

Judges 8:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they answered, We will willingly give them. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey.

Analysis

We will willingly give them (נָתָן נִתְנָהּ, natan nitten)—The emphatic Hebrew construction ('giving, we will give') expresses the people's eager enthusiasm to honor Gideon. **They spread a garment** (נִלְתָּשׁ, simlah), creating an impromptu collection point, and each warrior contributed earrings from his plunder.

The people's willingness reveals both genuine gratitude and dangerous man-centeredness. They readily give to Gideon what belongs ultimately to God. This echoes Israel's later demand for a king 'like all the nations' (1 Samuel 8:5)—the desire to exalt human leadership rather than trust divine governance. When God's people become more enthusiastic about honoring human instruments than glorifying God Himself, idolatry has already taken root in the heart even before physical idols are fashioned.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern custom dictated that military leaders received a portion of war spoils. However, Israel's theocratic system meant that Yahweh was the true King and Warrior (Exodus 15:3), and spoils ultimately belonged to Him. The spreading of a garment recalls Achan's sin with the Babylonian garment (Joshua 7:21), foreshadowing similar covenant violation here.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. When have you been more eager to honor human leaders than to give glory to God?
2. How does enthusiasm for good causes sometimes mask subtle idolatry in our hearts?
3. What distinguishes godly gratitude toward leaders from unhealthy elevation of them?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר וְ	נָתַן	נָתַן	אֵת	וְפִרְשָׁוּ
And they answered	We will willingly	We will willingly	them And they spread	H853
H559	H5414	H5414	H6566	
נְשָׁמָל הַ	שְׁמַרְכָּא יְכָא וְשָׁלַמְתָּ	אֵשׁ	נְזָמָן	שְׁלָלָן:
a garment	and did cast	H8033	therein every man	the earrings of his prey
H8071	H7993		H376	H5141 H7998

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