

## STORY OF GIDEON | JUDGES 6-8

THREE PARTS:

- 1) Narrator
- 2) Gideon
- 3) Angel/God

*Narrator: The Israelites are under Midianite occupation for seven years, and suffer greatly. Beginning with Judges 6:11...*

<sup>11</sup> The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. <sup>12</sup> When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said,

Angel "The LORD is with you, mighty warrior."

Gideon <sup>13</sup> "Pardon me, my lord,"

Narrator Gideon replied,

Gideon "but if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

Narrator <sup>14</sup> The LORD turned to him and said,

Angel "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?"

Gideon <sup>15</sup> "Pardon me, my lord," ~~Gideon replied,~~ "but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."

Angel <sup>16</sup> ~~The LORD answered,~~ "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive."

Gideon <sup>17</sup> ~~Gideon replied,~~ "If now I have found favor in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me. <sup>18</sup> Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you."

*Narrator: Gideon prepares an offering and, after the angel touched it, fire consumed it. Continuing with verse 22:*

<sup>22</sup> When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he exclaimed,

Gideon "Alas, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!"

*Narrator* <sup>23</sup> But the LORD said to him,

Angel "Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die."

*Narrator* <sup>24</sup> So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it The LORD Is Peace.

*Continuing with verse 36:*

<sup>36</sup> Gideon said to God,

Gideon: "If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised— <sup>37</sup> look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said."

*Narrator:* <sup>38</sup> And that is what happened. Gideon rose early the next day; he squeezed the fleece and wrung out the dew—a bowlful of water. <sup>39</sup> Then Gideon said to God,

Gideon: "Do not be angry with me. Let me make just one more request. Allow me one more test with the fleece, but this time make the fleece dry and let the ground be covered with dew."

*Narrator:* <sup>40</sup> That night God did so. Only the fleece was dry; all the ground was covered with dew.

**7** Early in the morning, Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and all his men camped at the spring of Harod. The camp of Midian was north of them in the valley near the hill of Moreh. <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Gideon,

God: "You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, 'My own strength has saved me.' <sup>3</sup> Now announce to the army, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.'"

Narrator: So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained.

<sup>4</sup> But the LORD said to Gideon,

God: "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will thin them out for you there. If I say, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go; but if I say, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go."

Narrator: <sup>5</sup> So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the LORD told him,

God: "Separate those who lap the water with their tongues as a dog laps from those who kneel down to drink."

Narrator: <sup>6</sup> Three hundred of them drank from cupped hands, lapping like dogs. All the rest got down on their knees to drink.

<sup>7</sup> The LORD said to Gideon,

God: "With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the others go home."

Narrator: <sup>8</sup> So Gideon sent the rest of the Israelites home but kept the three hundred, who took over the provisions and trumpets of the others.

Now the camp of Midian lay below him in the valley. <sup>9</sup> During that night the LORD said to Gideon,

God: "Get up, go down against the camp, because I am going to give it into your hands.

Narrator: *In case Gideon is afraid, God encourages Gideon to sneak down to the Midianite camp to overhear the Midianites speak about their fear of Gideon's army. Continuing now with verse 16:*

<sup>16</sup> Dividing the three hundred men into three companies, [Gideon] placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside.

Gideon: <sup>17</sup> "Watch me," he told them. "Follow my lead. When I get to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do. <sup>18</sup> When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, then from all around the camp blow yours and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.'"

Narrator: <sup>19</sup> Gideon and the hundred men with him reached the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just after they had changed the guard. They blew their trumpets and broke the jars that were in their hands. <sup>20</sup> The three companies blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. Grasping the torches in their left hands and holding in their right hands the trumpets they were to blow, they shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" <sup>21</sup> While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled.