

Judges 18:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men appointed with weapons of war.

Analysis

And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men appointed with weapons of war. The phrase "six hundred men appointed with weapons of war" (shesh-me'ot ish chagur keli milchamah, שֵׁשׁ־מֵאוֹת אִישׁ חָגוּר כֶּלִי מִלְחָמָה) describes a military expedition, not a peaceful migration. The number 600 appears elsewhere in military contexts (Judges 3:31, 1 Samuel 13:15, 14:2), possibly representing a standard military unit. These were warriors ready for conquest, demonstrating Dan's commitment to the unauthorized mission.

The departure from "Zorah and Eshtaol" emphasizes they left established settlements—they weren't refugees fleeing disaster but settlers abandoning God's assigned territory for perceived better options. From a Reformed perspective, this illustrates how disobedience often involves not merely passive failure but active rejection of God's provision. Dan had land, had towns, had established presence; their problem wasn't absence of blessing but unwillingness to fight for complete possession of what God had given. This warns against the temptation to abandon God's assignments when they require sustained effort and faith.

Historical Context

The mobilization of 600 warriors from just two towns suggests either these were major settlements or that Dan's population in their allotted territory was modest.

The number may represent a select contingent rather than Dan's entire military force. Historical context: this migration likely occurred during the early judges period (c. 1200-1150 BC) when tribal organization was still fluid and centralized authority weak. The ease with which 600 men departed on an unauthorized conquest mission demonstrates the political fragmentation characterizing this era—there was no king or judge to prevent or authorize such tribal decisions.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How do we sometimes abandon God's provision not because it's insufficient but because possessing it fully requires sustained faith and effort?
2. What does Dan's organized military expedition teach about how disobedience can be systematic and deliberate, not merely passive failure?
3. In what areas of your life might you be actively pursuing alternatives to God's assignments rather than persevering where He has placed you?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּסַע ו	מִשָּׁם	מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת		הַדָּנִי	מִצֹּרַח ה
And there went	H8033	from thence of the family		of the Danites	out of Zorah
H5265		H4940		H1839	H6881
וּמֵאֶשְׁתָּאֵל ל	שֵׁשׁ	מֵאֵלֶּכֶת	אֲנָשִׁים	חָגוּרִים	כָּלֵי י מִלְחָמָה:
and out of Eshtaol	six	hundred	men	appointed	with weapons of war
H847	H8337	H3967	H376	H2296	H3627 H4421