

Our Fight is an Internal Battle

Rev. Eugene P. Williams

October 12, 2021

John 16:33

“I have told you these things, so that you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Thilipsis

- Trouble
- Tribulation
- Persecution
- Affliction
- Distress
- Pressure

Faith is the Answer

- Emunah = Faith
 - Certainty in God
 - Steadfastness
 - Persistence
- Pistis = Faith
 - Moral Conviction
 - Religious Truth
 - Assurance
 - Belief
 - Trust

Judges 7:1-23 NRSV

1 Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the troops that were with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod; and the camp of Midian was north of them, below the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

2 The Lord said to Gideon, “The troops with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand. Israel would only take the credit away from me, saying, ‘My own hand has delivered me.’ **3** Now therefore proclaim this in the hearing of the troops, ‘Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home.’” Thus Gideon sifted them out; twenty-two thousand returned, and ten thousand remained.

Judges 7:1-23 NRSV

4 Then the Lord said to Gideon, “The troops are still too many; take them down to the water and I will sift them out for you there. When I say, ‘This one shall go with you,’ he shall go with you; and when I say, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ he shall not go.” 5 So he brought the troops down to the water; and the Lord said to Gideon, “All those who lap the water with their tongues, as a dog laps, you shall put to one side; all those who kneel down to drink, putting their hands to their mouths, you shall put to the other side.” 6 The number of those that lapped was three hundred; but all the rest of the troops knelt down to drink water

Judges 7:1-23 NRSV

7 Then the Lord said to Gideon, “With the three hundred that lapped I will deliver you, and give the Midianites into your hand. Let all the others go to their homes.” **8** So he took the jars of the troops from their hands, and their trumpets; and he sent all the rest of Israel back to their own tents, but retained the three hundred. The camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

9 That same night the Lord said to him, “Get up, attack the camp; for I have given it into your hand. **10** But if you fear to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah; **11** and you shall hear what they say, and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to attack the camp.” Then he went down with his servant Purah to the outposts of the armed men that were in the camp.

Judges 7:1-23 NRSV

12 The Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the east lay along the valley as thick as locusts; and their camels were without number, countless as the sand on the seashore. **13** When Gideon arrived, there was a man telling a dream to his comrade; and he said, “I had a dream, and in it a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian, and came to the tent, and struck it so that it fell; it turned upside down, and the tent collapsed.” **14** And his comrade answered, “This is no other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, a man of Israel; into his hand God has given Midian and all the army.”

Judges 7:1-23 NRSV

15 When Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped; and he returned to the camp of Israel, and said, "Get up; for the Lord has given the army of Midian into your hand." **16** After he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and put trumpets into the hands of all of them, and empty jars, with torches inside the jars, **17** he said to them, "Look at me, and do the same; when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. **18** When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then you also blow the trumpets around the whole camp, and shout, 'For the Lord and for Gideon!'"

Judges 7:1-23 NRSV

19 So Gideon and the hundred who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just set the watch; and they blew the trumpets and smashed the jars that were in their hands. **20** So the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the jars, holding in their left hands the torches, and in their right hands the trumpets to blow; and they cried, “A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!” **21** Every man stood in his place all around the camp, and all the men in camp ran; they cried out and fled.

Judges 7:1-23 NRSV

22 When they blew the three hundred trumpets, the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow and against all the army; and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath.

23 And the men of Israel were called out from Naphtali and from Asher and from all Manasseh, and they pursued after the Midianites.

Deuteronomistic Historians

Ancient scholars that wrote, compiled, and edited the books Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, and 1 & 2 Kings.

Purpose & Theology

1. Continues the unfolding story of Israel's life in the land promised to their ancestors. In contrast to the book of Joshua where the people were faithful and successful, in the book of Judges depicts how even God's chosen people broke covenant with God, resulting in oppression at the hands of their neighbors.
2. The book explains that the fault of Israel's oppression lay in Israel's collective sin and not in God's failure to keep His covenant promises. God was longsuffering and merciful as he continued to raise up saviors to deliver Israel even though they repeatedly forgot him and worshipped the gods of Canaan.
3. Judges also demonstrates that God held Israel to account for its moral and religious behavior

Purpose & Theology

4. The book shows that the Lord, not the Canaanite deities, is the God of history and salvation. The God of Israel is the true “Judge” who gave Israel into the hands of their enemies and then by Divine Spirit empowered deliverers to give them victory over their oppressors.
5. Judges illustrates the kind of moral decay that occurred when there was absence of godly leadership. Without godly leadership, the people drifted from the objective standard of God’s word and each person did as they saw fit. It also shows how the judges themselves were susceptible to a decline in their own spiritual condition.
6. The book of Judges also shows the power of faith and prayer.

“Judge”

The term “judge” does not refer to those who preside in courts of law in our modern society. Even though some of them exercised judicial functions, most of them acted primarily as military leaders. They were charismatic, yet very flawed and human leaders who arose in times of emergency and were selected by the Spirit of God because of their ability rather than their hereditary lineage or status.



The questions is...

Have you ever felt like you were stuck in a self-destructive cycle that you seemingly couldn't get out of? What did you do or what are you currently doing to fight your way out of that cycle?

The Judges

- Othniel
- Ehud
- Shamgar
- Deborah
- Gideon
- Tola

- Jair
- Jephthah
- Ibzan
- Elon
- Abdon
- Samson

Judges 6:12-13 NRSV

- **12** The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, “The LORD is with you, you mighty warrior.” **13** Gideon answered him, “But sir, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our ancestors recounted to us, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the LORD has cast us off, and given us into the hand of Midian.

But the question is...

What circumstances and situations in
the past or the present have
overshadowed your faith?

Judges 6:15 NRSV

15 He responded, “But sir, how can I deliver Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.”

Judges 7:2 NRSV

2 The LORD said to Gideon, “The troops with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand. Israel would only take the credit away from me, saying, ‘My own hand has delivered me.’”

Trust God to
sanctify us

Trust God when
we don't
understand



But the question is...

How do you respond when you don't understand what God is doing in your life? Why do you respond that way?

Trust God to
Deliver
