Gideon

Judges 6–7

The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD gave them into the hand of Midian seven years. For whenever the Israelites planted crops, the Midianites would come up against them. They would come like locusts[1] in number. They laid waste the land as they came in. The people of Israel cried out for help to the LORD.

Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said, "The LORD is with you, O mighty man of valor. Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian."

The Spirit of the LORD clothed Gideon, and he sounded the trumpet, and he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they went up to meet them.

The LORD said to Gideon, "The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.' Now therefore proclaim, 'Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home.'" Then 22,000 of the people returned, and 10,000 remained.

But the LORD said to Gideon, "The people are still too many. Take them down to the water. Every one who laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set by himself." And the number of those who lapped was 300 men.

The LORD said to Gideon, "With the 300 men who lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hand."

The Midianites lay along the valley like locusts. Gideon divided the 300 men into three companies and put trumpets into the hands of all of them and empty jars, with torches inside the jars. He said to them, "Look at me, and do likewise. When I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. When I blow the trumpet, then blow the trumpets also on every side of all the camp and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.'"

They blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. They held in their left hands the torches. When they blew the 300 trumpets, the LORD set the Midianites against one another and against all the army. And the army fled.

Explanatory Notes

[1]Grasshoppers.



"Shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon'."

For Reflection

1. Why did the people of Israel cry out to the Lord?
2. For what reason did God want only 300 soldiers to go into battle against the Midianites?
3. Read the verse in "Words to Remember." After reading the story of Gideon, how do we know this passage is true?

Words to Remember

It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. *Psalm 118:8*

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