

Judges 7 Gideon's Three Hundred Chosen Men

Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him got up early, and camped beside the spring of Harod; and the camp of Midian was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley.

2 And the LORD said to Gideon, "The people who are with you are too many for Me to hand Midian over to them, otherwise Israel would become boastful, saying, 'My own power has saved me.' 3 Now therefore come, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, 'Whoever is afraid and worried, is to return and leave Mount Gilead.'" So twenty-two thousand from the people returned, but ten thousand remained.

4 Then the LORD said to Gideon, "The people are still too many; bring them down to the water and I will test them for you there. So it shall be that he of whom I say to you, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go with you; but everyone of whom I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go." 5 So he brought the people down to the water. Then the LORD said to Gideon, "You shall put everyone who laps the water with his tongue as a dog laps in one group, and everyone who kneels down to drink in another."

6 Now the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men; but all the rest of the people kneeled down to drink water. 7 And the LORD said to Gideon, "I will save you with the three hundred men who lapped, and will hand the Midianites over to you; so have all the other people go, each man to his home." 8 So the three hundred men took the people's provisions and their trumpets in their hands. And Gideon dismissed all the other men of Israel, each to his tent, but retained the three hundred men; and the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

9 Now on the same night it came about that the LORD said to him, "Arise, go down against the camp, for I have handed it over to you. 10 But if you are afraid to go down, go with Purah your servant down to the camp, 11 so that you will hear what they say; and afterward you will have the courage to go down against the camp." So he went down with Purah his servant to the outposts of the army that was in the camp. 12 Now the Midianites, the Amalekites, and all the people of the east were lying in the valley as numerous as locusts; and their camels were without number, as numerous as the sand on the seashore.

13 When Gideon came, behold, a man was relating a dream to his friend. And he said, "Behold, I had a dream; a loaf of barley bread was tumbling into the camp of Midian, and it came to the tent and struck it so that it fell, and turned it upside down so that the tent collapsed." 14 And his friend replied, "This is nothing other than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has handed over to him Midian and all the camp."

15 When Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation, he bowed in worship. Then he returned to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise, for the LORD has handed over to you the camp of Midian!" 16 And he divided the three hundred men into three units, and he put trumpets and empty pitchers into the hands of all of them, with torches inside the pitchers. 17 Then he said to them, "Look at me and do likewise. And behold, when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. 18 When I and all who are with me blow the trumpet, then you also blow the trumpets around the entire camp and say, 'For the LORD and for Gideon!'"

Confusion of the Enemy

19 So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle night watch, when they had just posted the watch; and they blew the trumpets and smashed the pitchers that were in their hands. 20 When the three units blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers, they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing, and shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!"

21 And each stood in his place around the camp; and all the army ran, crying out as they fled. 22 And when they blew the three hundred trumpets, the LORD set the sword of one against another even throughout the entire army; and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the edge of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath. 23 And the men of Israel were summoned from Naphtali, Asher, and all Manasseh, and they pursued Midian.

24 Then Gideon sent messengers throughout the hill country of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against Midian and take control of the waters ahead of them, as far as Beth-barah and the Jordan." So all the men of Ephraim were summoned, and they took control of the waters as far as Beth-barah and the Jordan. 25 And they captured the two leaders of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb, and they killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and they killed Zeeb at the wine press of Zeeb, while they pursued Midian; and they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon from across the Jordan.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?

Did God instruct you to do something?

Did you gain any insight into God's character?

Paul's helpful insights

1. Gideon and his men got up and waited outside the camp of Midian.
2. 'There are too many men' says the Lord to Gideon, 'they will steal My glory'.
3. What is it to be self-boastful.

4. God says 'all the men who are full of fear, or have fear in them, tell them to go home'.
5. Twenty two thousand of Gideon's army went home, but there were still ten thousand remaining.
6. God says 'ten thousand is still too many', so he planned to identify those who were to go and take the camp of Midian.
7. Down at the lake the kneelers and the scoopers were sent home, but the lappers are chosen.
8. Of those who were lappers there were three hundred men.
9. Why did God choose the lappers over the scoopers to take the army of Midian.
10. All three hundred men took provision from the people who were sent home, as well as trumpets and lamps.
11. God wanted to encourage Gideon and build his confidence of the victory that He was about to bring him.
12. God instructed Gideon to go down to the camp of Midian and listen to the men who were talking to one another about the battle.
13. Gideon heard this news and was strengthened within his spirit, his confidence within him was great.
14. The sons of the East were in the valley waiting for the battle to commence.
15. A man has a dream and he tells it to his friend and the dread of their loss fell upon their people.
16. The mouth of God's enemies will declare God's victory.
17. Gideon takes the dream and its interpretation as a sign from God of the victory He was about to bring them into.
18. With great confidence and exultation he declares 'God has given the camp of Midian into our hands.
19. Gideon had worked out a strategy to win the battle and to fight against his enemy. It was with the sound of trumpet and the lamp that conquered the dark.
20. All three hundred men were instructed to do as Gideon would do, he gave them a war cry, an exultation to declare: 'for the Lord and for Gideon'.
21. He chose to make his attack at the changing of the guard of the night within the camp of Midian, he smashed the pitchers so that the light was seen in the darkness in the camp of the enemy of Midian.
22. At the sound of the trumpets and the increase of the light from Gideon's soldiers, the camp of Midian, the enemy of God, went into chaos!
23. With the sound of the cry, 'for the Lord and for Gideon', confusion and commotion created increased chaos and Midian's soldiers began to kill one another and they ran for their lives.
24. Then the army of Israel came into the battle and attacked the fleeing army of Gideon to destruction.
25. Gideon instructed the armies to go take back the waters from the sons of Midian and Israel killed the Midian leaders.