

Deuteronomy 20:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people.

Analysis

And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people— After dismissing the fearful and distracted (vv. 5-8), leaders appoint sarei tseva'ot (שָׂרֵי צְבָאֹת, 'army commanders'). This sequence prioritizes quality over quantity: a small, committed force exceeds a large, anxious mob. Gideon exemplified this—God reduced 32,000 to 300 (Judges 7:2-7), proving **the battle is the LORD's** (1 Samuel 17:47).

Spiritual warfare operates identically: **The weapons of our warfare are not carnal** (2 Corinthians 10:4). God seeks wholehearted warriors, not halfhearted crowds. Paul commands Timothy: **Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life** (2 Timothy 2:3-4). The dismissed soldiers weren't cowards but distracted—equally disqualified. Effective spiritual warfare requires focused devotion.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern armies often conscripted entire populations, resulting in undertrained masses. Israel's selective system (dismissing specific categories) produced disciplined troops trusting God's deliverance. This strategy distinguished holy war (YHWH fights for Israel) from mere human conquest.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What 'distractions' (new ventures, unfinished business, divided loyalties) disqualify you from focused spiritual warfare?
2. How does God's preference for quality (committed few) over quantity (anxious many) encourage you when you feel outnumbered?
3. In what spiritual battles are you 'entangled with affairs of this life' rather than fighting with undivided focus?

Interlinear Text

אָל	לִזְבַּח	רִאשְׁתָּה	יְמִינָה	פְּשָׁטָר	יְמִינָה	כָּכֶל	תְּבִיבָה	וְבִבְנָה	הַשְׁבָּרָה	יְמִינָה	כָּכֶל	תְּבִיבָה	וְבִבְנָה	אָל	
H1961	have made an end			And it shall be when the officers	of speaking										H413
		H3615				H7860									H1696
בָּעֵם:		וְבִבְנָה	וְבִבְנָה	וְבִבְנָה	וְבִבְנָה	וְבִבְנָה	וְבִבְנָה	וְבִבְנָה	וְבִבְנָה	וְבִבְנָה	וְבִבְנָה	וְבִבְנָה	וְבִבְנָה	בָּעֵם:	
the people	that they shall make			captains	of the armies										the people
H5971		H6485		H8269											H5971

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