

## GIDEON – THE JUDGE WHO NEEDED SIGNS – PART 4

--JUDGES 7:8-8:3--

### INTRODUCTION:

When we last left Gideon, he was in the midst of an internal battle. The LORD had just reduced Gideon's army of 32,000 men down to a measly 300 men to go against a vast army on camels. The internal battle that Gideon is waging is the same battle he had waged at the onset of each task God had given him to do, this is a battle between faith and fear. The fear was that what he might have accomplished with 32,000 men was utterly hopeless with 300 men. How could a force this small defeat the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the sons of the east that were spread out in the valley below him? The other side of this battle was faith in what God had promised, He had promised to deliver Midian and their allies into Gideon's hand. The LORD had promised to be with Gideon and if the LORD is on your side, it did not matter the size of your army, with a large or a small army the LORD would defeat the enemy. This is the battle that Gideon was waging as the night grew darker around him. I do not think that Gideon was sleeping as this battle took place within him, could he trust the LORD to do what He said He would do? This was the question that had to be answered.

- I. FAITH OVER FEAR (Judges 7:8-14)
  - a. Our passage opens on the night before \_\_\_\_\_, a night of little sleep for those facing battle the next day.
  - b. When Gideon has felt like this before, unsure, and afraid, he had asked God for a \_\_\_\_\_, but this night he is silent, alone with his thoughts and his fear is beginning to win out over his faith.
  - c. Gideon and Purah crept down into the valley and as they arrive at the outskirts of the enemy camp and Gideon looks around, he sees that the \_\_\_\_\_ is everywhere.
  - d. Gideon learns from this is that not all things are as they seem, because some of the Midianites are \_\_\_\_\_ too.
  - e. That little barley loaf is \_\_\_\_\_.

- II. FAITH IS THE VICTORY (Judges 7:15-23)
  - a. As we come at last to the climax of this event in the life of Gideon, we find Gideon on his \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. When Gideon rises from worship it is like he is a different person and in truth he is and in the verses that follow there are several things about this \_\_\_\_\_ Gideon that are impressive.
  - c. First, he gives all the \_\_\_\_\_ to God.
  - d. Second, Gideon acts like a \_\_\_\_\_.
  - e. Third, he shows himself to be very \_\_\_\_\_.
- III. FAITH IN THE VICTORY (Judges 7:24-8:3)
  - f. Gideon continues to show good leadership by using this \_\_\_\_\_ to his advantage.
  - g. There is one final leadership quality that is seen in Gideon's life and that quality is to know when to \_\_\_\_\_ and to know when to make peace.
  - h. Gideon's leadership qualities in this passage are very \_\_\_\_\_.

### CONCLUSION:

We have watched in these two chapters as God with great patience and abundant grace has shaped the leader that Gideon has become. One passage that clearly harmonizes with the event that we just looked at is Hebrews 11:32-34, where Gideon is mentioned among the members in the hall of faith. What we see in Gideon when he is at his best is the faith that Hebrews 11 is all about. The confidence in God that makes a man sure of what he hopes for and certain of what he cannot see. When Gideon rises from his knees after hearing the dream in the enemy camp, he hasn't yet seen Midian defeated. But he has seen the awesome power of God, and he is no longer afraid. He is free to attempt the impossible by relying on the promises that God has made to him. Out of weakness he was made strong, became mighty in war, and put foreign armies to flight as Hebrews 11:34 says. And Gideon did all this through faith, the author of Hebrews tells us. The history surrounding Gideon may have been about leadership,

but the greater theme that was underlying everything else was faith and moving from a place of lack of faith to a faith that was fully surrendered to the will of God.

One other passage that I believe harmonizes beautifully with the history of Gideon was our Scripture reading today from 2 Corinthians 4:5-7 which reads, and I am reading from the ESV, “*For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.*” (2 Corinthians 4:5–7, ESV) I do not know if the apostle Paul had Judges 7 in mind when he penned these words, but I do know that his words resonate with it on many levels. Paul in 2 Corinthians is writing about a fight that we are all involved in, a fight we are sure to lose unless God helps us. The strategy in this battle, too, is strength in weakness, breakable clay jars with something special inside and light shining out of darkness. God works this way so that when victories happen it is apparent to all that “*the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.*” (2 Corinthians 4:7b, ESV) A godly leader is someone who is aware of his own weaknesses but knows that it is no hindrance or barrier to God’s working through him. And what is that treasure that is hidden in our jars of clay? “*...the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*” (2 Corinthians 4:6b, ESV) All that is needed for it to shine forth is for us to be willing to be broken in His service, to become nothing that He may be everything.