

Judges 20:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And we will take ten men of an hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and an hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to fetch victual for the people, that they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have wrought in Israel.

Analysis

We will take ten men of an hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and an hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand—a decimation system (10% supply support, 90% combat forces) showing sophisticated military logistics. **To fetch victual for the people** (לִקְחַת צֵידָה לָעָם, laqachat tzeidah la'am)—the combat force would require massive supply lines. **That they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have wrought in Israel**—the stated purpose: punish Gibeah's 'folly' (נִבְלָה, nevalah, covenant-breaking wickedness).

Israel's military organization demonstrates competence and scale but reveals concerning assumptions. They plan for sustained siege warfare against a brother tribe without first attempting diplomacy, negotiation, or calling for Benjamin to surrender the guilty parties. Their logistics anticipate total war—complete destruction of Gibeah—rather than targeted justice against specific perpetrators. Righteous causes pursued through disproportionate means become unrighteous. The chapter will demonstrate this truth: Israel's initial defeats stem not from military incompetence but from spiritual inadequacy. Their comprehensive preparation for war contrasts with their incomplete preparation of heart. When we

make thorough plans for human action but minimal provision for spiritual discernment, we guarantee stumbling despite superior resources.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern warfare required extensive logistical preparation, especially for prolonged campaigns. The 10:1 ratio of combatants to supply personnel mirrors patterns seen in later Israelite military organization (2 Chronicles 25:5). The text's detailed focus on logistics emphasizes that Israel approached this as major warfare, not police action—showing how seriously they took covenant violation, yet also how quickly righteous indignation escalates to total war.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. When do your thorough preparations for action reveal inadequate preparation in prayer and spiritual discernment?
2. How do you escalate from proportionate justice to total warfare when dealing with offenses?
3. What does it mean to match military (or practical) competence with spiritual wisdom?

Interlinear Text

לָקַח חַת	עֶשְׂרֵה יָם	וּמֵאָה הַ	לְכֹל לַ	
And we will take	ten	and an hundred		
H3947	H6235	H376 H3967	H3605	
שְׁבִטֵי יִ	בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:	וּמֵאָה הַ	וְאֶלֶף	
throughout all the tribes	in Israel	and an hundred	and a thousand	
H7626	H3478	H3967	H505	
וְאֶלֶף	לְרִבְבֵּה הַ	לָקַח חַת	צִדָּה	לְעָם
and a thousand	out of ten thousand	And we will take	victual	for the people
H505	H7233	H3947	H6720	H5971
עָשָׂה הַ	לְבֹאֲם	לְגִבְעָה	בְּנֵימִן	כָּכָל לַ
that they have wrought	when they come	to Gibeah	of Benjamin	
H6213	H935	H1387	H1144	H3605
הַנָּבִלָה הַ	אֲשֶׁר רַ	עָשָׂה הַ	בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:	
according to all the folly		that they have wrought	in Israel	
H5039	H834	H6213	H3478	