

Judges 7

Gideon's choice of leaders

Alan Redpath- 'The church today is turning out Christian leaders lacking evidence of Heavens reality...eye appealing but w/o depth, w/o substance...more interested in the masses than maturity'.

Gideon was Gods' choice to lead Israel in victory over Mideanites-
 What kind of person does God choose to be part of Gideon's army,
 to come along side, partner w/ leadership, to be in service for God &
 do His work? **He dialogues w/ God thru out ch 6,7**

We discover God is more interested in **quality** than quantity. We
 think bigger is better when it comes to an army or church or staff.

Why? Ego we glory in it! David did # army God shares His glory w/ no one.

Many times when God strips away resources, depletes numbers,
 causes what looks like to us a setback, reversal—it doesn't mean He is
disapproving of the work we're doing **but** He's seeking to increase our faith
 that He might do an even greater work. **7 th day Adventist church-Empress**

Judg 7:1 Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him, rose early and camped beside the spring of Harod; and the camp of Midian was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley.

'Rose up early' success/secure in calling, doesn't give liberty to be lazy, but
 early about Lord's business. Soybean farmer 50-60 average 174
 bushes/Acre *Pr 28:19 He who tills his land will have plenty of food, but he who follows empty pursuits will have poverty in plenty* **Crops don't grow where the shadow of the farmer doesn't fall—Blacksmiths early at their trade before Christians at theirs...Chrysostom**

First thing we notice, when Gideon called they came willingly **6:34,35**-Call to ministry should never be coerced, pleaded w/, pressured into, but a work of the Spirit-*they volunteered willingly in the day of the Lord*. Should always be of a willing heart.—If **talked into** they can be **talked out of** mainly in hard times

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1 Cor 9:16-17 *For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me.*

2,3 *And the LORD said to Gideon, The people who are w/ you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, lest Israel become boastful, saying, My own power has delivered me. Now therefore come, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him return and depart from Mount Gilead. So 22,000 people returned, but 10,000 remained.*

From their vantage point the enemy could be seen below so Gideon asked **'if any are afraid go home'** **Dt 20:8** *"Then the officers shall speak further to the people, and they shall say, 'Who is the man that is afraid and fainthearted? Let him depart and return to his house, so that he might not make his brothers' hearts melt like his heart.'*

22,000 went home. Why? **Maybe** beaten down by enemy so long (**Stockholm syndrome**) had taken away their will to fight. **Maybe** sin ruling life so long drained them of courage, now fear replaced faith. **David's sin**

Ps 32:3-4 *When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer.*

Faith begets faith, fear begets fear. Fear looks to fleshly weapons to fight spiritual battles-**Peter's sword**. Fearful in battle influences others.

If you want to be a person of faith, hang out w/ people of faith. So far Gideon's army is composed of **1**-willing soldiers who **2**-full of faith in face of an intimidating enemy but know that **God is greater**.

4-7 *Then the LORD said to Gideon, The people are still too many; bring them down to the water and I will test them for you there. Therefore it shall be that he of whom I say to you, This one shall go with you, he shall go with you; but everyone of whom I say to you, This one shall not go with you, he shall not go. So he brought the people down to the water. And the LORD said to Gideon, You shall separate everyone who laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, as well as everyone who kneels to drink. Now the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was 300 men; but all the rest of the people knelt to drink water. And the LORD said to Gideon, I will deliver you with the 300 men who lapped and will give the Midianites into your hands; so let all the other people go, each man to his home.*

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Most were too casual--*overconfidence* has ruined many a minister & ministry--*not wise to schemes of devil*—Put selves in compromised situation (*gold, girls, glory*) Kneel w/ mouth to water-drink like the horses puts you off guard, easily caught, if enemy hiding out. Not a wise position if enemy lurking to catch unawares.

Lap w/ hand to mouth, alert to surprise attack. We need those next to us who not only have *willing heart*, who are *full of faith* also aware they are in a *spiritual battle* and *alert to the schemes of the devil*.

1 Peter 5:8-9 *Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.*

Bernard-girl's got her eye on you-instead of *alert* he was *flattered* & fell to temptation & out of ministry. **30 minutes of unchecked sin can lead to 30 years of regret**

8 *So the 300 men took the people's provisions and their trumpets into their hands. And Gideon sent all the other men of Israel, each to his tent, but retained the 300 men; and the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.*

Note that God chose them when doing something very ordinary (*tested*) . Lot tested by what he *saw*. Israel tested by what they *ate*, manna. Abraham tested by *sex* w/ Hagar. Moses by *gripping* people. *Those who worked for me* Be aware Gods testings often happen in ordinary circumstances of life-He tests us so He can trust us.

God's math important principle of ministry subtraction equals multiplication.

9-11 *Now the same night it came about that the LORD said to him, Arise, go down against the camp, for I have given it into your hands. But if you are afraid to go down, go with Purah your servant down to the camp, and you will hear what they say; and afterward your hands will be strengthened that you may go down against the camp. So he went with Purah his servant down to the outposts of the army that was in the camp.*

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If afraid go w/ Purah. Gideon goes w/ Purah. **Fear** is a feeling **faith** is an action. We overcome the feeling of fear by the action of faith. If never stepping out for Lord w/ some trepidation, uneasiness maybe we're carving out our walk to suit ourselves. **Not** venturing out in faith which **brings** fear, not slavish, but healthy knowing if God not come thru we've had it. [ns/town](#)

12-14 Now the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the sons of the east were lying in the valley as numerous as locusts; and their camels were without number, as numerous as the sand on the seashore. When Gideon came, behold, a man was relating a dream to his friend. And he said, Behold, I had a dream; a loaf of barley bread was tumbling into the camp of Midian, and it came to the tent and struck it so that it fell, and turned it upside down so that the tent lay flat. And his friend answered and said, This is nothing less than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given Midian and all the camp into his hand.

God's providence--dream interpretation--God did two things **One** put terror in the hearts of the Midianites. **Two** gave courage to the hearts of the Israelites. *Is 45:7 'I form light & create darkness, I make weal (wellbeing) and create woe, I the Lord do all these things.*

15 And it came about when Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation, that he bowed in worship. He returned to the camp of Israel and said, Arise, for the LORD has given the camp of Midian into your hands.

Bowed in worship-a position of submission, a place of trust & dependence.

It's an acknowledgment that the battle belongs to the Lord. **2 Cor 2:14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, Gideon**

worships before the victory when facing a strong enemy. It's easy to worship after we've won the battle-enemy is conquered-no fear-no need for faith. **If we pray in time of peace we will not have to plead in time of battle.**

16 And he divided the 300 men into three companies, and he put trumpets and empty pitchers into the hands of all of them, with torches inside the pitchers. 17 And he said to them, Look at me, and do likewise. And behold, when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. 18 When I and all who are with me blow the trumpet, then you also blow the trumpets all around the camp, and say, For the LORD and for Gideon.

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Look at me--mentoring for ministry--**seasoned saints**—follow my lead, here is what & how to do ministry--to overcome enemy. *That which I've received from the Lord declare I unto you*, it's what works—**Elijah/Elisha** Chuck's example, spiritual DNA. Ultimately '*fixing our eyes on Jesus the author & finisher...*' Heb 12:2

19 So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just posted the watch; and they blew the trumpets and smashed the pitchers that were in their hands. 20 When the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers, they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing, and cried, A sword for the LORD and for Gideon! 21 And each stood in his place around the camp; and all the army ran, crying out as they fled. 22 And when they blew 300 trumpets, the LORD set the sword of one against another even throughout the whole army; and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the edge of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath. 23 And the men of Israel were summoned from Naphtali & Asher & all Manasseh, & they pursued Midian.

Those who were fearful earlier & left, now joined the battle as they observed the example of what God was doing thru their brethren. We mentor/train others by what they see in us. Your example can have the effect of turning timid saints into courageous servants for the Lord.

Note; when the clay pots were broken, fire inside came out, torch lit. **2 Cor 4:7-8** *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels **jars of clay-clay pots**, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves*—fire of God falls when we are broken. Gods light shines thru broken vessels

24 And Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, Come down against Midian and take the waters before them, as far as Beth-barah and the Jordan. So all the men of Ephraim were summoned, and they took the waters as far as Beth-barah and the Jordan. 25 And they captured the two leaders of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb, and they killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and they killed Zeeb at the wine press of Zeeb, while they pursued Midian; and they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon from across the Jordan.

Trouble in the camp after victory—Soft answer confronts Jealousy