

Judges 7:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do.

Analysis

Gideon instructs his men: 'Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do.' Leadership by example—'look on me'—demonstrates authentic authority. Gideon won't send his men where he won't go first. His command to watch him and imitate his actions ensured coordinated timing despite lack of modern communications. This principle extends to Christian leadership: Paul wrote 'Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ' (1 Corinthians 11:1) and 'those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do' (Philippians 4:9).

Historical Context

Coordinating night operations without radios, signal flags, or other modern communications required carefully rehearsed plans and visible leadership. The three companies were positioned separately around the camp perimeter; each needed to know exactly when to act. By having everyone watch Gideon's company and mirror their actions, coordination was achieved through direct observation despite separation. This leadership style contrasted with ancient Near Eastern kings who commanded from rear positions.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Gideon's 'follow me' leadership contrast with authoritarian leadership that merely issues orders?
2. What does leading by example require of Christian leaders in terms of personal faithfulness and courage?
3. How does Gideon's model point to Christ who calls us to follow Him into battle against sin, death, and Satan?

Interlinear Text

And he said	וַיֹּאמֶר	וְאֵלֶיךָ מֹתֵן	תְּרִא	וְיֹאמֶר	וְיֹאמֶר	תְּעַשׂ
	H559	H413	H4480	unto them	Look	H3651
				H7200		it shall be that as I do
					H7097	H6213
אָנֹכִי	וְיֹאמֶר	בְּאָנֹכִי	בְּאָנֹכִי	בְּעֵזֶב	בְּמִחְנֵת	בְּמִחְנֵת
H2009	H595	likewise and behold when I come	H935	H7097	H4264	to the outside
						of the camp
כַּאֲשֶׁר	וְיֹאמֶר	תְּעַשׂ	וְיֹאמֶר	תְּעַשׂ	וְיֹאמֶר	תְּעַשׂ
H1961	H834	it shall be that as I do	H6213	H3651	H6213	it shall be that as I do

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 11:1 (Parallel theme): Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

Hebrews 13:7 (Parallel theme): Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

Matthew 16:24 (Parallel theme): Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

1 Peter 5:3 (Parallel theme): Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

Judges 9:48 (Parallel theme): And Abimelech gat him up to mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with him; and Abimelech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid it on his shoulder, and said unto the people that were with him, What ye have seen me do, make haste, and do as I have done.

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