

1 Samuel 7:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Beth-car.

Analysis

And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Beth-car.

Israel's role was response to divine initiative. After God routed the enemy with supernatural thunder, 'the men of Israel went out' to pursue. The Hebrew 'radaph' (pursue) indicates aggressive chase of fleeing enemies. Their striking ('nakah') the Philistines transformed divine victory into territorial gain. Beth-car ('house of pasture' or 'house of the lamb') appears only here in Scripture, its location uncertain but likely marking significant distance from Mizpeh. The pursuit 'until' ('ad') this point suggests sustained military action completing what God's thunder began. This pattern appears throughout Scripture: God delivers, people respond in faith-action. Neither passivity (expecting God to do everything) nor presumption (acting without divine initiative) characterizes biblical faith. Israel pursued because God had already given victory.

Historical Context

Beth-car's location remains debated - suggestions include modern Ain Karim or a site further into Philistine territory. The pattern of divine deliverance followed by human pursuit appears in Exodus 14:23-28, Joshua 10:10-11, and elsewhere. Mizpeh's elevation would have aided observation of retreating Philistines.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do you balance waiting for God's initiative with actively pursuing what He has given?
2. What victories has God won that you need to 'pursue' through faithful action?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּצֵא ו	אֲנָשִׁי	יִשְׂרָאֵל	מִן	הַמִּצְפָּה	וַיִּדְפּוּ	אֹת
went out	And the men	of Israel	H4480	of Mizpeh	and pursued	H853
H3318	H582	H3478		H4709	H7291	

פְּלִשְׁתִּים	וַיִּכּוּ	עַד	מִתַּחַת	לְבֵית
the Philistines	and smote	H5704	H8478	H0
H6430	H5221			

כָּרָ:

them until they came under Bethcar

H1033