

Judges 7:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after the Midianites.

Analysis

Following the initial rout, 'the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after the Midianites.' The previously dismissed soldiers (or other tribal members) now join the chase. This is human nature—willing to join victorious pursuit but not to risk dangerous initial assault. Yet God graciously allows their participation in completing the victory. The three tribes mentioned (Naphtali, Asher, Manasseh) were the northern tribes originally summoned (6:35), now pursuing the fleeing enemy eastward through their territories.

Historical Context

Pursuing routed enemies was essential in ancient warfare—allowing enemy forces to escape intact meant they could regroup and return. Complete victory required destroying the fleeing army and capturing or killing its leaders. The gathering of additional Israelites shows the snowball effect of visible success—victory attracts followers. This parallels the period after David killed Goliath when 'all Israel and Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued' the Philistines (1 Samuel 17:52).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the joining of additional troops after the victory expose the difference between genuine faith and opportunistic followership?
2. What does God's gracious permission for latecomers to participate teach about His mercy toward the weak and fearful?
3. When have you been reluctant to join God's work until success was already visible?

Interlinear Text

וַיָּצִעַ קָ	אִישׁ	יִשְׂרָאֵל	מִנַּפְתָּלִי י	וּמִן	
gathered themselves together	And the men	of Israel	out of Naphtali		
H6817	H376	H3478	H5321	H4480	
אֲשֶׁר	וּמִן	כָּל	מְנַשֶּׁה	וַיִּדְרֹפּוּ	אֹחֲרָיו
and out of Asher			and out of all Manasseh	and pursued	after
H836	H4480	H3605	H4519	H7291	H310
מִדְיָן:					
the Midianites					
H4080					

Additional Cross-References

Judges 6:35 (Parallel theme): And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh; who also was gathered after him; and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.

