

Deuteronomy 7:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.

Analysis

This verse reveals the spiritual trajectory of compromise—it 'will turn away thy son from following me.' The Hebrew yasur (turn away) describes apostasy, not minor deviation. One generation's compromise becomes the next generation's captivity. God's 'anger' (aph, literally 'nostril,' indicating flared nostrils) is His holy response to covenant violation. The phrase 'destroy thee suddenly' shows that judgment, though patient, arrives swiftly when God's patience ends. This demonstrates the covenantal principle: blessing flows from obedience, curse from disobedience. God's jealousy for His people's exclusive devotion isn't petty but protective—like a husband's righteous jealousy for his wife's faithfulness.

Historical Context

Israel's subsequent history validated this warning completely. The cycle of Judges shows repeated apostasy through Canaanite intermarriage and idolatry. Solomon's foreign wives led him to build high places for Chemosh and Molech (1 Kings 11:7). Ahab's marriage to Jezebel introduced Baal worship systematically. The northern kingdom's syncretism led to Assyrian exile; Judah's compromise resulted in Babylonian captivity. Every major apostasy in Israel's history can be traced to the pattern warned against here.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What compromises in your life might lead future generations away from Christ?
2. How should understanding God's jealous love for His people shape your devotion to Him?
3. What practices or relationships are you tolerating that could 'turn away' your children from following God?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	יָסִיר	אֶת	בְּנֶךָ	מֵאַחֲרַי	וְעֹבְדֵי
H3588	For they will turn away	H853	thy son	from following	me that they may serve
	H5493		H1121	H310	H5647
אֱלֹהֵי יָם	אֲחֵרֵי יָם	וְסִכָּה	אֵף	יְהוָה	בְּךָ מֵ
gods	other	be kindled	so will the anger	of the LORD	H0
H430	H312	H2734	H639	H3068	
וְהִשְׁמִידְךָ	מִהֶרָּה				
against you and destroy	thee suddenly				
H8045	H4118				

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 6:15 (References God): (For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

Exodus 20:5 (References God): Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

Deuteronomy 4:26 (Parallel theme): I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

Judges 2:11 (References Lord): And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:

Judges 2:20 (References Lord): And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice;