

Judges 20:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Israel set liers in wait round about Gibeah.

Analysis

Israel set liers in wait round about Gibeah (וַיִּשְׁכְּעֵל אֲרָבִים, vayasem yisra'el orevim)—'liers in wait' (אֲרָב, orev, ambush forces) marks strategic shift. Previously Israel attacked directly; now they employ deception mirroring Joshua's capture of Ai (Joshua 8:2-29). This demonstrates that after proper consultation, God grants both promise and strategy. Israel's new plan shows they finally sought God's wisdom, not just permission.

The ambush strategy reveals humility: after relying on superior numbers and direct assault (which failed twice), they now use cunning and coordination. This illustrates that genuine seeking of God produces not just spiritual insight but practical wisdom. When pride is broken and God is properly consulted, He provides both blessing and method. The verse marks the turning point—from presumptuous failure to humble success.

Historical Context

Ambush warfare was common in ancient hill country where terrain favored defensive positions. Israel's earlier frontal assaults against Gibeah's elevated position were tactically foolish despite numerical superiority. The new strategy using concealed forces reflected both military wisdom and divine guidance—proper consultation yields practical insight.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does proper consultation with God yield not just blessing but practical wisdom for implementation?
2. When has humility after failure made you receptive to strategies you previously rejected?
3. What's the relationship between spiritual surrender and practical effectiveness?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּשֶׁט	וְיִשְׂרָאֵל	אֲרֻב־יָם	אֶל	הַגִּבְעָה	סָבִיב:
set	And Israel	liers in wait	H413	Gibeah	round about
H7760	H3478	H693		H1390	H5439

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 8:4 (Parallel theme): And he commanded them, saying, Behold, ye shall lie in wait against the city, even behind the city: go not very far from the city, but be ye all ready: