

Judges 1:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him.

Analysis

And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him.

This verse demonstrates tribal cooperation rooted in kinship—Judah and Simeon were full brothers, both sons of Jacob and Leah (Genesis 29:33-35). The Hebrew *achi* (אֶחָד, "my brother") emphasizes covenant and blood relationship, not mere political alliance. Judah's invitation "come up with me into my lot" (aleh itti beghoral, עַלְהוּ אֶתְכִּי בְּגָרְלִי) uses *ghoral* (גָּרְלִי) meaning "lot" or "allotment"—the divinely assigned inheritance (Joshua 15:1, 19:1). This wasn't arbitrary territory but God-ordained possession requiring faith-filled obedience to claim.

The reciprocal promise "I likewise will go with thee into thy lot" reflects covenant faithfulness and mutual support. Interestingly, Simeon's tribal allotment was actually embedded within Judah's territory (Joshua 19:1, 9) because "the part of the children of Judah was too much for them." This geographical reality made military cooperation natural and necessary. The phrase "So Simeon went with him" demonstrates immediate obedience without recorded hesitation or negotiation—a model of brotherly unity in pursuing God's purposes.

From a Reformed perspective, this tribal cooperation foreshadows the New

Testament church where believers are called to "bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). The body of Christ requires mutual support, with stronger members helping weaker ones (Romans 15:1, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27). However, the partnership must be for God's purposes—pursuing divinely assigned missions, not merely human agendas. Judah and Simeon's alliance succeeded because it aligned with God's command to possess the land He had given them.

Historical Context

The historical relationship between Judah and Simeon was complex. Simeon's allotment within Judah's borders (Joshua 19:1-9) made them interdependent. Jacob's prophecy that Simeon and Levi would be "divided in Jacob, and scattered in Israel" (Genesis 49:7) found fulfillment as Simeon gradually absorbed into Judah, eventually losing distinct tribal identity. By David's census (2 Samuel 24), Simeon isn't separately enumerated. Archaeological evidence from the northern Negev (Simeon's primary territory) shows settlement patterns consistent with gradual integration into Judah. This tribal cooperation in Judges 1:3 thus represents both immediate military necessity and long-term assimilation. The cities listed in Joshua 19:2-6 as Simeonite—Beersheba, Ziklag, Hormah—later appear as Judahite cities in subsequent narratives.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Judah's invitation to Simeon model the biblical principle of stronger believers helping weaker ones in pursuing God's purposes?

2. What does the cooperation between these tribes teach about balancing individual calling with corporate responsibility in the body of Christ?
3. In what ways might your spiritual gifts or resources be used to help fellow believers possess their God-given 'inheritance' in sanctification and service?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר	יְהוּדָה	שָׁמְעוּ:	אֶחָד	עַל	אַתָּה
said	And Judah	So Simeon	his brother	Come up	H854
H559	H3063	H8095	H251	H5927	
בְּגַבְלֵךְ בְּ	וְנִלְחָמָה	בְּכָנָעָנִים	וְלֹא		
with me into my lot	that we may fight	against the Canaanites	and I likewise will go		
H1486	H3898	H3669	H1980		
בְּגַבְלֵךְ בְּ	וְלֹא	אַתָּה	שָׁמְעוּ:		
with me into my lot	and I likewise will go	H1486	H854	So Simeon	
H1571	H589	H854			H8095

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 19:1 (Parallel theme): And the second lot came forth to Simeon, even for the tribe of the children of Simeon according to their families: and their inheritance was within the inheritance of the children of Judah.

2 Samuel 10:11 (Parallel theme): And he said, If the Syrians be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me: but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee.

Judges 1:17 (Parallel theme): And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah.