

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 עַמּוֹלֶקְיִ וַהֲקָנְעָנִי (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 פִ... עַל-כֵן (ki... al-ken, because... therefore) establishes covenant principle: turning from God שׁׁוּב מִאַפָּרִי וְהַיָּה (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

לפניכם מ שם
H3588 הַעֲמָלֵק ו הַכָּנָעָן
For the Amalekites and the Canaanites H8033
H6003 H3669 H6440

שבתתם מ עלי ג נפלת מ
you and ye shall fall by the sword H3588 H5921 H3651 because ye are turned
H5307 H2719 H7725

עפְקָם: מִאָחָר הַיְהוָה לֹא יְהוָה הַיְהוָה מִאָחָר
away from the LORD H3808 H1961 from the LORD H5973
H310 H3068 H3068

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.

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