

Exodus 17:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn that the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.

Analysis

For he said, Because the LORD hath sworn that the LORD will have war with Amalek from generation to generation—The phrase 'the LORD hath sworn' (כִּי־יָד עַל־כִּסֵּי יְהוָה, literally 'for a hand upon the throne of Yah') indicates divine oath tied to God's throne. Amalek's attack on God's people constitutes attack on God's sovereignty. The declaration of perpetual war 'from generation to generation' (מִדּוֹר דּוֹר, midor dor) means no peace treaty with flesh is possible—believers war against sin until death. Amalek's utter destruction in Deuteronomy 25:19 and Esther's Haman (Agagite, Amalekite descendant) show this conflict's persistence. Paul echoes this: 'For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit...these are contrary the one to the other' (Gal 5:17). Victory over flesh requires Christ's finished work, not negotiated truce.

Historical Context

God's sworn enmity against Amalek extended through Israel's history. Saul's failure to destroy them completely (1 Samuel 15) had consequences that reached to Haman's attempted genocide in Esther.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. Why is God's war against Amalek 'from generation to generation' rather than one decisive battle?
2. How does perpetual war against Amalek picture the believer's lifelong mortification of sin?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר For he said H559	כִּי H3588	יָד hath sworn H3027	עַל H5921	כָּס H3676	יְהוָה Because the LORD H3050	מִלְחָמָה will have war H4421
לַיהוָה that the LORD H3068	בְּעַמֶּלְקָא with Amalek H6002	דָּר: from generation H1755	דָּר: from generation H1755			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 66:1 (References Lord): Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?