

Deuteronomy 2:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain:

Analysis

The systematic conquest 'we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city' describes herem warfare's complete nature. The exception 'we left none to remain' emphasizes thoroughness. This severe judgment served multiple purposes: punishing incorrigible wickedness, preventing cultural contamination, and ensuring Israel's security. While difficult for modern sensibilities, it demonstrates sin's gravity and holiness' demands.

Historical Context

Herem (devoted destruction) was commanded primarily for Canaanite nations whose wickedness had reached full measure (Genesis 15:16). The Amorites practiced child sacrifice, temple prostitution, and other abominations. God's patient forbearance had allowed centuries for repentance; when judgment came, it was both just and final. This severity protected Israel from adopting such practices.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the severity of God's judgment on sin affect your understanding of holiness?
2. What compromises with sin seem small but threaten spiritual contamination?

Interlinear Text

וּנָלַכְּ דָּ	אֶת	כָּל	עַ יִר	בַּעֲת	הָהִיא	וַיִּמָּחֶרֶם
And we took	H853	H3605	all his cities	at that time	H1931	and utterly destroyed
H3920			H5892	H6256		H2763
אֶת	כָּל	עַ יִר	מֵהֶם	וְהַנָּשִׁים	וְהַטֹּטִיף	לֵא
H853	H3605	all his cities	the men	and the women	and the little ones	H3808
		H5892	H4962	H802	H2945	
הַשָּׂרִידִים	שָׁרִיד:					
we left	none to remain					
H7604	H8300					

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 7:2 (Parallel theme): And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them:

1 Samuel 15:3 (Parallel theme): Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.

Deuteronomy 3:6 (Parallel theme): And we utterly destroyed them, as we did unto Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children, of every city.