

1 Chronicles 4:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they went to the entrance of Gedor, even unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks.

Analysis

And they went to the entrance of Gedor, even unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks—this describes Simeonite expansion seeking גָּדוֹר (Gedor, location debated), illustrating tribal movements pursuing resources. The phrase 'seek pasture' (לְבָקֵשׁ מִרְעָה, levakesh mireh) describes nomadic-pastoral economy's demands—tribes needed extensive grazing lands for livestock survival.

The passage (vv. 38-43) records Simeonite conquest of Hamite populations during Hezekiah's reign, demonstrating continued tribal identity and expansion even after 722 BC northern kingdom's fall. While Israel proper collapsed, Judah's southern tribes maintained covenant consciousness and territorial claims. This faithfulness through turbulent times preserved them for return from Babylonian exile generations later. Persistent seeking—whether pasture or God's purposes—characterizes covenant faithfulness.

Historical Context

This expansion occurred during Hezekiah's reforms (c. 715-686 BC), when Assyria had destroyed northern Israel. Some northern tribes like Simeonite clans found refuge in Judah, maintaining identity. Their aggressive expansion southward suggests population pressure and economic necessity. The Chronicler preserves this as example of tribal vitality during monarchy's twilight.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does the Simeonites' diligent seeking of pasture illustrate the persistent pursuit required in spiritual life?
2. What does this minor tribe's maintained identity through Israel's collapse teach about faithfulness when larger structures fail?

Interlinear Text

לִמְבָּדָה וְאַתְּ	לִמְבָּדָה	גֵּדֶר	עַד	לִמְזָבֵחַ	לִמְזָבֵחַ	בְּאֵין
H1980	to the entrance	of Gedor	H5704	even unto the east side	of the valley	
	H3996	H1446		H4217		H1516
לִצְאָתָם:	מִרְעֵה	לְבָקָשׁ				
to seek	pasture	for their flocks				
H1245	H4829	H6629				

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 4:18 (Parallel theme): And his wife Jehudijah bare Jered the father of Gedor, and Heber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah. And these are the sons of Bithiah the daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took.

1 Chronicles 4:4 (Parallel theme): And Penuel the father of Gedor, and Ezer the father of Hushah. These are the sons of Hur, the firstborn of Ephratah, the father of Beth-lehem.

Joshua 15:58 (Parallel theme): Halhul, Beth-zur, and Gedor,

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