

Judges 8

Jesus

- **Ch. 7**

1. **135,000 Midianites** flood into valley
2. God reduces Israel's army: **32,000 to 300 guys**
3. Head down mountain at night/Surround Midianite camp...

Break Pitchers/Expose Light of Torches within...
The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon!

- **Miraculous Victory:** Only God could get the glory

1. Enemy confused/killing one another/run away
2. Gideon leads Israel in pursuit...

Judges 7:24 Then Gideon sent messengers throughout all the mountains of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites, and seize from them the watering places as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan." Then **all the men of Ephraim gathered together** and seized the watering places as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan.²⁵ And they captured two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb. They pursued Midian and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side of the Jordan.

- **Tribe or Ephraim called to help...**

1. Called after initial battle/ Called during final pursuit
2. Kill Midianite leaders **Oreb and Zeeb**. Lit Raven and Wolf
3. Brings the heads of Midian to Gideon...**Literally**

I. Gideon Subdues the Midianites [Ishmaelites]

1 Now the men of Ephraim said to [Gideon], "**Why have you done this to us** by not calling us when you went to fight with the Midianites?" And they **reprimanded him sharply.**

- **Tribe of Ephraim:** Furious w/Gideon

Why were we not called when the battle began!

2 So [Gideon] said to them, "What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer? 3 God has delivered into your hands the **princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb**. And what was I able to do in comparison with you?"

- **Don't be upset.** You guys did great. You did more than me. **Chill...**

3b... Then their **anger toward him subsided** when he said that.

- **Anger subsides:** Lit. to sink, relax, sink down, let drop
- **Civil War is prevented**

Repaying anger w/anger can and many times does...lead to Civil War

Division/Contention between Individuals/w/in families/w/in church

Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word **stirs up anger**. 2 The tongue of the wise **uses knowledge rightly**, but the mouth of fools **pours forth foolishness**.

- Wise know how to use words rightly to get desired result

Proverbs 25:15... And a gentle tongue breaks a bone.

- Responding to anger w/anger is the choice of the weak/foolish

Proverbs 16:32 He who is slow to anger is **better than the mighty**, And he who **rules his spirit** than he who takes a city. **Likewise, ...**

Proverbs 25:28 Whoever has **no rule** over his own spirit Is like a city broken down, without walls.

Allowing God's Spirit to rule our spirit [self-will] ...producing life exemplified by self-control

Galatians 5:22 ...the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, **self-control**.

Gideon's response to Ephraim's anger prevented a Civil War until Ch. 20

- **Meekness is not weakness:** Wisdom exemplified by strength under control.
- Ephraim's anger subsided by soft answer

4 When Gideon came to the Jordan, he and the three hundred men who were with him crossed over, **exhausted but still in pursuit**.

- Up all night now in pursuit of 15,000 Midianites
- **Exhausted yet still in pursuit...**

"Let us also serve the Lord when every movement is painful, when even to think is wearisome. These men were faint. You know what it is for a soldier to be faint; it is no nonsense, no pretense, it is real fainting. Yet to go running on when you are ready to faint, to keep right on when you are ready to drop, this is very trying work; yet let us do it, brethren, by God's grace. [Spurgeon]

Exhausted but still in pursuit/In pain but still moving forward
Temporal earthly trials...

Romans 8:18 ...I consider that the **sufferings of this present** time are **not worthy** to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

2 Corinthians 4:17 ...our **light affliction**, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory...

Revelation 21:4 [Heaven] There shall be **no more pain...**

- Exhausted continue/In pain press on... for the joy set before Him He endured cross

Tired/Hungry Gideon/Men advance to finish the enemy...

5 Then [Gideon] said to the men of Succoth, "Please give loaves of bread to

the people who follow me, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian." 6 And the leaders of Succoth said, "Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand, that we should give bread to your army?" 7 So Gideon said, "For this cause, when the Lord has delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, then I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers!" 8 Then he went up from there to Penuel and spoke to them in the same way. And the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered. 9 So he also spoke to the men of Penuel, saying, "When I come back in peace, I will tear down this tower!"

- **Gideon/300 Stop at two cities for provisions:** Denied by both
- Not asked to fight/Only to give bread...**instead he is mocked**

Why are you acting like you already won?

- God's people walking in God's ways **will be mocked...**

Psalm 35:15 ...in my adversity they rejoiced And gathered together; Attackers gathered against me, And I did not know it; They tore at me and did not cease; 16 With ungodly mockers at feasts **They gnashed at me with their teeth.**

- **Satan the first mocker:** Did God really say not to eat/touch the tree. Please.
- **Satan mocks through people...**He saved others let Him save Himself

James 3:6 ... the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell...**9** With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.

Proverbs 18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue...

- God's people walking in God's ways will be mocked...**in the end be validated**

Luke 7:33 ...wisdom is justified by all her children."

- **E.g. Parents scorned for Home schooling**

Kids won't be able to socialize/Know how to get along with others/How to interact
Parents Mocked/Laughed at/Cut up. Laughing tends to stop. Parents justified.

1. You don't drink? Do drugs?
2. You don't have sex before marriage?
3. You don't believe in evolution?
4. You don't cheat, lie, compromise? What terrible life. [Okay keep watching]

- **Ignore/Embrace mocking and continue to victory:**

1. Wisdom is justified by her children. God's ways are right. People are solid.
2. God will deal with those who mock His people...

Gideon: After I win with God's help...I'll be back to take you to school

- **Succoth:** Tear flesh with thorns

- **Penuel:** [Face of God] Tear down your tower...with you in it

10 Now **Zebah and Zalmunna** were at Karkor, and their armies with them, about fifteen thousand, all who were left of all the army of the people of the East; for one hundred and twenty thousand men who drew the sword had fallen.

- Still chasing 15,000 Midianite soldiers ...
- **Still tired/hungry:** Empowered by Spirit through **forced fasting...**

Gideon could have asked God **why this**...instead he asked God **what now**
Two Cities disobedience forced Gideon to deny his flesh/have empowerment of Spirit

11 Then Gideon went up by the road of those who dwell in tents on the east of Nobah and Jog-behah; and he attacked the army **while the camp felt secure**. 12 When Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued them; and he took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and routed the whole army.

- **Gideon attacked when enemy felt secure:** Just letting down their hair

Special strength given as we repent when the enemy thinks he has us/thinks he's safe
Learn to love the sweet taste of victory over sin...

- When we are just about to gossip, click the mouse, become angry, prideful...

When temptation is still just a thought...we capture it and put it down

2 Corinthians 10:4 ...the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, **bringing every thought into captivity** to the obedience of Christ, 6 and being **ready to punish** all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

Satan's empire consists in the yielding of our will to his will; but when our will revolts against him, then already **we have...overcome him**

I never read of [Satan]having any shield whatever; so that when we resist him, he is bound to run away. He has **no defense for himself**, and the fact of our resistance is in itself a victory. [Spurgeon]

- Ready to punish anything that have the audacity to rise against God's will for us
 1. Attack the thing that is attacking you
 2. Cause pain to the thing that is causing you pain
 3. Kill the thing that wants to kill you; i.e. sin and principalities/powers darkness
- Gideon attacked enemies' camp as they **felt secure...**

13 Then Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle, from the **Ascent of Heres**. 14 And he caught a young man of the men of Succoth and interrogated him; and he wrote down for him the leaders of Succoth and its elders, seventy-seven men. 15 Then he came to the men of Succoth and said, "Here are Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you ridiculed me, saying,

'Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand, that we should give bread to your weary men?' " 16 And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he **taught the men of Succoth.**

- Gideon catches/interrogates young man from Succoth
- Young man writes names 70 Elders from Succoth
- He taught them a lesson...beat them with sticker-bushes...

Mockers/fools/loud mouths seem to only learn by feeling pain

Proverbs 19:29 Judgments are prepared for scoffers, And beatings for the backs of fools.

Proverbs 26:3 A whip for the horse, A bridle for the donkey, And a rod for the fool's back.

Proverbs 18:6 A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calls for blows.

17 Then [Gideon] **tore down the tower** of Penuel and killed the men of the city.

**All they had to do was bring out the Wonder Bread for the boys
Humble yourself before God or be humiliated before men.**

- **Gideon:** Captured Zebah/Zalmunna

18 And he said to Zebah and Zalmunna, "What kind of men were they whom you killed at Tabor?" So they answered, "**As you are**, so were they; each one **resembled the son of a king.**" 19 Then he said, "They were my brothers, the **sons of my mother.** As the Lord lives, if you had let them live, I would not kill you."

- **Each one looked like a king...like you**

Because they were my blood bothers...sons of my mother

20 And [Gideon] said to Jether his firstborn, "**Rise, kill them!**" But the youth would not draw his sword; for he was afraid, because he was still a youth. 21 So Zebah and Zalmunna said, "**Rise yourself, and kill us;** for as a man is, so is his strength." So Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the **crescent ornaments** that were on their camels' necks.

Rise and kill us yourself: Show what kind of man you are

- **Midianite are Ishmaelites:** Crescent Ornaments?
- **Islam** began 2000+ yrs. before Mohammad with the worship of the moon

**Oreb and Zeeb. Zebah and Zalmunna
Picture of the fate of anyone who would seek to plunder Israel**

- **Prophetic Psalm 83 War:** List of nations surrounding Israel who will invade them...

Psalm 83:11 [Psalmist prays] Make their nobles like **Oreb and like Zeeb**, Yes, all their princes like **Zebah and Zalmunna**, 12 Who said, "Let us take for ourselves The pastures of God for a possession."

SUMMARY Gideon Subdues the Midianites

II. Gideon's Decline

22 Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "**Rule over us, both you and your son, and your grandson also; for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian.**"

Rule over us Gideon. Be our Leader Gideon. You are Fantastic Gideon!
I thought God was the One who delivered?

23 But Gideon said to them, "**I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you.**"

- **First King of Israel** will be installed about 100 yrs. later: Saul, David, Solomon
- Gideon already rules as Judge/Deliverer

I will not rule over you...The Lord shall rule over you

- **Humility?** If so, he should have stopped there...

24 Then Gideon said to them, "I would like to make a request of you, that each of you would give me the earrings from his plunder." For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.

- Refuses responsibility/Wants privileges

Entitlement Mentality for something God did? Trouble ahead...

I wouldn't mind a reward for...**my victory. Maybe I can get sump-in out of this...**

- **50 Lbs. of gold**

25 So they answered, "We will gladly give them." And they spread out a garment, and each man threw into it the earrings from his plunder. 26 Now the weight of the gold earrings that he requested was one thousand seven hundred shekels of gold, besides the crescent ornaments, pendants, and purple robes which were on the kings of Midian, and besides the chains that were around their camels' necks. 27 Then Gideon **made it into an ephod** and **set it up in his city, Ophrah**. And **all Israel played the harlot** with it there. **It became a snare to Gideon and to his house.**

- **After the battle Gideon fell apart...**

Gideon was remarkably obedient and filled with faith in the extreme moment of battle. The routine of daily living seems to have been a greater test of his character. This is true for many, and the challenges of daily living are more difficult than those of the extreme moment. [Guzik]

- **Ephod: Priestly Attire:** In this case not to wear... but to worship

Judges 17:5 The man Micah had a shrine, and **made an ephod** and **household idols**; and he consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. 6 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone **did what was right in his own eyes.**

- **Attraction away from God:** Come one and all to see Gideon's Ephod
 1. Gideon set it up in **his** city
 2. Israel began to worship Gideon's Ephod
 3. Gideon's family became ensnared by it...

No longer about God but about Gideon's Ephod

Idol is anything that distracts us from God. Evil and Demonic no matter how cute

- Fathers responsibility not to introduce idols into his family
 1. Money/Status/Stuff
 2. **Even the family itself can be an idol**; i.e. attraction for others to see

1 john 5:21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

28 Thus Midian was subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted **their heads no more.** And the country was quiet for forty years in the days of Gideon.

- **Lifted their heads no more:** Especially Oreb and Zeeb
- Land rested for 40 years

SUMMARY Gideon's Decline

III. Death of Gideon

29 Then Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and dwelt in his own house.

- **Gideon retired.** Not finishing well after the battles

30 Gideon had **seventy sons** who were his own offspring, for he had many wives. 31 And his concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, whose name he called **Abimelech.** 32 Now Gideon the son of Joash died at a good old age, and was buried in the tomb of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

- **Gideon dies:** Leaves behind...
 1. 70 Sons from many wives
 2. One son from concubine

**Abimelech means "My father the King" Named by Gideon?
Mixed up/Messed up after the Battle**

- **Danger of Retirement:** Too much time/Too much talk/Too much self-indulgence
- **Key:** Find where God is working and jump in. Far from done/much to offer but...

Make sure you are Spirit led in doing good/not led by the *do-gooder spirit*

E.g. I think I'll make an Ephod: Beware the do-gooder

33 So it was, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel again played the harlot with the **Baals**, and made **Baal-Berith** their god. 34 Thus the children of Israel did not remember the Lord their God, who had delivered them from the hands of all their enemies on every side; 35 nor did they show kindness to the house of Jerubbaal (Gideon) in accordance with the good he had done for Israel.

- **Gideon:** Began by Chop-chopping Idols. Ended w/ Chop-chopping his legacy with idols

It isn't enough for us to begin well with God. We must continue on throughout our whole Christian life. Gideon, in his later years, had to look back to see anything done for God. All those works were in the past [Guzik]

- **Judge dies people do evil...**

Gideon knowingly/unknowingly reinstated Idol worship because he was bored

1. **Israel's Idolatry** Worshiped Baal-Berith: Philistines [lord of the covenant]
2. **Israel forgot** God's goodness/personal intimate care
3. Israel even begins to treat Gideon's family unkindly

SUMMARY Death of Gideon