

Gideon Series – Part 5

Judges 8

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Review of Chapter 7

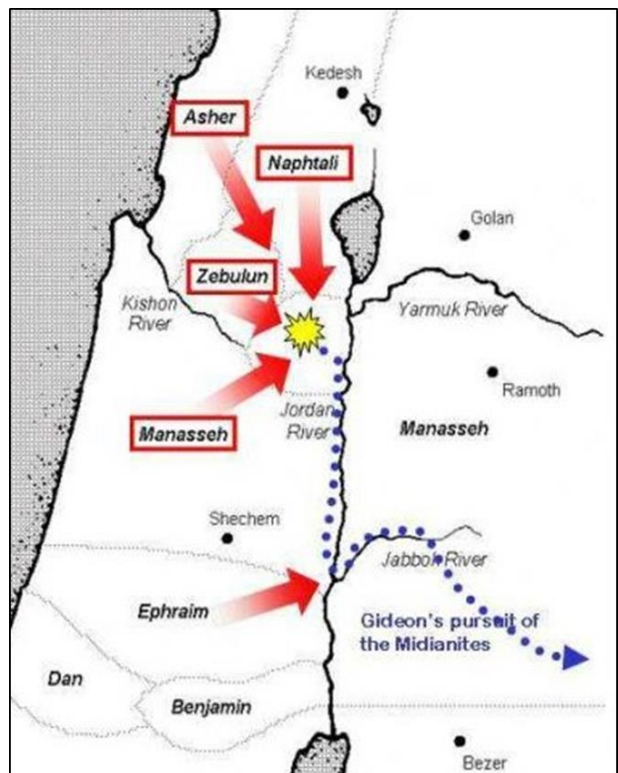
- Holy Spirit moves and Gideon rallies several tribes to join the fight against Midianites
- Israel outnumbered on the battlefield at Valley of Jezreel: Israel (32,000) vs Midianites (135,000)
- God reduces Israel's headcount:
 - 32,000 (too many) – **“lest Israel boast over me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’”**
 - 22,000 (still too many) **‘Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home...’**
 - 10,000 (still too many) **“Take them down to the water, and I will test them for you there”**
 - 300 (sufficient) **“With the 300...I will save you and give the Midianites into your hand”**
- God gently accommodates Gideon's fear; Israel shows up ready with 300 torches, clay jars & horns
- God sends enemy into confusion; kills each other and flees (Israel stands and watches)
 - **Every man stood in his place around the camp, and all the army ran.**
- Israel pursues remaining 15,000 Midianites into hill country and east of Jordan
- Ephraim joins the chase and kills 2 princes of Midian

Principle:

In God's economy, there is a “necessity of weakness” that displays His power ever more fully.

Judges 7

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.



Chapter 8

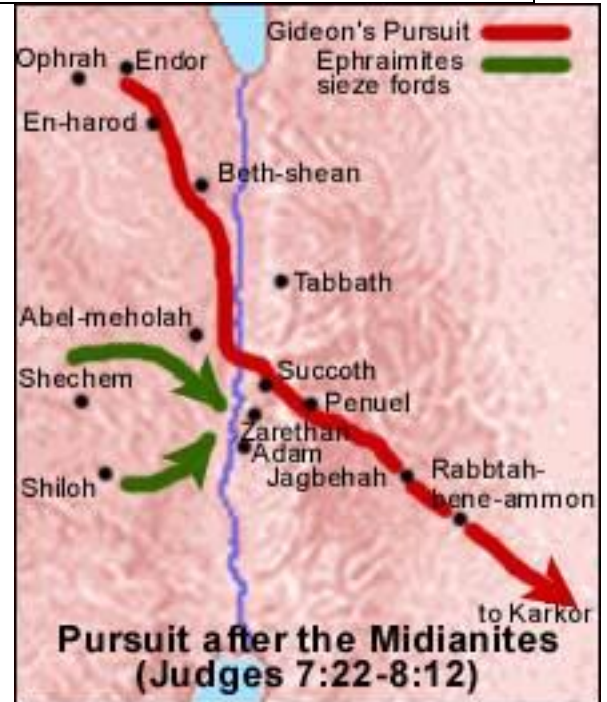
Section 1 – Ephraim’s Complaint (vs1-3)

Gideon Defeats Zebah and Zalmunna

8 Then the men of Ephraim said to him, “What is this that you have done to us, not to call us when you went to fight against Midian?” And they accused him fiercely. ² And he said to them, “What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim better than the grape harvest of Abiezer? ³ God has given into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. What have I been able to do in comparison with you?” Then their anger against him subsided when he said this.

Section 2 Gideon’s Spiritual Descent (vs 4-18)

⁴ And Gideon came to the Jordan and crossed over, he and the 300 men who were with him, exhausted yet pursuing. ⁵ So he said to the men of **Succoth**, “Please give loaves of bread to the people who follow me, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian.” ⁶ And the officials of Succoth said, “Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hand, that we should give bread to your army?” ⁷ So Gideon said, “Well then, when the LORD has given Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, I will flail your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers.” ⁸ And from there he went up to **Penuel**, and spoke to them in the same way, and the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered. ⁹ And he said to the men of Penuel, “When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower.”



¹⁰ Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in **Karkor** with their army, about 15,000 men, all who were left of all the army of the people of the East, for there had fallen 120,000 men who drew the sword. ¹¹ And Gideon went up by the way of the tent dwellers east of Nobah and Jogbehah and attacked the army, for the army felt secure. ¹² And Zebah and Zalmunna fled, and he pursued them and captured the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and he threw all the army into a panic.

These are Israelite towns; why would they not help the 300 men?

¹³ Then Gideon the son of Joash returned from the battle by the ascent of Heres. ¹⁴ And he captured a young man of Succoth and questioned him. And he wrote down for him the officials and elders of Succoth, seventy-seven men. ¹⁵ And he came to the men of Succoth and said, "Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you taunted me, saying, 'Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hand, that we should give bread to your men who are exhausted?'" ¹⁶ And he took the elders of the city, and he took thorns of the wilderness and briers and with them taught the men of Succoth a lesson. ¹⁷ And he broke down the tower of Penuel and killed the men of the city.

¹⁸ Then he said to Zebah and Zalmunna, "Where are the men whom you killed at Tabor?" They answered, "As you are, so were they. Every one of them resembled the son of a king." ¹⁹ And he said, "They were my brothers, the sons of my mother. As the LORD lives, if you had saved them alive, I would not kill you." ²⁰ So he said to Jether his firstborn, "Rise and kill them!" But the young man did not draw his sword, for he was afraid, because he was still a young man. ²¹ Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, "Rise yourself and fall upon us, for as the man is, so is his strength." And Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and he took the crescent ornaments that were on the necks of their camels.

How has Gideon changed?

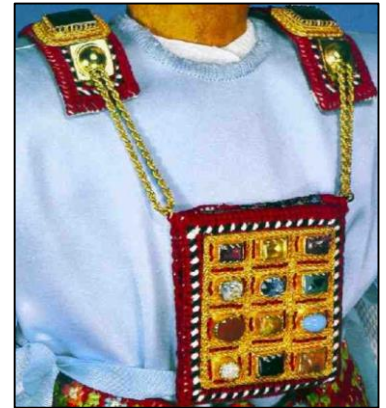
Principle:

No one (not Gideon or Israel) is evidencing a changed life after God's hand of rescue. Believers operating without continued gratitude & amazement for God's deliverance, forfeit the grace that could be theirs.

↓
Joy
Growth
Security
Relationship

Gideon's Ephod

²² Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us, you and your son and your grandson also, for you have saved us from the hand of Midian." ²³ Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you; the LORD will rule over you." ²⁴ And Gideon said to them, "Let me make a request of you: every one of you give me the earrings from his spoil." (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.) ²⁵ And they answered, "We will willingly give them." And they spread a cloak, and every man threw in it the earrings of his spoil. ²⁶ And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was 1,700 shekels of gold, besides the crescent ornaments and the pendants and the purple garments worn by the kings of Midian, and besides the collars that were around the necks of their camels. ²⁷ And Gideon made an ephod of it and put it in his city, in Ophrah. And all Israel whored after it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and to his family. ²⁸ So Midian was subdued before the people of Israel, and they raised their heads no more. And the land had rest for forty years in the days of Gideon.



The Death of Gideon

²⁹ Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and lived in his own house. ³⁰ Now Gideon had seventy sons, his own offspring, for he had many wives. ³¹ And his concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, and he called his name Abimelech. ³² And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age and was buried in the tomb of Joash his father, at Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

³³ As soon as Gideon died, the people of Israel turned again and whored after the Baals and made Baal-berith their god. ³⁴ And the people of Israel did not remember the LORD their God, who had delivered them from the hand of all their enemies on every side, ³⁵ and they did not show steadfast love to the family of Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) in return for all the good that he had done to Israel.

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH...

GIDEON?	THE PEOPLE?
<i>He is chasing...</i>	<i>They are chasing...</i>
Pride & Position	Security (anywhere they can get it)
Trust in Self	Spirituality (apart from God)
Self-indulgence	Peace (but without obedience)
Spiritual Success (but showing hypocrisy)	

Deuteronomy 17

Laws Concerning Israel's Kings

¹⁴ “When you come to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,’ ¹⁵ you may indeed set a king over you whom the LORD your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. ¹⁶ Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the LORD has said to you, ‘You shall never return that way again.’ ¹⁷ And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold.

Principle #2

I will fail at pivot points in my life if I’m living one way externally and another way internally. What’s in my heart eventually shows through and I’ll follow my heart in the long run—even if it’s wrong.

Hebrews 11

³² And what more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of **Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, of David and Samuel and the prophets— ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight.**