

**The Mighty Warrior Series Part 8**  
**A Cautionary Tale of**  
**Christian Contention**  
**Judges 7:23-25/8:1-7**

**Judges 7:23** And the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after the Midianites.

**24** And Gideon sent messengers throughout all mount Ephraim, saying, Come down against the Midianites, and take before them the waters unto Bethbarah and Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together and took the waters unto Bethbarah and Jordan.

**25** And they took two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb; and they slew Oreb upon the rock Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the winepress of Zeeb, and pursued Midian, and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side Jordan.

**8:1** And the men of Ephraim said unto him, Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him sharply.

**2** And he said unto them, What have I done now in comparison of you? *Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?*

**3** God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their anger was abated toward him, when he had said that.

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

**5** And he said unto the men of Succoth, Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto the people that follow me; for they be faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian.

**6** And the princes of Succoth said, Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thine army?

**7** And Gideon said, Therefore when the LORD hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, then I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers.

### **Our Text**

“And Gideon said, Therefore when the LORD hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, then I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers.”

### **Judges 8:7**

- Can we contend with other Christians and be right with God?
  - What brings the contention?
- The Men of Ephraim contended with Gideon because he didn't call them to the original battle?
  - Gideon simply asked them a question and made an observation.
  - Gideon did call them to the victory, for he knew the battle was the Lord's.
  - So, Gideon said to them, “you men are more valiant and fruitful than I am, You have taken back what is yours and destroyed the leadership of the enemy!
  - What are we fighting about?

- Sometimes God calls folks later in the battle than He does others, the victory is no less theirs and no more ours...it is God's!
- Let us come together in that!
- Although did God call the other people of Israel?
  - Do we see Gideon seeking God's direction on calling the ones God had already sent home?
  - Was this Gideon or God?
  - I honestly don't know the answer, but want us to consider...
    - Always seek God's direction
    - Whether in victory or defeat
    - When in Victory we can lose sight of Who is giving the victory
    - In defeat we have lost sight of the promise of Victory
  - If you haven't figure out by now life is a series of victories and defeats, we can allow neither to change our status of Jehovah's Mighty Warriors
- Now Gideon and his 300 are tired...famished...so,
  - Gideon seeks help from others that are supposed to be in league with him.
  - They needed sustenance but were refused.
  - Gideon's response was very interesting...He said, "I'll deal with you all later, after I obey God".
  - So, who is in the wrong here?
    - Succoth and Penuel: Refused to help Gideon and the 300
    - They did so because they were bitter about not being part of what was going on

- They enquired about the victory wanted to know their part
- When they couldn't have the part they wanted they refused the part God may have had for them
- God wanted to use them to encourage and strengthen those in the battle
  - Their refusal to help brought consequences
  - They lost their leadership and their vision
- Gideon Promised Retaliation
  - Was Gideon right in doing so?
    - Did he seek God's will for how to deal with the contention?
    - Or did he react in the flesh?
  - What were the consequences?
    - He proved he was not to be trifled with
    - He then was sought by Israel to be their king
  - He refused this offer as that Gideon recognized God as Israel's King
  - But he did mess with their offerings and their worship
- Shouldn't Grace be Our Response in Contention?
  - What if Gideon had sought God's help in how to deal with contention?
    - God wanted Gideon to stand against the Midianites
    - God equipped Gideon to be a Mighty Warrior
  - Was it God's Will for Gideon to Judge his own people?

- You don't find God's Word calling Gideon a "judge over Israel" as you do others in the book of Judges
- Gideon was a deliverer of Israel

- **If We Don't Take the Fight to the Enemy, We Will Fight One Another**

- Isn't that a confused thing?
- Isn't that what the Midianites did?
- When we take our focus off of the faith that God has established in us, fear will replace it
  - Fear that we are missing out on something
  - Fear that someone else will be more valuable
  - Fear that we might not have enough
  - Fear that someone disrespecting us will make us look bad
- This is when we **MUST** stop and seek God's face
- Let His Word and His Spirit make us to know His vision for us
- Stand strong as the Mighty Warrior He sees
- Encourage our fellow Warriors to do the same
- Pick up the ones who may have fallen and help them stand again
- **Put on the Whole Armor of God and Stand in the Victory Only God Provides!**