

Exodus 34:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves:

Analysis

God commands destruction of Canaanite worship sites: altars (מִזְבֵּחֹת, mizbechot), pillars (מַצְבּוֹת, matsevot—standing stones), and Asherim (אֲשֶׁרִים, asherim—wooden poles representing the goddess Asherah). This is not mere iconoclasm but spiritual warfare against demonic forces masquerading as deities (1 Cor 10:20-21). Half-measures in destroying idolatry lead to spiritual compromise.

Historical Context

Archaeological discoveries confirm widespread worship of Baal and Asherah in Canaan, including cultic sites on 'high places' featuring stone pillars and wooden poles.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What 'idols' or spiritual influences in your life require complete destruction rather than moderation?

2. Why does God demand such thorough removal of false worship rather than mere avoidance?

Interlinear Text

תְּשִׁבֶּר וְיִמְצַבֵּת מִן מִזְבְּחָתֶם וְאֶת תַּתְצִל וְאֶת מִזְבְּחָתֶם
 H3588 H853 their altars But ye shall destroy H853 H4196 H5422 H853 their images break H4676 H7665

וְאֶת תְּכַרְתֵּן אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה יְמִינְךָ וְאֶת תְּכַרְתֵּן אֲשֶׁר יְמִינְךָ
 H853 H842 their groves and cut down H3772

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 18:4 (Parallel theme): He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.

Exodus 23:24 (Parallel theme): Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works: but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images.

Deuteronomy 7:5 (Sacrifice): But thus shall ye deal with them; ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire.

Deuteronomy 16:21 (Sacrifice): Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the LORD thy God, which thou shalt make thee.

2 Kings 23:14 (Parallel theme): And he brake in pieces the images, and cut down the groves, and filled their places with the bones of men.

Judges 6:25 (Sacrifice): And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it:

Judges 2:2 (Sacrifice): And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?

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