

I. Intro

A. Judges 6:1-6

*<sup>1</sup> Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years, <sup>2</sup> and the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel. Because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made for themselves the dens, the caves, and the strongholds which are in the mountains. <sup>3</sup> So it was, whenever Israel had sown, Midianites would come up; also Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them. <sup>4</sup> Then they would encamp against them and destroy the produce of the earth as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep nor ox nor donkey. <sup>5</sup> For they would come up with their livestock and their tents, coming in as numerous as locusts; both they and their camels were without number; and they would enter the land to destroy it. <sup>6</sup> So Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD. (Judges 6:1-6)*

B. Recap

II. Body

A. The Struggle Is Real: But Why?

1. Israel was Oppressed by the Midianites.
2. The Overarching Question: Why?
3. A gracious, yet truthful answer (6:7-10)

*<sup>7</sup> And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried out to the LORD because of the Midianites, <sup>8</sup> that the LORD sent a prophet to the children of Israel, who said to them, “Thus says the LORD God of Israel: ‘I brought you up from Egypt and brought you out of the house of bondage; <sup>9</sup> and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you and gave you their land. <sup>10</sup> Also I said to you, “I am the LORD your God; do not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell.” But you have not obeyed My voice.’” (Judges 6:7-10)*

- a. I brought you out of Egypt.

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- b. Instead of running to Me, you ran from Me.
- c. The reason is sin.

4. The reason for ALL oppression, bondage, calamity is sin.

- a. Not necessarily our sin. But sin nonetheless.
- b. Instead we make treaties and ceasefires with sin.

5. There Are Consequences To Sin

*<sup>1</sup>Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years (Judges 6:1)*

- a. Constant cycle where God would give Israel over to the fruit of their own sin.

*<sup>2</sup>and the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel. Because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made for themselves the dens, the caves, and the strongholds which are in the mountains. (Judges 6:2)*

6. **Unbelievable Opposition:** Coalition of Midianites, Amelekites and other nations from the East

- a. When the coalition of bullies arrived, the Israelites ran for the mountains
  - i. Living in dens and caves... in the mountains (6:2)
- b. The land was stripped of all sustenance.
  - i. Sheep, oxen and donkeys (6:4)
  - ii. Produce and crops completely destroyed (6:4)
  - iii. Couldn't even see Israel with seed. Dug up the seed out of the soil. (6:3)
- c. Israel was greatly impoverished. (6:6)
  - i. Greatly oppressed.

7. **Cultural Fallacy: Child of God = Struggle-Free Life**

- a. The fact that they were being punished for sin does not dispel the fact that they were the people of God.
  - i. "Whom the Lord loves, He chastens" (Heb. 12:6)

**B. Does God Still Deliver?**

1. God heard the cries of Israel and chose Gideon to deliver his people.

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- a. God often raised up judges as instruments to deliver Israel from oppression.

*<sup>11</sup> Now the Angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites. (Judges 6:11)*

- 2. Threshing Floor was usually a flat, smooth surface out in the open (Photo).
  - a. The sheaves of wheat (Photo) were laid on the surface and oxen were used to repeatedly trample and separate the edible part from the surrounding shell.
  - b. A fork (Photo) was then used to toss the grain in the open air so the wind could take away the light, useless chaff.
    - i. The heavy grain would fall back to the ground.
- 3. In the text, Gideon was threshing wheat in a sunken winepress (Photo)...
  - a. Climbed down (Photo) into the empty reservoir.
  - b. Next to a terebinth tree (Photo).
  - c. Gideon was clearly threshing wheat in fear of the Midianites.

*<sup>12</sup> And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, “The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor! (Judges 6:12)*

*<sup>13</sup> Gideon said to Him, “O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the LORD has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.” (Judges 6:13)*

- 4. Gideon asked a contemporary question: If the Lord is with us, then why has this happened?
- 5. The Lord is with you and I will use you to deliver.
  - a. Talk about comfort in the midst of a crisis?

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*<sup>12</sup> And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, “The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor! (Judges 6:12)*

6. You are a “Mighty Man of Valor”!!!!!!
  - a. Prophetic word.
    - i. When God looks at us, he doesn’t define who we are by where we are.
  - b. The One who calls those things that be not, as though they were.
  - c. God defines who we are based on whose we are.
  - d. God sees our destiny and purpose.

*Then the Lord turned and said to him and said, “Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have not I sent you? (Judges 6:14)*

- e. Go in the might that you have.
  - f. I’m sending you to deliver.
7. Before Gideon did anything in battle, He went and tore down some idols (**v. 25-27**)
  - a. Gideon feared his father’s household and the residents of the city, so he did it secretly at night.
    - i. But he did it.
  - b. The tearing down of family idols actually fueled the battle!
8. Gideon didn’t have a problem asking for confirmation.
  - a. Much like the Bereans
    - i. Received the word with all readiness
    - ii. Searched to find out if it were so
  - b. Gideon immediately acted in faith
    - i. He repented and tore down family idols.
  - c. But then He asked for clarification, verification and confirmation.
    - d. Prove it: Throw a Fleece (**6:36-40**)

*“If you will save Israel as you have said, ...I’m going to lay out this fleece”(6:36)*

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### C. Victory is Not The Result of Favorable Circumstances

<sup>1</sup> Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him rose early and encamped beside the well of Harod, so that the camp of the Midianites was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley. <sup>2</sup> And the LORD said to Gideon, “The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’ (Judges 7:1-2)

1. God doesn't mind crazy odds. (v. 2)
  - a. When God delivers, He invites us to partner, but he does all the work.
    - i. Ps. 42:8: “I am the Lord, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another...”
2. Numbers Won't Save You → The Cut Down (Slide)
  - a. 32,000 won't deliver you! (7:3)
  - b. The Fearful Were Dismissed (7:3)
    - i. 22,000 walked away (10,000)
  - c. The Normal Were Dismissed (7:4-7)
    - i. 9,700 walked away
    - ii. 300 Remained (7:7)

### D. War Clothes Are Necessary, But Victory Comes From the Lord

1. The Get Down

<sup>16</sup> Then he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet into every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and torches inside the pitchers. (Judges 7:16)

- a. Divide the 300 into 3 companies of 100 (7:16)

<sup>19</sup> So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outpost of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just as they had posted the watch; and they blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers that were in their hands. <sup>20</sup> Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers—they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing—and they cried, “The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!” (Judges 7:19-20)

- b. Sound Off the War Cry with trumpets (7:20a)

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<sup>20</sup> Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers... (v.20a)

c. Break the pitchers and lift the torch (7:20b)

*“...they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing...” (v. 20b)*

d. Shout unto the Lord with the voice of triumph (7:20c)

*“...and they cried, “The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!” (v. 20c)*

2. Every man simply stood still (7:21)

<sup>21</sup> And every man stood in his place all around the camp; and the whole army ran and cried out and fled. The Lord set every man’s sword against himself. (Judges 7:21)

a. Although it was tens of thousands vs. 300, the enemy fled in fear.

3. The Lord fought. The 300 didn’t (7:22)

<sup>22</sup> When the three hundred blew the trumpets, the LORD set every man’s sword against his companion throughout the whole camp; and the army fled to Beth Acacia, toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel Meholah, by Tabbath. (Judges 7:22)