan, with all the nations that I have cut off, even unto the great sea westward.

Deuteronomy 19:1 (References God): When the LORD thy God hath cut off the nations, whose land the LORD thy God giveth thee, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their cities, and in their houses;

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