

Exodus 17:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua—This is Scripture's first explicit command to write, establishing written Scripture's authority. The verb 'write' (קִתְבָּה, katav) and 'memorial' (זִיכָּר, zikaron) show God ensures permanent record of His promises and judgments. The dual instruction—write for posterity, rehearse to Joshua—combines written and oral transmission. Joshua must know that God has decreed Amalek's utter destruction: 'I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.' This prophetic declaration spans centuries (fulfilled partly under Saul and David) and ultimately prefigures final judgment. The command to write also establishes Moses as Scripture's first human author under divine inspiration.

Historical Context

This written memorial became part of Torah. Amalek's destruction was commanded again in Deuteronomy 25:19 and partially fulfilled under Saul (1 Samuel 15) and David (1 Samuel 30).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. Why does God command written record in addition to oral instruction?
2. What does God 'blotting out the remembrance' of Amalek teach about final judgment on evil?

Interlinear Text

זֶה אָתָּה כְּתָב בְּמֵשֶׁה אֶל יְהוָה הָיָה אָמָר
this for a memorial this for a memorial
said And the LORD unto Moses Write
H559 H3068 H413 H4872 H3789 H2063
H2146

אֶת אָמָחָה בְּסֶפֶר וְשָׁם בְּאֶזְנָה יְהוָשָׁע כִּי אָמָחָה
for I will utterly in a book and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua for I will utterly
H4229 H5612 H7760 H241 H3091 H3588 H4229

בְּשָׁמָיִם מִתְּעִמָּלֵךְ אֶת זְכָרְךָ אֶת אָמָחָה
from under heaven of Amalek the remembrance of Amalek
H8064 H8478 H6002 H2143 H853 H4229

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 34:27 (References Lord): And the LORD said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.

1 Samuel 30:17 (Parallel theme): And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day: and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men, which rode upon camels, and fled.

1 Samuel 30:1 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire;

Numbers 24:20 (Parallel theme): And when he looked on Amalek, he took up his parable, and said, Amalek was the first of the nations; but his latter end shall be that he perish for ever.

2 Samuel 8:12 (Parallel theme): Of Syria, and of Moab, and of the children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the spoil of Hadadezer, son of Rehob, king of Zobah.

Job 18:17 (Parallel theme): His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street.

Exodus 12:14 (References Lord): And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

Exodus 13:9 (References Lord): And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes, that the LORD'S law may be in thy mouth: for with a strong hand hath the LORD brought thee out of Egypt.

Exodus 24:4 (References Lord): And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.