

# JUDGES 7:9-21

## LESSON: GIDEON DEFEATS THE MIDIANITES—June 21, 2020

### 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. Baal means *"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 action implies that he couldn't portray himself as a god. The Midianites kept terrorizing Israel and stealing their harvest. So, scripture lets us know that Gideon and the people 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.

**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 *"well 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 separate them. It is not Gideon who is separating them out. 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 with Gideon and which ones will not go.

**7:5** So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. The 10,000 men were brought down to the water. God told Gideon that every man

# PITWM VERSE BY VERSE



that lapped the water like a dog with his tongue is to be set aside by himself. And those that bowed down to the water on his knees to drink are to be set by himself. So there are two groups God will choose from: the ones who lapped and the ones who bowed.

**7:6 And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.** In the first group there were 300 men that lapped like a dog, putting his hand to his mouth to drink the water. But the rest of the men (7,000) bowed down on their knees to drink the water.

**7:7 And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.** Now, the Lord is really about to say something that Gideon may not be ready to hear. Well, the men that lapped up the water by putting their hands to their mouths to drink are the ones that the Lord will save Gideon and deliver the Midianites into his hand. Undoubtedly, the men that lapped water from their hands were the smaller group. They were the ones who were crouched and looking and not on their knees. And they were able to arise quicker as they watched around them. They seemed more alert than the others. And the Lord tells Gideon to send the others home. There were too many people going out to war against the Midianites. God's process of elimination dwindles them down from 32,000 to 10,000, then to 300. There were a total of 29,000 to go home. 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.

**7:8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.** So, the people brought provisions and their trumpets and sent all the Israelites to their own dwelling places. The 300 men were retained; keeping alert to do battle with the host of Midianites beneath in the valley.

## **LESSON: I. GOD'S PROMISE OF VICTORY JUDGES 7:9-14**

**7:9 And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto him. Arise, get thee down unto the host: for I have delivered it into thine hand.** God waited until that night and spoke to Gideon, telling him to get up and go down to the host of Midianites (their camp), meaning it was time to attack now with the 300 men, for God Himself would deliver the Midianites into Gideon's hand!

**7:10 But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host:** — But, God says, however, if you are fearful, God tells Gideon to take his servant "*Phurah*" whose name means "*beauty or bears fruit*" with him down to the host into the valley. Those who follow God must have faith. The opposite of faith is fear. There, they would spy upon the Midianites. This would help Gideon overcome any fear or doubt.

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



# PITWM VERSE BY VERSE



**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 Phurah come near the camp, a man was telling a dream to his friend. He said he had dreamed about a cake of barley bread tumbling 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 else save 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.

## II. GOD'S PLAN OF ATTACK JUDGES 7:15-18

**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 worshipping 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 up by His Spirit flowing in your heart.

**7:16** And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. Then the 300 men were divided into three groups and were given each man a trumpet and pitchers (clay jars) with a torch in it. This is a very unusual tactic. Mind you, they were going up against 135,000 soldiers.

**7:17** 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. Gideon says *"Look on me"*; He's saying *"Watch me! Now, do as I do!"* When he reaches the outside or edge of the camp, the men were to follow and do whatever he did.

**7:18** When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon. They would all be dispersed out in their three groups on every side of the camp. This means the camp would be surrounded! When Gideon blows his trumpet, they and all that were with him would also blow their trumpets on every side of the camp. As they did all this they were to shout this one line: *"The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon."* And they didn't even have swords.

## III. GOD'S POWER JUDGES 7:19-21

**7:19** So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands. At the beginning of the middle watch (just as the midnight watch began) and the sentry of



# PITWM VERSE BY VERSE



guards were posted in the Midian camp, Gideon and the 100 men had come to the outside or edge of the camp. The rest of the camp was asleep and suddenly Gideon and the 100 men began to blow the trumpets and brake the pitchers that were in with their hands. I believed that Gideon and his men didn't have to run, but just stood there blowing the trumpets and breaking the pitchers (clay jars). You see the enemy couldn't see the lamps for they were hid inside the pitchers until the pitcher was broken. And suddenly they were circumference about the camp with light!

**7:20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.** The three groups did all of this at the same time. They blew the trumpets with their right hand, and broke the pitchers while holding the lamps in their left hands crying and shouting aloud: *"The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon."*

**7:21 And they stood every man in his place round about the camp; and all the host ran, and cried, and fled.** Yes, they were bold in their stance! The camp was surrounded by Gideon and the men covering the entire circumference of the camp. All the host of the Midianites ran, crying as they fled the camp because of the fear of the Lord and His power. The two men could bear witness to the dream: *"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 Gideon could plainly see that God keep His promises. 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. God lets them see that it was Him who had won this victory for them. Could you imagine trumpets, pitchers, and lamps in their hands, and the enemy runs away like that? Nobody but God!

## SUMMARY:

God was determined to build Gideon's confidence because god says *"Arise, get thee down unto the host: for I have delivered it into thine hand."* If he wasn't sure about what God would do in this war, it had to be cleared up, so God allows Gideon to take his armor-bearer/servant with him and spy out the enemy's camp. And the two went at the outskirts of the enemy's camp. The 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. Gideon 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 (7:9-14).

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; to know that the enemy knows that God has your back is enough to let God rule! Gideon divided the 300 men God allowed to come into 3 groups. Each man carried a trumpet and an empty pitcher and a lamp to put within the pitcher. Whatever Gideon did, the men were to do the same, and chant the words: *"The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon"* (7:15-18).

At the beginning of the middle watch (just as the midnight watch began) and the sentry of guards were posted in the Midian camp, Gideon and the 100 men had come to the outside or edge of the camp. The rest of the camp was asleep and suddenly Gideon and the 100 men began to blow the trumpets and the brake the pitchers that were in with their hands. began). Then they began to blow the trumpets and break the pitchers. The three groups did all of this at the same time, crying and shouting aloud: *"The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon."* The camp was surrounded by Gideon and his men and all the host of Midianites ran crying and fleeing (7:19-21).

