

God Wins With A Small Army

Judges 7:1-23

Farmer Becomes A Military Man

6:1-10 Imagine having a garden and all your neighbors steal all of it every year

7 Years of this happening

Plea to God to make it stop

Gideon

- Jerrubaal - "Cutting off or hewing down"
- Farmer and husbandman from Manasseh
- Not a man of war
- Depicted somewhat cowardly in ch. 6
- Perfect Example that God uses all kinds of people

Why Me Lord?

Ever wondered this? Gideon questions God

God has his reasons

Sometimes, for a lesson:

- Goal – Romans 8:29
- Chastening shows His love for us – Heb. 12:5-11
- Rebuked for their sins – Judges 2:1-5

Gideon then wonders why God has chosen him and makes excuses – like Moses

6:11-12 Appears to Gideon

14 God appears to Gideon – "theophany" – Gen. 18:1-2, 16-17

15 "Mighty Man of Valor" – Who, Me?

16 God is with Gideon

Midianites – "Contention, Strife"

- Relatives of Isreal
- Descendants of Midian
- 6th son of Abraham, 3rd wife Keturah (concubine) – Gen. 25:1-2
- Abraham gave gifts to all his sons and sent them away from Isaac – Gen. 25:6
- Went East
- Sold Joseph into slavery – Gen. 37:28
- Moses fled to land of Midian, marries Zipporah

- Lived there 40 years
- Seduced men of Israel – 24,000 killed – Mt. Juliet size 23,671
- Declared enemies – Num. 25:17-18, 31:2
- Moses spared some – Num. 31:17-18
- Sizeable people by Gideon's time

25-26 Gideon's courage

27 Obeyed God's command

28-29 Realized what has happened

30 Want to kill Gideon!

31 Joash's defense

32 Name change

Gideon Accepts the Responsibility 7:1-8

Midianites camped around Israel, ready to attack

6:36-37 Gideon needed some reassurance from God

38 God delivers

39 Another time

40 God delivers

Our success depends on God – God will be with us – Phil. 4:13

7:1 Rallied the troops – 32,000 – Cookeville 32,622

Enemy has 135,000 combined – Murfreesboro 131,947

2 God says that there are too many

3 The fearful told to leave – 22,000 leave – Farragut 22,282

10,000 men left to fight – Manchester 10,102

Imagine Gideon's shock!

4 Still too many!

Told to go to water – marched to stream, thirsty

5 Drinks like a dog – keep – ready to fight

Stoops down – out – easy prey

8 Only 300 remain – 9700 are sent home! Liberty 310

We are too concerned with the actual number – Great Commission says to go to everyone!

Gideon Received Assurance From a Strange Place 7:9-15

- 9 Same night
- 10 Go down to the camp with servant
- 11 Hear what they are saying!
- 12 Innumerable amount of people
- 13 Man tells of dream
God caused the dream – Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Pilate’s Wife, Paul, Peter, Many others
- 14 Interpretation is that Gideon is coming!
- 15 God says go! When He says go, you go!

The Plan Was God’s 7:7, 16-23

- 7 God says He will deliver Gideon!
- 16 Good leader – 3 groups each with trumpets, pitcher, lantern, (Sword not mentioned here)
- 17 Do as I do – leading by example!
- 18 Surround camp, torch inside pitcher, when Gideon blew his trumpet, shout with mighty shout:
“The Sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.”
- 19 Plan in motion
- 20 Plan fulfilled!
- 21 They woke up and thought they were surrounded and began to flee!
- 22 The LORD set the swords against the enemies!
- 23 Chased after them – day memorialized forever!

Lessons:

1. Israel was plagued with idolatry. Idolatry leads to all kinds of ungodly practices.
2. We often wonder what difference we can make. The good we do will be left behind and influence others.
3. Though Gideon asked God for tests, it seems clear it was not a lack of faith of God, but in himself.

4. There is abundant proof that God does not really need any man, but He allows us to serve Him when we are willing and together we can accomplish great things. Numbers do not matter to God, but commitment does.
5. Gideon provides us with an excellent example of leadership.
6. Putting out the fleece, a term still used today, is often seen as a lack of faith or a desire to follow God with conditions. That may have been true in this case as well, but here it serves as evidence that God understands our frailties and weaknesses. His grace and mercy serve to show that understanding to those willing to follow Him.
7. It is interesting Gideon did not mention taking a sword, although we know that they did. Today the only offensive weapon Christians are asked to take with them into the spiritual battle in which we are engaged against Satan and his forces is the “sword of the Spirit.” (Heb. 4:12) We can be victorious in our battle if we study and learn God’s Word.
8. Although we may not understand God’s plan for our lives, like Gideon we need to obey Him. God’s thoughts and His ways are far beyond ours. We need only to trust and obey Him and He will give us the victory. I Cor. 15:57-58

June 29, 2017 Lumley Stand Church of Christ VBS

July 10, 2017 Rockliff Church of Christ VBS

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