

Gideon's Mighty 300 By Trey Sullins

What is your job? When you hear this question, your first thought probably goes to whatever your physical occupation is that brings you an income. This is certainly not a wrong answer as everyone has work, and God expects us all to work in this life. However, when Christians hear this question, maybe our first thought should instead go to the high purpose for which God has made us: to serve him and bring others to Him. We all have a great role to play in our Christian walks. Gideon's account shows us that we must all do our part and with God all things are possible!

Gideon's work begins with great Midianite oppression. Following Israel's typical pattern, shortly after the previous deliverance by God, the children of Israel turned away from the Lord. In Judges 6:1, the children of Israel were once again "evil in the sight of the Lord." Therefore, "the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years." Judges 6:5-6 reveals that this oppression had gone on long enough so that Israel was now impoverished. Because of this great impoverishment, in Judges 6:7, Israel began to cry out to God for help. God then sent a prophet to reveal once again how they had rejected and rebelled against the Almighty.

God next chose Gideon for this task. In Judges 6:12, Gideon's call begins, and God reveals the main mission which Gideon is going to have to do: defeat the Midianites. Before this Gideon needed to remove an altar of Baal that was in Israel's lands. The fact that this altar was there in the first place really shows you Israel's state at this time. Nonetheless, Gideon went off to destroy this altar by night for fear of the wicked men of the city. Finally, Gideon asked for another sign from God at the end of Chapter 6 to prove that God was with him. When Gideon was chosen, he answered the call of God, and we must do that same today!

In Chapter 7 Gideon began the process of choosing his men by God's command. First, God requires that those who were afraid go ahead and leave the army of Gideon. Second, the ten thousand remaining were to drink water from a body of water. Those who were not on their knees and lapped the water by putting their hand to their mouths were the ones selected. Everyone else who got on their knees was rejected. In the end Gideon went from 32,000 soldiers down to just 300 soldiers. The main reason why God did this is in Judges 7:2: "lest Israel claim glory for herself, saying, 'My own hand has saved me.'" Gideon was about to face an army of around 135,000 Midianites with only 300 men. There would be no way for anyone to say that Israel did this by their own strength and might. Furthermore, throughout this selection process, notice how God wanted the quality men to be the ones chosen. Gideon and his men were chosen for God's work because of their quality. They could not forsake their work, and neither can we.

The battle with the Midianites takes place in Judges 7:19-8:21. Before the battle God sent Gideon into the Midianite camp in secrecy, and God gives him another sign. In this sign a Midianite soldier had a dream about how Gideon would defeat them. Imagine how disheartening that would be! In the main part of the battle Gideon positions his 300 men around the Midianites at night, and all at once they shout, break pots, and blow trumpets. When the Midianites heard this, they awoke and in a confused frenzy and started killing each other. Gideon and his men then chased them down with help from the Ephraimites who were nearby. In the end, 122,000

Midianites died, the Midianite leaders were killed, and the remaining Midianite soldiers routed and fled. The battle was a huge massacre. All of this goes to show that when you are on the Lord's side you truly can do anything.

God took a man who was from the "weakest in Manasseh" and defeated a mighty host of enemies. There is nothing too great or difficult for God. When God's people respond properly to His missions, then amazing things can be done in His name. This great challenge now falls upon Christians today. We all must join the ranks of God by becoming Christians, and then fulfilling our roles which He has commanded of us!