

BOOK OF JUDGES
THE CYCLE CONTINUES-#4-GIDEON PT 2
JUDGES 6:33-7:25

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Introduction

Tonight we're going to pick up where we left off last week. We began to see how the **LORD** raised up **GIDEON** to deliver the **CHILDREN OF ISRAEL** from yet another **OPPRESSION** brought on by their sin!

We saw the same CYCLE as before taking place:

- I. *WE SAW ISRAEL'S SIN! (Judges 6:1a)*
- II. *WE SAW ISRAEL'S SUFFERING! (Judges 6:1b-6a)*
- III. *WE SAW ISRAEL'S SUPPLICATION! (Judges 6:6b)*
- IV. *WE SAW ISRAEL'S SALVATION!*

THE JUDGE NAMED GIDEON

We were seeing how The LORD Raised Up And Called A Man By The Name Of GIDEON To Lead HIS People In Battle Against The MIDIANITES.

- I. *WHEN THE ANGEL OF THE LORD FIRST CAME TO GIDEON HE WAS HIDING HIS WHEAT THRESHING ACTIVITY FROM THE MIDIANITES! (Judges 6:11-12a)*
- II. *WE SAW THAT, IN SPITE OF HIS HIDING AND IN SPITE OF HIS DOUBTS ABOUT HIMSELF, THE LORD WAS WITH HIM AND CALLED HIM TO DELIVER ISRAEL! (Judges 6:12b-16)*
- III. *WE SAW THAT AT FIRST GIDEON'S FAITH WAS WEAK! (Judges 6:14-24)*
 - A. *GIDEON'S Weak Faith Is Shown In His Initial FOCUS On His Own LIMITATIONS And WEAKNESSES Rather Than On The LORD! (Vs 14-15)*
 - B. *The Call Of The LORD On His Life Here Trumped His Weak Faith! (Vs 14b, 16)*
 - C. *His Weak Faith Was Seen In His Interaction With The Angel Of The LORD. (Vs 17-24)*
- IV. *WE SAW GIDEON'S FIRST ASSIGNMENT FROM THE LORD. (Judges 6:25-26)*

HE instructed GIDEON to:

- 1) *Tear down the altar of BAAL that his father had,*
- 2) *To cut down the grove beside it, and*
- 3) *To build an altar to the LORD GOD and sacrifice his father's seven year old bull using the wood he got from cutting down the grove.*

V. *WE SAW GIDEON OBEYED THE LORD, BUT HE DID SO AT NIGHT! (Vs 27)*

VI. *WE SAW THE UPROAR BY THE MEN IN THE CITY FOR WHAT HAD BEEN DONE BY GIDEON! (Vs 28-30)*

VII. *WE SAW THAT GIDEON'S FATHER CAME TO HIS DEFENSE! (Vs 31)*

GIDEON was then given another name by his father—"Jerubbaal", which means "let Baal plead." (Vs 32)

BEFORE WE MOVE ON FROM THIS LET'S NOTE THREE THINGS:

1. **The SPIRITUAL Must Come Before The PHYSICAL!**
Matthew 6:33- "But seek ye first the Kingdom of God..."
Again, **ISRAEL'S** greatest problem was a **SPIRITUAL** problem! Though their primary concern was their **SUFFERING**, the **LORD'S** primary concern was their **SIN OF IDOLATRY!**
They wanted **HELP** but not **HOLINESS!**
They wanted **REVENGE** but not **RIGHTEOUSNESS!**
They wanted **VICTORY** but not **VIRTUE!**

But, the **LORD** does not **DELIVER** people **IN THEIR SINS!**
HE DELIVERS them **FROM THEIR SINS!**

Even today we find that people want the **LORD** to solve their **EARTHLY PROBLEMS**, but they don't want to deal with their **SPIRITUAL PROBLEMS** first!

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The priority of our lives should be **SPIRITUAL MATTERS FIRST** and earthly concerns second!

The SPIRITUAL Must Come Before The PHYSICAL!

2. The PRIVATE Must Come Before The PUBLIC!

Before **GIDEON** could take the war to the country, he had to **FIGHT THE WAR AT HOME!** Before he could reform a nation, he first had to **REFORM HIS HOME!**

REVIVAL of a nation comes from **PERSONAL REVIVAL** first...then to the family....then to the Church... and then to a nation!

3. The SMALL Must Come Before The GREAT!

Before **GIDEON** could be trusted to lead an army, he had to prove himself in his household and hometown!

Luke 16:10—“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.”

VIII. WE SEE GIDEON AND THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL GATHERED TO FIGHT THE MIDIANITES.

Judges 6:33-40; 7:1-2

A. We See That The MIDIANITE Army Along With The AMALEKITES And Some Others From The East Were Ready To Move Against ISRAEL Again! (6:33)

1. There was a great host of men and equipment. (7:12)
2. There were 135,000 fighting men. (8:10)

B. Under The SPIRIT OF THE LORD's Direction, GIDEON Gathered An Army. (6:34-35)

C. Then We See Another Weak Display Of FAITH From GIDEON. (6:36-40)

D. ISRAEL'S Army Gathered To Oppose MIDIAN. (7:1-2)

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1. Understand that this army of 32,000 were untried, untrained, and ill equipped men.
2. Consider **GIDEON'S** reaction to the people following him. He might have been overwhelmed that the people listened and that the **LORD** had chosen him. But, he also might have looked on the **32,000** as not being enough to do the task.
3. The **LORD'S** analysis of the **32,000** was that there were too many for **HIM** to bless. **32,000 vs 135,000** (4.22 to 1 odds)
4. The **LORD'S** reason was **ISRAEL'S PRIDE!**
5. Consider **MAN'S PRIDE** and the **LORD'S WAYS!**
1 Corinthians 1:27-31—“But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, [yea], and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”

IX. GIDEON AND THE PEOPLE WERE PREPARED BY THE LORD. (Judges 7:3-14)

A. The First Test Was Given And 22,000 Were Eliminated. (7:3)

1. Those who were **FEARFUL** and **AFRAID** were those who didn't believe they could win. They did not understand the greatness of the **LORD** being on their side in the fight!

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2. Consider *Exodus 14:13* when all of **ISRAEL** had their backs to the **RED SEA** and the **EGYPTIAN** army was in pursuit.
“And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever.”

Later in **ISRAEL’S** future the **LORD**, through the **PROPHET ISAIAH** had to remind them again !
Isaiah 41:10–“Fear thou not; for I [am] with thee: be not dismayed; for I [am] thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

3. After this first culling of **GIDEON’S** army, he had 10,000 men left (*13.5 to 1 odds*). (7:4)
The **LORD’S** analysis was that there were still too many.

B. A Second Test Was Given To Whittle The Number Down.

- They were to go down to the water. (7:4-7)
1. None of these were afraid.
 2. These were tested by drinking water.
 - a. Those who fell on their knees were those who might take their eyes off the enemy.
 - b. Those who lapped the water out of their hand were those who were fully alert.
 3. So, **GIDEON** had 300 men left. (*450 to 1 odds*)
 - a. Consider the decrease.
 - b. Consider the caliber of soldiers.
 4. The **LORD** would save **ISRAEL** by the 300. (7:7)

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The **LORD** uses men of **HIS** own choosing!

5. Everybody else was sent home! (7:8)

C. GIDEON Was Assured. (7:9-15)

X. GIDEON AND THE 300 WENT TO WAR. (Judges 7:16-21)

A. We See Their Strategy! (7:16-18)

B. They Worked This Strategy! (7:19-20)

C. Every Man Stood In His Place! (7:21)

After blowing their trumpets and breaking their pitchers they let the **LORD** do what they could not do!

XI. THE LORD SET EVERY MAN’S SWORD AGAINST HIS FELLOW TO ACCOMPLISH THE VICTORY FOR ISRAEL! (7:22-25)

Conclusion

That's our **BIBLE STUDY** for this evening. **LORD** willing, we will come back and look at *chapter 8* where we see a few problems **GIDEON** encountered in his **PURSUIT** of the kings of **MIDIAN**!

One of the problems came from their brethren...the **EPHRAIMITES**, whom he had to appease. Other problems came from the men in **SUCCOTH** and **PENUEL** who refused to give him and his army bread in their pursuit.

And we'll see a few other things as we wrap up the story of **GIDEON**.