

Judges 20:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the children of Israel came near against the children of Benjamin the second day.

Analysis

The children of Israel came near against the children of Benjamin the second day (וַיִּקְרְבוּ בְנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל־בְּנֵי־בִנְיָמִן בַּיּוֹם הַשֵּׁנִי)—they advance again with renewed courage based on God's permission to 'go up' (v. 23). The phrase 'came near' (קָרַב, qarav) suggests approaching for battle, the same verb used for approaching God in worship—ironic given their incomplete seeking.

Israel proceeds with God's permission but without fuller counsel or promise of victory. They interpret 'go up against him' as sufficient authorization, yet the following verse reveals another devastating defeat. This teaches that divine permission doesn't always equal divine blessing. God may allow us to pursue courses of action that will teach through painful consequences. Israel's confidence in God's word 'go up' proves misplaced because they sought permission for predetermined plans rather than wisdom for right action. When we frame questions to get the answer we want rather than seeking truth we need, God may give permission that leads to correction through failure.

Historical Context

The second day's battle followed quickly after regrouping—likely less than 24 hours after the first defeat. Ancient warfare sometimes involved multi-day engagements with armies camping in proximity. Israel's continued commitment despite 22,000 casualties demonstrates both their determination to pursue covenant justice and their stubborn unwillingness to fully reassess their approach.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do you confuse divine permission with divine blessing?
2. When do you interpret God's allowance as approval without seeking His fuller wisdom?
3. What painful lessons has God taught through consequences of plans He permitted but didn't fully bless?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּקְרַב ו	בְּנֵי י	אֶל יִשְׂרָאֵל ל	בְּנֵי י	בְּנֵימ
came near	And the children	of Israel	And the children	of Benjamin
H7126	H1121	H3478	H1121	H1144
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בִּי וּמ	הַשֵּׁנִי:			
day	the second			
H3117	H8145			

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