

Deuteronomy 25:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Therefore it shall be, when the LORD thy God hath given thee rest from all thine enemies round about—the command's execution was deferred until Israel secured the land and established peace. God didn't require immediate revenge but patient obedience at the appointed time. **That thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven**—complete destruction, erasing their name and memory. **Thou shalt not forget it**—the paradox: remember to destroy their memory. Israel must remember the command and the reason, then execute judgment that eliminates Amalek's future.

This cherem (חֵרֵם, 'ban/devotion to destruction') applied elsewhere to Canaanites represents God's judicial prerogative over nations. Amalek's persistence in opposing Israel throughout Judges (3:13, 6:3, 7:12) validated the judgment. Saul's partial obedience (1 Samuel 15) left remnants who continued hostility. David fought Amalekites (1 Samuel 30), and they appear even in Hezekiah's time (1 Chronicles 4:43). Complete obedience to difficult commands matters—partial obedience leaves ongoing problems.

Historical Context

Given circa 1406 BC for implementation after conquest and consolidation, fulfilled partially by Saul (circa 1020 BC) and David (circa 1000 BC). The command's fulfillment stretched centuries, reflecting both Israel's incomplete obedience and Amalek's persistent survival. Theologically, Amalek became a symbol of anti-God forces (Balaam grouped them with Israel's enemies in Numbers 24:20), particularly those attacking the weak. Haman's descent from Agag (Esther 3:1) shows Saul's incomplete obedience had lasting consequences—the genocide Haman planned against Jews backfired when Mordecai and Esther intervened.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How do we understand God's command to destroy Amalek in light of New Testament enemy-love commands?
2. What does Saul's partial obedience (sparing Agag) teach about incomplete repentance and delayed consequences?
3. How does Amalek symbolize spiritual enemies Christians must 'blot out'—besetting sins, false teachings, or persecution?

Interlinear Text

וְהָיָה H1961	בָּהֶם יָמָּה H5117	יְהוָה H3068	לֵךְ אֱלֹהֶיךָ H430	H0
	hath given thee rest	Therefore it shall be when the LORD	thy God	
מִכָּל H3605	אֶיְבֹיֶיךָ H341	מִסָּבִיב H5439	בְּאֶרֶץ H834	
	from all thine enemies	round about	in the land	
	יְהוָה H3068	אֱלֹהֶיךָ H430	נָתַן H5414	לְךָ H0
	Therefore it shall be when the LORD	thy God	giveth	thee for an inheritance
				H5159
לְרִשְׁתָּהּ H3423	תִּמְחָה H4229	אֶת H853	זֵכְרָהּ H2143	עַמּוֹלֵי קֵן H6002
to possess	it that thou shalt blot out		the remembrance	of Amalek
מִתַּחַת H8478	הַשָּׁמַיִם H8064	לֹא H3808	תִּשְׁכַּח H7911	
	from under heaven		thou shalt not forget	

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 17:14 (References Lord): 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.

Exodus 17:16 (References Lord): For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn that the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.

Deuteronomy 9:14 (Parallel theme): Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven: and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they.

1 Samuel 14:48 (Parallel theme): And he gathered an host, and smote the Amalekites, and delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them.

