



# Christian Questions

TALK RADIO WITH A PURPOSE

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13

Dear Ralph,

Thank you for writing us at Christian Questions Radio. You wanted to know why the LORD ordered the deaths of men, women, children and animals in the Old Testament.

We will mention one instance in the Old Testament that is illustrative of your inquiry. 1 Samuel 15:2-3 states, "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy everything that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.'"

By modern human standards God's command seems exceedingly harsh, especially the directive to kill all the women and children. Before we criticize God from our human moral perspective for what appears to be a very cruel instruction, we need to understand God's reasoning and judgment. To do this, we must go back to the time of Israel's exodus from Egypt. God said, "When you were weary and worn out, they met you on your journey and cut off all who were lagging behind; they had no fear of God. When the LORD your God gives you rest from all your enemies around you in the land he is giving you to possess as an inheritance, you shall blot out the memory of the Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget!" (Deuteronomy 25:18-19) Here we see that God had passed judgment on the Amalekites at a much earlier time. However, that judgment was deferred until Israel had a kingdom of her own and was strong enough under the leadership of her first king, Saul, to carry out that judgment.

God wanted everything that the Amalekites had to be destroyed so that nothing could be made use of in any way for profit or advantage. That is why all livestock had to be put to death and everything else burnt and destroyed. Men, women and children, including infants were to be slain. No mercy was to be shown them, since the Amalekites showed Israel no mercy when she was weak and feeble. Children suffered for their parents' sins, and livestock because of their owners. No person or belonging was to be spared, lest it should be said that this was the spoil of Amalek.

It is important to remember that the Israelites were to inflict judgment that the LORD had decreed. It was NEVER their decision to inflict harm. Furthermore, they were not to profit from the spoils. Their action was to be a lesson not only to the nations around them, but also to them. God used Israel as a picture and instrument of his justice. It was





# Christian Questions

TALK RADIO WITH A PURPOSE

You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:13

through her experiences and history that God illustrated his principles.

Many think that God's decree to destroy the Amalekites is an awful picture of cruelty. We would agree with this thought IF God had not provided a Redeemer in the person of his Son, Jesus. The good news is that God's judgment is not final for the Amalekites. They were all redeemed by the provision of God's love, by the death of Jesus. IF God had not planned to send his only begotten Son as a Ransom for Adam, all humanity, the good as well as the evil, would have been doomed to die with no chance of redemption. But Jesus paid the price at Calvary, assuring us that every person who has ever lived will have the opportunity for everlasting life on earth during the Day of Judgment. Knowing that God had a well-devised and thought out plan in place since the foundation of the earth (Revelation 13:8) helps us understand why He would sometimes order the extermination of every man, woman and child. May we be comforted knowing that all those who died will come forth from their graves and have an opportunity for everlasting life during the Millennial Age. "For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ." (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)

We hope we have answered your question. Be sure to sign up for CQ Rewind at [www.christianquestions.com](http://www.christianquestions.com). The service is free and will provide you with scriptural perspective on many questions and topics.

Sincerely,

Christian Questions Radio

