

MIGHTY MAN OF VALOR!

Jdg 6:11 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.

Jdg 6:12 And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said to him, "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!"

The story of Gideon gives us rich treasures for our Christian life. The stories of the Old Testament were written for our instruction and learning. [Rom 15:4] We pick up the story with Gideon with the camera zooming in on a young Jew hiding in a winepress. As he would peek over the edge from time to time, he was busy threshing some meager stocks of wheat that he had just harvested. He was hiding from the Midianites. He was hiding because the Midianites had gained control over his land. They oppressed Israel and took away from them whatever they grew and gained. As soon as a small crop would come up and be harvested, the Midianites would rush down and take it all. He could not seem to get ahead. When he would make some progress and get a little, the enemy would rush in and take it! That is why Gideon was hiding in the winepress so the Midianites would not see him and come and take away his wheat. It is in this setting the Angel of the Lord came and appeared to him. The Angel of the Lord is the pre-incarnate manifestation of the Lord Jesus. The Angel of the Lord said to Him, "**The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!**" Gideon then looked around expecting to see someone else standing behind him that the Angel was addressing. But he was alone. The angel must have meant him! Gideon responded:

*Jdg 6:13 And Gideon said unto him, **Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us?** and **where be all his miracles** which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but **now the LORD hath forsaken us**, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.*

Gideon responded that if the Lord was with him, then why were bad things happening? He asked where are the miracles and power of God?

Gideon was placing the responsibility for his defeat and lack upon God! God had come to place the responsibility on Gideon to rise up in his true identity and covenant rights that were given to him! The Angel then responds:

(Jdg 6:14) And the LORD looked upon him, and said, **Go in this thy might**, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?

The Angel told Gideon that the Lord was with Him [He was in covenant] and he was a mighty man of valor [his identity]. God was basically saying, "Gideon, don't blame me or wait on me to deliver you from the enemy. I have given you my covenant [I am with you] and have given you all the power you need to defeat this enemy!"

Now the Angel tells Gideon to get up from hiding and go in this they might and deliver Israel. Gideon instead recounts his weakness and defeated position and history.:

Jdg 6:15 And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? **behold, my family is poor** in Manasseh, and **I am the least in my father's house.**

Gideon responds by telling the Lord that he was from a poor family and that he was so little and insignificant as a person and in his standing. Gideon had the problem that many Christians have today. They have a victim mentality. They see themselves as powerless and insignificant. They see themselves as the helpless victim that is being harassed by the enemy and never allowed to get ahead. Gideon blamed God for not performing miracles and delivering him and his people as they hid from the enemy. The problem with Gideon and with many Christians today is that they do not know their identity in the Lord and are ignorant of the covenant they have with God. The Angel of the Lord came to Gideon to teach him about his identity and the covenant he had with God so that he would rise up to stand victorious against his enemies and live in freedom. The Lord said, "**The Lord is with you!**" This is covenant language. Gideon was a covenant man of God, which placed God on his side. Because of this covenant it gave Gideon a powerful identity, "**you mighty man of valor**" Gideon saw himself differently than God saw him. Many Christians see themselves differently than God sees them. They see themselves weak, defeated, and a victim. God sees them strong, victorious, and righteous.

Gideon had adopted the mindset of his family. He was told all his life that his family was poor and that he was insignificant and would not amount to anything. He had to change the mindset of his family culture that limited him and kept him bound by the enemy. Many Christians never break free from the culture of their natural family they were born in. They identify with the negative traits of their family. Gideon had to break free from the identity of his earthly family and take on his identity in God. This identity is based on covenant. Our identity as Christians comes because of the New Covenant and the finished work of Jesus. Before Gideon could defeat the enemy he had to break down the idols of his family that had controlled him and dictated to him all his life.

Jdg 6:25 And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, **Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath**, and cut down the grove that *is* by it:

God's first instruction to Gideon was to throw down the altar of his father and cut down the grove of idolatry that was by it. His father served the devil. He worshipped a lie. Since he worshipped a lie he taught lies to his family. Gideon had to break down the lies of his family before he could rise up in his identity in God. What lies do you believe from your family that is opposite to the Word of God? These must be broken down and rejected. If you are born again you are not weak, defeated, prone to sickness, poor, good for nothing, never get ahead, not good enough, a victim, shameful, dirty, or a sinner. What lie have you believed that you got from your family? Those lies will limit you. It is time to break them down. You are a covenant man or woman of God and God is with you! That means you are a man or woman of valor! This means you have inner strength and might in which you can go for God and see victory in your life!

Once God convinced Gideon that He was indeed with Him and was calling him to defeat the enemies that had controlled him, it was time Gideon take some action against the enemy. Gideon rallied his troops for battle against the host of the Midianites. Gideon gathered 32,000 men to fight against the Midianites. This number was far less than the host of Midianites, which appeared to be without number! Gideon was ready for battle when God spoke up. Gideon was hoping to hear that God was going to bring more men to him to fight, but that is not what God said.

Jdg 7:2 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.

Jdg 7:3 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.

God had the audacity to say that Gideon had too many men to fight with. Gideon had too many resources left for him to trust in. With 32,000 men in battle, the victory could be attributed to Gideon's superior military prowess as a general and the army's superior strength and valor. The problem with Gideon up till that point was a self-focus which produced fear in him. Self-focus and self-dependence will always produce fear. It was time for Gideon to trust fully in the Lord and in the covenant he had with God. God told Gideon to tell everyone that was fearful and afraid to go home. The bible reports that twenty-two thousand men got up and left! **It did not say twenty-two men left. It says twenty-two thousand men left immediately.** They all said, "Thank God! We are terrified to fight all these Midianites!" They all slunk back home. God was peeling away all those who had the Gideon complex. He was revealing that any believer that is self-focused and self-reliant will be crippled by fear. Fear was the very first thing that gripped Adam and Eve after they abandoned their faith covenant with God and trusted in their own works and righteousness. Their self-focus and their self-dependency created great fear and insecurity in their life. The problem with Gideon in the wine-press and with the twenty-two thousand was that they were **RELIGIOUS**. They were self-focused and self-reliant. Therefore, they were fearful. Fear is the opposite of faith. Faith rests upon the grace and covenant of God and looks at God. Fear is looking at yourself and your own abilities. When those abilities are overmatched by the enemy and circumstances then fear is produced. God was revealing that the self-righteous will never be able to defeat their enemies. The fearful will never be able to stand victorious against their foes.

Gideon was left with only ten thousand men. Gideon started to sweat! Now two thirds of his army was gone and the Midianites were just as populous as before! Gideon however was ready to go to battle. Not so fast! God spoke again! Gideon was hoping to hear God say that he had found a lot more men that were not afraid and they were on their way to help, but no...

Jdg 7:4 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.

Jdg 7:5 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.**

Jdg 7:6 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.

Jdg 7:7 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.

God said that there were yet too many to fight with. There might still be the temptation to take the credit for the battle by superior military acumen and prowess. God wanted to pare down the troops some more. God told Gideon to take the remaining troops down to the water's edge and let them drink. He was to watch how each man drank. Those that dunked their head in the water to drink were to be released from the army and told to go home. Those who kept their head up and lapped the water from their cupped hand would be those to go and defeat the enemy. Gideon looked and 9,700 of the men dunked their head lustily in the water so they could quickly satisfy their lust for water. This next test was to reveal those who lived to satisfy the lusts of their flesh. These men were not RELIGIOUS, but they were CARNAL. The flesh has two capabilities. The first is to be self-righteous and religious. The second is to be licentious. There are some believers that have rejected living by legalism, but they live to please and gratify their flesh. They think that since they are free from Law that they can do what they please and satisfy their carnal desires. A believer is set free from the Law, but they are not to be **lawless**. Paul the Apostle said that he was free from the Law- his own efforts to become righteous by his own works, but he was **not without law unto God**. [[1Co 9:21](#)] Paul lived by the **law of faith** in the grace of God. [[Rom 3:27](#)] If we place our faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ and receive the gift of righteousness then we will neither live under the legalism and neither will we be controlled by the lusts of the flesh. The Spirit of Christ will work through us to put to death

the sinful deeds of the body and produce the fruit of holiness in and through us. [[Romans 8:13](#), [Gal. 5:22-23](#)] Those that are living lawless cannot defeat the enemy.

There are several lessons we can draw from by these two tests the Lord told Gideon to give those that followed him. First, the first group that God puts his finger upon that are not able to defeat the enemy and that are not fit for battle are those who are **RELIGIOUS** and therefore fearful! This group comprised two-thirds of the people. Only one third were **CARNAL** and living to gratify the lusts of their flesh. This reveals that in the body of Christ that self-righteousness, religion, and fear are the main reason for spiritual defeat and there are a lot more Christians that are religious than are living in sin! God put his finger **first** on this group and thus revealed they were the biggest reason for defeat among the people of God! This is exactly what happened when Jesus came on the scene in the New Testament. He railed against the religious crowd first and then spoke to those living in sin! God does not ignore those living in the lusts of their flesh, but He cannot tolerate self-dependence and fear [lack of faith, self-reliance, self-righteousness]. God has more tolerance for those who are carnal than those that are religious and self-reliant, but God will deal with the carnal as well. The carnal cannot stand victorious!

Gideon was left with only three hundred men. He was left with about 1 percent of the original army! Now he was really sweating! He only had a remnant left. God is always about using and working through a remnant in the scriptures. It has always been a remnant that won battles and was used of God greatly. God does not need a great amount of people to accomplish His ends. He just needs a remnant of believers that will place their trust in His grace and upon the covenant given to them! In many churches, pastors are discouraged about how many people are leaving. They are focused upon the religious, fearful, and carnal. However, God has a remnant in every church. God wants to do mighty exploits through the remnant! It only takes a few to do mighty things in the kingdom! **The remnant wins by faith in and acting upon the covenant!** These three hundred of Gideon were ready for battle. God gave Gideon the instructions for battle and in these battle plans reveal how the remnant of God wins the battle over the enemy. The plans given to Gideon are still God's plan for the remnant today!

[Jdg 7:16](#) And he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and **he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty earthen vessels, and lamps within the earthen vessels.**

Jdg 7:17 And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be *that*, as I do, so shall ye do.

Jdg 7:18 When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that *are* with me, then **blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and shout, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.**

Gideon told his remnant to take a trumpet in one hand, and an earthen vessel with a lighted lamp [torch] inside of it. They were to blow their trumpets, shout "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon", and then break the earthen vessel and let their light shine! This would defeat the enemy. This would throw the enemy into confusion and make them flee! They did what they were told.

Jdg 7:20 And the **three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow *withal*: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.**

Jdg 7:21 And **they stood every man in his place** round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled.

Jdg 7:22 And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Bethshittah in Zererath, *and* to the border of Abelmeholah, unto Tabbath.

They blew their trumpets, shouted, and broke their earthen vessels, and let their lights shine in the dark night. The enemy was routed. What is the significance in the battle plan that God gave Gideon? The trumpet stands for proclamation in the bible. Believers are to proclaim the gospel of grace over themselves and to others. They are to blow their gospel trumpet and proclaim the covenant they have with God through Jesus Christ. Many believers are only trumpeting their fear, doubt, and problems. Believers are to trumpet [proclaim] their identity in Christ. They are to trumpet their blood bought covenant rights! Gideon also shouted, "**The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon**" This shows us that we must loudly proclaim and rely on the **sword of the Lord- the Word of God**. We are to shout out what God says about us and to us. It is not enough to have the sword of the Lord. **It must also become your sword!** It is not enough for God to have spoken His Word, you must speak it as well. God uses His Word as a sword. It becomes our sword when we speak God's word! The trumpet and sword is

our proclamation of our righteousness based upon the finished work of Christ and the covenant we have with God. This will cause fear to go from us as we look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith! [\[Heb. 12:2\]](#) This was not sufficient though! They still had to break the earthen vessel and let their light shine out in the darkness so the enemy could see it. The lamp in the earthen vessel represents New Covenant believers!

[2Co 4:6](#) For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

[2Co 4:7](#) But we have this treasure [light] in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

God has placed his burning light within our re-born spirits! However, this light is covered by our earthen vessel- our natural life- our flesh. The flesh must be broken before the light of the glory of God can shine out in the darkness. The flesh and flesh patterns must be broken in our lives before we can see victory over the enemy! It is by placing our faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and our union with His work that the flesh will be broken. Sin will not have dominion over us because we are under grace, and not under the Law. [\[Romans 6:14\]](#) The flesh is broken when we proclaim that the old sinner we used to be has died with Christ and we are born again a righteous child of God. By relying on the finished work of Christ, the gift of righteousness, and our new identity in Him, the Spirit of Christ within us will break and put to death the deeds of the flesh! [\[Rom 8:13\]](#)

Once Gideon's army blew the trumpets, shouted, and broke their earthen vessels, it says that each man STOOD IN HIS PLACE! They did not run away in fear. They did not run forward to try to conquer the enemy. The STOOD IN THEIR PLACE GIVEN TO THEM! Christians are not called to defeat the enemy! He is already defeated! We are called to stand on our victory ground blowing our trumpet, swinging the sword of the Lord, and to break our earthen vessel, so the light can shine! There is no need to move from this position. The enemy will flee! [\[Ephesians 6:10-13\]](#) tells us to **STAND** firm wearing the ARMOR OF GOD. We must stand upon the victory ground of Jesus and His covenant.

If you are born again you are a mighty man or woman of valor. It is time to rise up and grab your trumpet in one hand and the sword of the Lord in the other. It is time for your earthen vessel to break and to let your light

shine! Rise up in your covenant rights and your identity in Christ and take dominion! It is time to be free!