

Gideon - Part 4

Judges 7

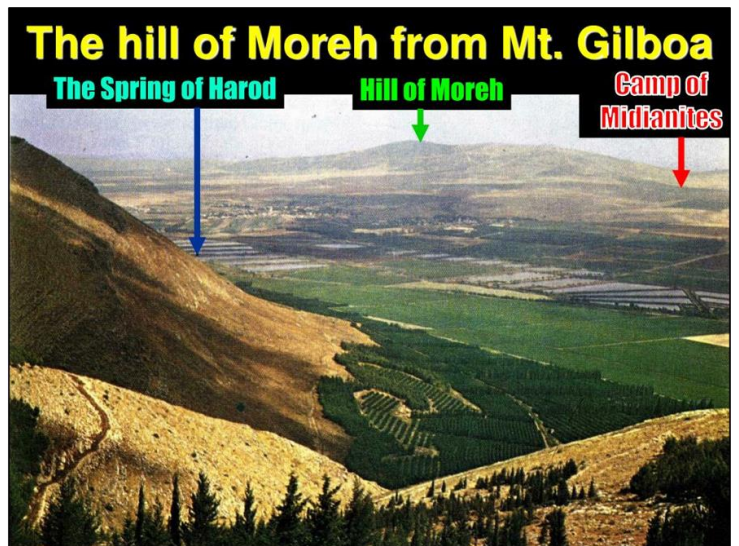
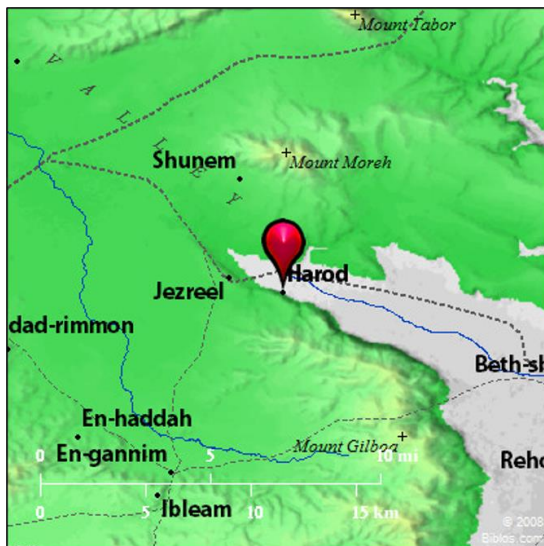
Jay Hohfeler

REVIEW OF CHAPTER 6

- **The Angel of the Lord (pre-incarnate Christ) appears to Gideon in physical form:**
 - Calls him to:
 - **“Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?”**
 - **“But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man.”**
 - Gideon wants assurance that he is talking to God
- **Christ:**
 - Patiently waits on Gideon to prepare a special meal
 - Consumes the meal with fire (classic representation of God)
 - Calls Gideon to tear down his father’s idols & altars to Baal & Asherah
- **Holy Spirit is moving in Israel:**
 - Town erupts in anger, but Joash (Gideon’s father) defends Yahweh against Baal
 - Gideon finds favor with town & nearby clans
 - 32,000 Israelite men rally to front lines behind Gideon
 - Gideon gets a new name: Jerubbaal, (“Baal Fighter”)
- **Midianites, Amalekites & People of the East arrive to plunder Israel’s harvest & herds**
 - **³³ Now all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the East came together, and they crossed the Jordan and encamped in the Valley of Jezreel.**
- **Once assembled, Gideon is unsure of whether God is really calling him to attack**
 - Places a fleece of wool and asks for a sign from God
 - The Lord is patient and bears with Gideon... twice

Gideon's Three Hundred Men

7 Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod. And the camp of Midian was north of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.





² The Lord said to Gideon, "The people with you are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel boast over me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.' ³ Now therefore proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, 'Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home and hurry away from Mount Gilead.'" Then 22,000 of the people returned, and 10,000 remained.

⁴ And the Lord said to Gideon, “The people are still too many. Take them down to the water, and I will test them for you there, and anyone of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall go with you,’ shall go with you, and anyone of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ shall not go.” ⁵ So he brought the people down to the water. And the Lord said to Gideon, “Every one who laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set by himself. Likewise, every one who kneels down to drink.” ⁶ And the number of those who lapped, putting their hands to their mouths, was 300 men, but all the rest of the people knelt down to drink water. ⁷ And the Lord said to Gideon, “With the 300 men who lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hand, and let all the others go every man to his home.” ⁸ So the people took provisions in their hands, and their trumpets. And he sent all the rest of Israel every man to his tent, but retained the 300 men. And the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

32,000 (22,000)	Israelite fighting men Afraid; can go home

10,000 (9,700)	Still too many Lapped water w/ hands to mouth

300	Sufficient army (laughable in human terms)



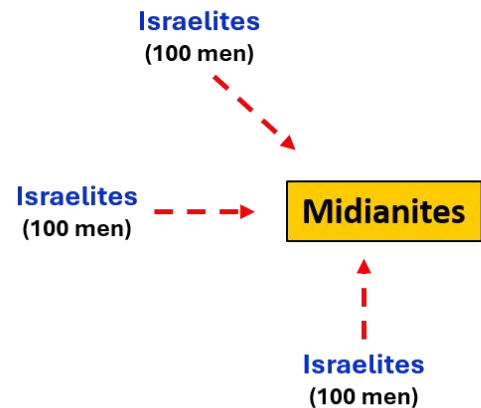
No virtue either way—just a method for God to reduce the number.

⁹ That same night the Lord said to him, “Arise, go down against the camp, for I have given it into your hand. ¹⁰ But if you are afraid to go down, go down to the camp with Purah your servant. ¹¹ And you shall hear what they say, and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to go down against the camp.” Then he went down with Purah his servant to the outposts of the armed men who were in the camp. ¹² And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the people of the East lay along the valley like locusts in abundance, and their camels were without

number, as the sand that is on the seashore in abundance. ¹³ When Gideon came, behold, a man was telling a dream to his comrade. And he said, "Behold, I dreamed a dream, and behold, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian and came to the tent and struck it so that it fell and turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat." ¹⁴ And his comrade answered, "This is no other than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given into his hand Midian and all the camp."

¹⁵ As soon as Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped. And he returned to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise, for the Lord has given the host of Midian into your hand." ¹⁶ And he 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. ¹⁷ And he said to them, "Look at me, and do likewise. 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 blow the trumpets also on every side of all the camp and shout, 'For the Lord and for Gideon.'"

Shofar horns

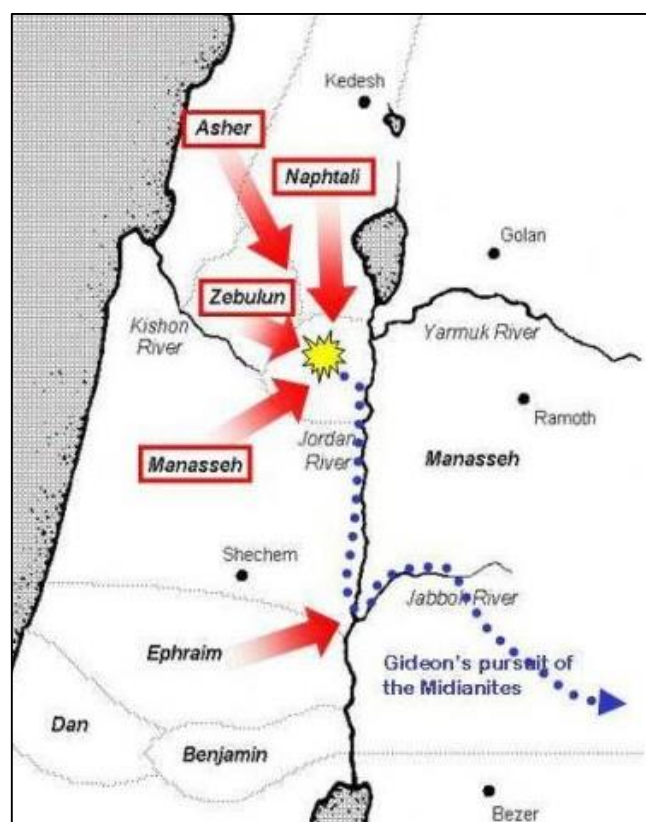


Gideon divides his 300 into three groups. They come at the Midianite camp on 3 sides (100 men each)--leaving one side open for the Midianite's retreat and Israel's pursuit (joined by other tribes).

Gideon Defeats Midian

¹⁹ So Gideon and the hundred men 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 Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the jars. They held in their left hands the torches, and in their right hands the trumpets to blow. And they cried out, "A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!" ²¹ Every man stood in his place around the camp, and all the army ran. They cried out and fled. ²² When they blew the 300 trumpets, the Lord set every man's sword against his comrade 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 Midian.

²⁴ Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites and capture the waters against them, as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan." So all the men of **Ephraim** were called out, and they captured the waters as far as Beth-barah, and also the Jordan. ²⁵ And they captured the two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb. Then they pursued Midian, and they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon across the Jordan.








What happened and Who was behind it?

- The enemy was completely surprised [GOD]
- Some fled [GOD]
- Some turned on themselves [GOD]
- Israel didn't fight; just pursued [GOD]

²¹ **Every man stood in his place around the camp, and all the army ran.**

Common thread in chapters 6 & 7 is:

- The WEAKNESS of Israel & Gideon
- How God's character is displayed most fully through their weakness

WEAKNESS	ILLUMINATES	GOD'S CHARACTER (WHO HE IS)
Israel's loss of devotion to God		Unconditional love for His own Kept His promises to love, keep, rescue
Gideon's hiding, fear, poverty		Initiating love
Gideon's fear of family Israel's apostasy in all tribes		Ability change hearts/minds
Gideon's repeated need for assurance		Patience & long-suffering
No military strength or experience		Power