

Judges 20:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, ye are all children of Israel; give here your advice and counsel.

Analysis

Behold, ye are all children of Israel (הִנֵּה כָּלְכֶם בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) —the Levite appeals to shared covenant identity. **Give here your advice and counsel** (קְבוּ לְכֶם דָּבָר וְעֵצָה) —he calls for deliberation and decision. The parallelism emphasizes both speech ('advice,' davar) and wisdom ('counsel,' etzah).

The Levite's appeal is rhetorically powerful but spiritually hollow. He invokes national identity and calls for corporate response, yet omits any appeal to seek God's direction. His summons to 'give advice' creates the illusion of democratic process while his manipulative presentation has already predetermined the outcome. The assembled masses will react with predictable outrage to his selective narrative. This illustrates how appeals to shared identity and democratic process can mask manipulation. True counsel requires full information and divine wisdom, not merely corporate deliberation based on emotionally charged, incomplete testimony. The question Israel should have asked first was not 'What shall we do?' but 'What does the LORD say?'

Historical Context

National assemblies for judicial matters followed patterns from the Mosaic covenant, where elders gathered at city gates for legal proceedings (Deuteronomy 21:19; 22:15; 25:7). However, proper judicial process required multiple witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15), thorough investigation (Deuteronomy 13:14), and most

importantly, consulting God through the priesthood (Numbers 27:21). Israel's process violated these standards by accepting the Levite's uncorroborated testimony and failing to adequately inquire of the LORD.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do you use appeals to shared identity to manipulate group decisions?
2. When do you seek human consensus without first seeking divine wisdom?
3. What safeguards ensure that corporate deliberation rests on truth rather than emotional manipulation?

Interlinear Text

כָּלָכְ מִן הַבָּבָן	H2009	בְּבָבָן	H3605	בְּבָבָן	H1121	לְכָמַד בְּבָבָן יִשְׁבָּא לְ	H3478	לְכָמַד בְּבָבָן יִשְׁבָּא לְ	H0
your advice	H1697	and counsel	H6098	here	H1988				

Additional Cross-References

Judges 19:30 (References Israel): And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day: consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds.

