



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

JUDGES 7:2-4, 13-15; 8:22-25

LESSON: GOD CONFIRMS GIDEON'S MISSION

October 1, 2023

INTRODUCTION:

7:1 Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley. Jerubbaal is Gideon's other name. In Judges 6:32, he was given the name after destroying the idols of Baal meaning *"let Baal plead."* The idea is that Baal ought to be able to plead for himself if he were really a god. And the fact that Baal was unable to stop Gideon's actions implies that he couldn't portray himself as a god. This was the time when God uses Gideon again. The Midianites kept terrorizing Israel and stealing their harvest. So, scripture lets us know that Gideon, and the people that were with him rose up early, and camped beside the well of Harod, known as *"spring of trembling."* And the Midianites were across the valley to the north, by the hill of Moreh, some four miles away. Thus, the scene is set and the time for battle finally is near. Gideon hastily assembled a volunteer army.

LESSON:

I. READINESS JUDGES 7:2-4

7:2 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. Fearful and trembling Gideon, who must obey at night under the cover of darkness and be constantly reassured by signs and fleeces, now arrives at the *"spring of trembling"* with his men, and the Lord tells him there are far too many men with him for God to hand over the Midianites into Gideon's hands. Why did God say this? He didn't want Israel to say or think they had won the victory through their own strength; or even to say, they had saved themselves. In the next verse you'll see how many volunteer men Gideon had. Self-sufficiency is any enemy when it causes us to believe we can always do what needs to be done in our own strength.

7:3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand. Now there is a process of elimination. And it may seem strange until one understands what was actually happening. **First**, he asked whosoever was fearful and afraid to return home. Out of 32,000 men, 22,000 men returned home, and 10,000 remained. This is the number of men Deborah and Barak had in Judges 4:8-10 going into Kedesh and from Tabor (Judges 4:14) to pursue Sisera. The men who returned home were honest, but it's still a test for Gideon.

7:4 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. Gideon still has to be in it with the Lord's leading, for the Lord is saying of the 10,000 that remained again, there are still too many. The men are brought to the water where God would sift and separates them. It is not Gideon who is doing the separating. It is the Lord! The Lord will choose His army. Hasn't the Lord chosen the body of Christ for His army here on earth? But our obedience will have to be fulfilled (II Cor. 10:6). God said that He will show Gideon which ones will go, and which ones who will not go.

NOT APART OF THE LESSON: VERSES 11-12

7:11 And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the



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host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host. Gideon and his trusted servant/armor-bearer, Phurah went together at night to the outpost of the Midianite camp to hear what they're saying or ease drop on their conversation. It took courage to do that. And God was sure that Gideon would be strengthened after hearing what the enemy had to say,

7:12 And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude. The Midianites and the Amalekites and other nations of the Mideast are camped just below the Israelites along in the valley like grasshoppers, and their camels were without number as the sand by the sea side.

II. CONFIRMATION JUDGES 7:13-15

7:13 And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. So, Gideon and Gideon and his trusted servant/armor-bearer, Phurah, go at night to the outpost of the Midianite camp (7:11), and a man was telling a dream to his friend. In the dream, he saw a cake of barley bread rolling into the camp, knocking and striking his tent, turning it over, and turning it over laying it flat on the ground.

7:14 And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host. And the response of the other man hearing the dream was: *"This is nothing other than the sword of Gideon...for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host."* This was what God was saying to Gideon all along. Now, Gideon discovers something, and nothing will encourage a coward more than discovering that his enemy is afraid of him. The significance of the dream was to convince and reassure Gideon (the barley thresher) that the Midianites were all afraid of him, than him being afraid of them. In this case, both the dreamer and the interpreter of the dream are not Israelites; they are the enemy! It reassures Gideon that God is in control of everything: of the battle, the enemies, and Israel. Like Rahab and the inhabitants of Jericho, the enemy was afraid and knew that Israel's powerful God would give the victory to Israel. God not only provided Gideon with encouragement; He did it through the mouths of his enemies.

7:15 And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian. All Gideon could do was just stand outside the enemy's camp worshiping God. He was so encouraged and strengthened with excitement that he returns back to his men telling them to *"Arise for the Lord has given them the victory; God hath delivered into their hand the host of Midian."* On the basis of that encouragement, it was as good as done! The enemy doesn't seem so big now. Whatever you're going through, your confidence is strengthened by one Word! And that Word can only be brought up in your spirit by the Spirit of God. We can worship anywhere by changing our focus from life's struggles to a God who cares. His worship comes flowing up out of your heart.

CHAPTER 8

III. CONCLUSION JUDGES 8:22-25

8:22 Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. All that Gideon set out to do was accomplished. Gideon is weary and tired and the men of Israel asks him to be their ruler rule over them, even also—his sons, and even passing it down to generations. The men of Israel were full of gratitude, for Gideon delivering them from the Midianites. As you remember, for seven years, the Midianites were the ones that greatly oppressed the Israelites with raids, leaving them in poverty. Even Gideon was one that was found hiding from them in the winepress, threshing





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wheat. They were so grateful that they thought Gideon had delivered them and they desired him to rule over them. They want this strong leader over them. However, something has gone entirely wrong! They had forgotten about God!

8:23 And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you. The people wanted to make Gideon their ruler, but Gideon stressed that God was their true King and Ruler. He understood that it was not his place to take the throne over Israel. Gideon refused for himself and his sons to hold such a position. ¹Though Gideon said he didn't want to be a king, in the rest of the chapter he acted like one. His words were humble, but his actions were not. It is easier to talk about humility and service to God than it is to actually live it.

8:24 And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)— Having refused, Gideon requested instead that they give him the earrings of his prey, which they had taken from the fallen Ishmaelites (used interchangeably here for Midianites). Both Ishmael, by Hagar, and Midian, by Keturah, were sons of Abraham; and their descendants became closely allied. ²They were fleshly people. The descendents of Isaac were the spiritual people. The flesh and the spirit have been fighting ever since. They adorned themselves {both men and women} with gold jewelry, such as necklaces and earrings. The earrings of so many dead would be worth a tremendous amount of money.

8:25 And they answered, We will willingly give them. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey. The men willingly responded and spread a garment upon which each man cast the earrings of his prey. Verse 27 says Israel went a whoring after it: which became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house. Instead of giving glory to God for His miraculous deliverance, the people began worshiping the prey of that deliverance.

SUMMARY:

There were too many men going out to war against the Midianites. God's process of elimination dwindled them down from 32,000 to 10,000, then to 300. This is the only way God would give the enemy into the Israelites' hand. He wanted them to know that the victory comes from the Lord, and not in their own strength. Gideon had never led an army, and a vast majority of the soldiers were untrained and inexperienced. It wasn't about their skill; it was about the number of men God would keep or let go (**7:2-4**).

¹²The Midianites and the Amalekites and other nations of the Mideast are camped just below the Israelites along in the valley like grasshoppers, having camels without number as the sand by the sea side. ¹³Gideon overhears one of the soldiers tell another of a dream he had dreamed. The dream he overhears shows that God has given Gideon the victory over the Midianites and they know it. It convinces and reassures Gideon (the barley thresher) that the Midianites were all afraid of him, than him being afraid of them. This causes Gideon to worship the Lord and he goes back to the men in his camp and encouraging them to Arise, Why? - Because God has given the enemy into their hands. To know that God has your back is enough to let Him rule, and to know that the enemy also knows that God has your back is enough to let God rule! (**7:13-15**).

The grateful Israelites then asks Gideon to be their ruler, because they're looking at Gideon as the deliverer who has won the battle for them, instead of God. And this is the one thing that God was trying to divert them from. Only God can receive the honor for anything we come through! Gideon knows this and he refuses the rulership, because God could only be Israel's one and only Deliverer (**8:22-25**).

¹ <http://www.enduringword.com/commentaries/0708.htm>

² <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/judges/09.html>

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

