

## Judges, Part 3 – Who Do You Think You Are?

**Judges 7:2-7** And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. [3] Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand. [4] And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. [5] So he brought down the people unto the water: and the Lord said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. [6] And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. [7] And the Lord said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.

In this series, we have learned that the people of Israel were PROMISED all of the land, but they didn't POSSESS all of it, and therefore they couldn't ENJOY all of it! That is like so many Christians today – they SIT ON THE PREMISES, but don't STAND ON THE PROMISES.

We also learned last week about Israel's enemy in the time of Gideon – the MIDIANITES. Their favorite tactic was to wait until there was an opportunity for harvest and then invade, destroying Israel's crops and livestock just for sport and to demoralize the people.

- MIDIAN was actually a son of Abraham; his descendants were LIKE Israel, but they were NOT Israel.
- The Midianites were friendly to the Israelites as long as they stayed on the OUTSKIRTS of the land and didn't ENTER IN.
- The Midianites would make an alliance with the Amalekites or anyone else just to maintain the STATUS QUO.
- The name MIDIAN means "brawling, contention, quarrel."

The Midianites are still among us! Every time there is an opportunity for HARVEST, here they come, taking the crops meant for others just because they can! The spirit of Midian is a spirit of "ME FIRST."

The only way to fight the Midianites is to have the spirit of Gideon's army – a spirit of "GOD FIRST!"

Gideon battled incredible odds and won, because he was willing to believe God when the situation looked impossible, and because he was willing to believe WHAT GOD SAID ABOUT GIDEON (it took him awhile!). He broke the spirit of "ME FIRST!" God said to Gideon, "You already have what it takes to defeat the Midianites and stop this cycle of wasting the harvest – BELIEVE WHAT I HAVE SAID ABOUT YOU! We are not trying to gain something we don't have, but trying to live up to what we already have in Christ! **WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?**

The acid test came when God downsized Gideon's army from 32,000 to 10,000 to 300 – less than 1% of its original size. Why? Because God thought the rest were dead weight anyway! First, He sent home everyone that was afraid – because the kingdom of God operates in an atmosphere of faith, not fear!

**Deuteronomy 20:8** And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart.

**Hebrews 11:1, 6** Now faith is the **substance ("foundation")** of things hoped for, the **evidence ("proof")** of things not seen ... But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Next, God sent home everyone who drank water by bowing down instead of lapping from their hand – in the "ready" position. They didn't just believe that God could win the battle TOMORROW, but TODAY!

**Hebrews 3:7-13** Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, **To day** if ye will hear his voice, [8] Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: [9] When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. [10] Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. [11] So I sware in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) [12] Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. [13] But exhort one another daily, while it is called **To day**; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

**2 Corinthians 6:2** (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, **now** is the accepted time; behold, **now** is the day of salvation.)

**Hebrews 13:8** Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and **to day**, and for ever.

**John 11:23-26** Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. [24] Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. [25] Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: [26] And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

**Romans 14:23** And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: **for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.**

Gideon's 300 men were not any smarter, stronger or more skilled than the other 31,700 men who went home. The only difference was that they decided to BELIEVE WHAT GOD SAID ABOUT THEM! Later, God tells Gideon to go spy on the enemy and he overhears this conversation:

**Judges 7:13-14** And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. [14] And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.

Barley was a grain used primarily by poor people, and this little cake was so stale and hard that it could roll like a wheel – not a complimentary comparison at all, but it would be enough to win the battle!

#### HAVE YOU HEARD THE REPORT FROM THE ENEMY'S CAMP ?!?

**Acts 19:13-15** Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. [14] And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. [15] And the evil spirit answered and said, **Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?**

#### Here is David's Old Testament perspective ...

Psalm 6:2 – I am weak  
Psalm 6:6 – I am weary  
Psalm 22:6 – I am a worm  
Psalm 22:14 – I am poured out like water  
Psalm 25:16 – I am desolate and afflicted  
Psalm 31:9 – I am in trouble  
Psalm 31:12 – I am forgotten  
Psalm 31:12 – I am like a broken vessel  
Psalm 31:22 – I am cut off  
Psalm 38:6 – I am bowed down  
Psalm 38:8 – I am feeble  
Psalm 38:17 – I am ready to halt  
Psalm 39:4 – I am frail  
Psalm 39:12 – I am a stranger  
Psalm 40:12 – I am not able to look up  
Psalm 40:17 – I am poor and needy  
Psalm 69:20 – I am full of heaviness  
Psalm 69:29 – I am sorrowful

Psalm 77:4 – I am so troubled that I cannot speak  
Psalm 88:15 – I am distracted  
Psalm 102:11 – I am withered  
Psalm 109:22 – I am tossed up and down  
Psalm 119:120 – I am afraid  
Psalm 119:141 – I am small and despised  
Psalm 142:6 – I am brought very low

#### Here is Paul's New Testament perspective ...

Romans 1:15 – I am ready  
Romans 1:16 – I am not ashamed  
Romans 8:38 – I am persuaded  
Romans 15:29 – I am sure  
1 Corinthians 16:17 – I am glad  
2 Corinthians 7:4 – I am filled with comfort  
2 Corinthians 7:4 – I am exceedingly joyful  
2 Corinthians 11:21 – I am bold  
2 Corinthians 12:10 – when I am weak, then I am strong  
Ephesians 6:20 – I am an ambassador  
Philippians 1:17 – I am set for the defense of the gospel  
Philippians 4:11 – I am content  
Philippians 4:18 – I am full  
Colossians 1:25 – I am made a minister  
2 Timothy 1:11 – I am appointed  
1 Corinthians 15:10 – by the grace of God, I am what I am!

**Joel 3:10** Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: **let the weak say, I am strong.**

**Acts 20:24** But **none of these things move me**, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might **finish my course with joy**, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

**Judges 8:4** And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over, he, and the three hundred men that were with him, **faint, yet pursuing** them.

**Isaiah 40:28-31** Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. [29] He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. [30] Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: [31] But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

**WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?** I am God's child! So, if He is not tired, discouraged or defeated ... neither am I. If God believes in revival, I believe in revival. The devil can't outlast people or churches like that!