

Judges 20:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the people the men of Israel encouraged themselves, and set their battle again in array in the place where they put themselves in array the first day.

Analysis

The people the men of Israel encouraged themselves (וַיִּתְחַזֵּק הָעָם אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל) — 'encouraged' (חַזָּק, chazaq) means to strengthen, bolster courage. **Set their battle again in array in the place where they put themselves in array the first day** — they return to the same position and strategy that failed, merely strengthening their resolve.

This verse reveals dangerous self-reliance: they 'encourage themselves' rather than seeking God for analysis of their failure. Their response to defeat is to try harder with the same approach, returning to identical strategy and location. This demonstrates the human tendency to respond to failure with increased effort rather than repentance. Instead of asking 'Why did we fail?' and seeking God's correction, they assume the plan was right but execution was weak. Determination without discernment, courage without correction, persistence without repentance — these lead to repeated defeat.

Historical Context

Rallying troops after devastating defeat required strong leadership. Ancient armies could disintegrate after heavy casualties as men deserted. Israel's ability to regroup shows their organizational strength and commitment to covenant justice. However, their unchanged strategy demonstrates military stubbornness that would cost another 18,000 lives (v. 25).

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 – Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. When do you respond to failure with 'try harder' rather than seeking God's correction of your approach?
2. How does self-encouragement sometimes prevent the repentance God desires?
3. What distinguishes godly persistence from stubborn repetition of failed strategies?

Interlinear Text

וְעַמְקֵז	וְעַמְקֵז	בְּעַמְקֵז	אֲוֹשֶׁת	וְעַמְקֵז	וְעַמְקֵז	וְעַמְקֵז
encouraged	And the people	the men	of Israel	again	in array	
H2388	H5971	H376	H3478	H3254		H6186

בָּיִם וּמִשְׁמָרָם הַמְלָכָם הָיָה	set their battle in the place	בָּמָקָם וּבְמִשְׁמָרָם	אֲשֶׁר בָּמָקָם וּבְמִשְׁמָרָם	שָׁמֶן רְכוּב				
themselves and set their battle	in the place	H4121	H4725	H834	H6186	H8033	H3117	day

הראשון:

the first

H7223

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