

Deuteronomy 25:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary; and he feared not God.

Analysis

How he met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee—Amalek specifically targeted stragglers: the elderly, sick, exhausted, children—those unable to keep pace with the main column. **When thou wast faint and weary**—Israel's vulnerable condition made Amalek's attack particularly cowardly and cruel. **And he feared not God**—the fundamental charge. Amalek's tactical choice revealed moral bankruptcy: attacking the defenseless demonstrated utter disregard for divine justice or human compassion.

The phrase 'feared not God' identifies Amalek's core character. Exodus 18:21 defined qualified leaders as 'men who fear God,' connecting fear of God to trustworthiness and justice. Amalek's opposite posture—treating God as irrelevant and the weak as prey—made them embodiments of ungodliness. Their attack wasn't war but massacre, not conquest but terrorism. God's judgment on Amalek wasn't arbitrary but response to their brazen evil and persecution of His chosen people.

Historical Context

Delivered circa 1406 BC, recalling events from 1446 BC. Ancient warfare had codes (limited as they were)—attacking refugees, especially the weak and vulnerable, violated even pagan warrior honor. Amalek's choice to strike the hindmost revealed calculated cruelty, not battlefield necessity. This attack

occurred before Sinai, before Israel had structured military, making it assault on civilians. The Amalekites' nomadic raiding culture prioritized plunder and violence, opposing the settled agricultural order God intended for Israel.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 – Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 – Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does 'fearing God' mean, and how does it connect to justice and compassion for the vulnerable?
2. How do Amalek's tactics—attacking the weakest—characterize those who oppose God throughout history?
3. Why might God's judgment on Amalek seem harsh, and how do we reconcile divine justice with mercy?

Interlinear Text

רָאשָׁה	קָרְבָּן	בְּדַעַת	בְּרִיתָה	בְּרִיתָה	בְּרִיתָה	בְּרִיתָה	בְּרִיתָה	בְּרִיתָה
H834	How he met	thee by the way	and smote the hindmost			H0	H3605	

עִזִּים אַתָּה בְּמַחְשָׁל יְמֵינֶךָ
thee when thou wast faint
H859 thee when thou wast faint
H588q thee when thou wast faint

אֱלֹהִים:	אֵל אֵלֶג עַ	ירא	ירא	ירא
not God	H3808	and he feared	and weary	
H430	H3023	H3373		

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 36:1 (References God): The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, that there is no fear of God before his eyes.

Romans 3:18 (References God): There is no fear of God before their eyes.

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