

I. The Battle Plan from Gideon (vv 16-21).

- A.** The need for a plan of action (v 16)
- 1) Gideon, knowing the outrageous disparity between Israel's army and Midian, makes a plan
 - 2) *Note*, Just because God has promised the victory over all His enemies does not mean that we are passive; but rather we must act in faith.
 - a) We are active in sharing the Gospel with the lost as we have opportunity.
 - b) We are active in putting sin to death and pursuing sanctification.
- B.** An example of godly leadership (vv 17-18)
- 1) There is no 'do as I say, but not as I do' in applying the fifth commandment (*Larger Catechism 129*)
 - 2) Ultimately, this points us to the Lord Christ, who is our example as well as our substitute
- C.** The battle plan enacted (vv 19-21)
- 1) Its summary
 - 2) Its origins (which we are not told)
 - a) It could be that, in an extraordinary manner, as with the selection of the 300 men, the Lord gave direct instructions.
 - b) It could be that, in an ordinary manner, Gideon applied the battle strategy of Abraham in rescuing Lot (Gen 14:14-16)
 - 3) Its wisdom seen clearly
 - a) *Came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch*
 - b) *The three companies*
 - c) *Smashed the jars in their hands*
 - d) *Then the three companies blew the trumpets . . . And they cried out, A sword for the LORD and for Gideon*
 - 4) Doctrines from the Text
 - a) The Word of God makes a weak few as if they were a mighty many.
 - b) We have in this text a figure of the manner of the Gospel advancing.

II. The Victory from God (v 22).

- A.** Exposition of the Text
- 1) *When they blew the 300 trumpets*
 - 2) *The LORD set every man's sword against his comrade and against all the army*
 - 3) *And the army fled as far as the border of Abel-meholab, by Tabbath*
- B.** Doctrines from the Text
- 1) God alone will work His providence in destroying the wicked, that He alone should receive the glory.
 - 2) When God judges the wicked, He often turns them against one another to destroy each other in turn (Isa 19:1-15).
 - 3) The wicked retreat only to their further destruction, which is inevitable.
- C.** Uses from the Text
- 1) from slumber or be destroyed (Eph 5:11-14)!
 - 2) We do not value our preparation based solely off of the initial usefulness of something.

III. The Principle of Pursuit (vv 23-26).

- A.** After God has internally weakened the Midianites, and they begin to flee, Gideon begins the chase after them (Jdg 8:10)
- B.** Everybody nearby is called to join in, not just the 300 soldiers under Gideon
- C.** The Princes of Midian are put to death
- D.** Doctrines from the Text
- 1) The principle of pursuit (*Larger Catechism 76*)
 - 2) Not all are called to the frontlines, but all are called in at the pursuit.
 - 3) The justice of God in history is often an ironic mockery of the wicked (Isa 14:3-7)
- E.** Uses from the Text
- 1) A word on exhortation: Heed God's Warning! Be faithful to the vow you have made in the sacraments!
 - a) *They captured the waters as far as Beth-barab* (Jn 1:28, 3:36)
 - b) *Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb*
 - 2) A word of encouragement: Hear God's Promise! Just as the heads of these wicked kingdoms were cut off, so Christ has crushed the Serpent's head, and all of His enemies shall be placed under His feet (Rev 12:11-12)