

Numbers 14:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you, and ye shall fall by the sword: because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you.

Analysis

For the Amalekites and the Canaanites are there before you—Moses identifies specific enemies (אֲמָלֵקִי וְהַכְנַעֲנִי Amaleqi vehakena'ani) occupying the terrain, emphasizing concrete military realities Israel would face without divine intervention. Amalek symbolized perpetual opposition to God's people (Exodus 17:8-16; Deuteronomy 25:17-19), while Canaanites represented entrenched wickedness Israel was commissioned to judge.

Because ye are turned away from the LORD, therefore the LORD will not be with you—The causal connection (כִּי... עַל־כֵּן ki... al-ken, because... therefore) establishes covenant principle: turning from God (שׁוּב מֵאַחֲרַי יְהוָה shuv me'acharei YHWH, returning from following the LORD) results in divine withdrawal. God's presence depends on covenant faithfulness, not presumptuous demands. Jesus warned that branches severed from the vine wither and bear no fruit (John 15:4-6).

Historical Context

Amalekites had attacked Israel at Rephidim (Exodus 17:8-16), earning divine judgment. Canaanites controlled the hill country north of Kadesh-barnea. Both groups would have observed Israel's 40-day spy mission and prepared defenses against invasion, making Israel's unsanctioned attack doubly foolish.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does 'turning away from the LORD' manifest in presumptuous religious activity rather than humble obedience?
2. What 'spiritual enemies' seem insurmountable without God's presence and power in your battles?
3. How can churches discern when they're 'following the LORD' versus pursuing self-directed agendas?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	הָעֲמֻלָּקִי	וְהַכְנָעֲנִי	שָׁם	לִפְנֵיכֶם
H3588	For the Amalekites	and the Canaanites	H8033	are there before
	H6003	H3669		H6440
וְנָפְלֹתֶם	בְּחַרְבֵּי	כִּי	עַל	שְׁבִיתֶם
you and ye shall fall	by the sword	H3588	H5921	H3651
H5307	H2719			H7725
מֵאַחֲרַי	יְהוָה	וְלֹא	יְהוָה	יְהוָה
away	from the LORD	H3808	H1961	from the LORD
H310	H3068		H3068	H5973

Additional Cross-References

2 Chronicles 15:2 (References Lord): And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.

Numbers 13:29 (Parallel theme): The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the Canaanites dwell by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan.

Numbers 14:25 (Parallel theme): (Now the Amalekites and the Canaanites dwelt in the valley.) To morrow turn you, and get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red sea.

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org