

Adult Bible Study

in Simplified English

*God Sends Help:
A Study from Judges*

Lesson 10: Gideon's Courage to Fight

Bible Text

Judges 7:12-22

Memory Verse

"Have I not told you? Be strong and have strength of heart! Do not be afraid or lose faith. For the Lord your God is with you anywhere you go." (Joshua 1:9)

Word List

example: a person or way of behaving that is seen as a model that should be followed

repentance: showing you are sorry for something you did wrong and that you are willing to do right

A popular Christian song by Sanctus Real highlights the faith of Daniel. Daniel showed strong faith in God when King Darius placed him in a den of lions. Many Christians admire Daniel's faith. In fact, the Bible is full of people whom Christians admire. For sure, no person is perfect. But many people in the Bible set a strong **example** for Christians to follow. These men and women all showed important character traits God can use.

Christians remember the leadership of Moses and the loyalty of Ruth. They remember the strength of Samson. They also remember the **repentance** of David.

Christians admire the loyal friendship of Jonathan and the wisdom of Solomon. They strive to model their lives after examples like these.

As for Gideon, he is known for his courage in battle. God commanded Gideon to fight an army of 135,000 Midianites with only 300 men. It is easy to see why Gideon might be afraid. He could not rely on the strength and skill of a large army. Even though Gideon was fearful, he still obeyed God with great courage. But where did Gideon find the courage to fight this battle? In today's lesson, we will find good reasons for Gideon's courage.

Gideon Needs Courage

(Judges 7:12-14)

12 The Midianites and Amalekites and all the people of the east were lying in the valley. They were like locusts, there were so many. Their camels were too many to number. They were like sand beside the sea, there were so many.

13 When Gideon came, a man was telling a dream to his friend. The man said, "I had a dream. A loaf of barley bread was rolling toward the tents of Midian. It came to the tent

and hit it so it fell down. It turned it up-side-down so the tent fell apart.”

14 His friend answered and said, “This is nothing else but the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel. God has given Midian and all the army into his hand.”

God knew that Gideon was fearful as he faced the battle with the Midianites. God showed great kindness and patience toward Gideon in the middle of his fears. God came to Gideon. He told Gideon to visit the camp of the Midianites. He told Gideon to listen carefully to the things he would hear there.

Gideon took his servant Purah and did as God said. They arrived at the Midianites’ camp and saw that it was quite large. Even so, God led Gideon to the right place at the right time. Gideon heard one of the Midianites telling his friend about a dream. The man dreamed that the Midianites’ camp was destroyed. The man’s friend explained the dream. His friend said that the God of Israel would give victory to Gideon’s army.

Gideon heard this and understood what it meant. This brought Gideon much courage. Gideon bowed down and worshiped God. Gideon knew God was in control. God came to Gideon in his fear. God led Gideon to the man with the dream. God led Gideon there at the right time to hear the dream explained.

Gideon’s courage grew stronger because of these things.

God Gives Confidence (Judges 7:15-18)

15 When Gideon heard the story of the dream and what it meant, he bowed down and worshiped God. Then he returned to the tents of Israel and said, “Get up! For the Lord has given the army of Midian into your hands.”

16 He divided the 300 men into three groups. He gave horns and empty pots with fire sticks inside to each of them.

17 And he said to them, “Watch me, and do what I do. When I come to the side of their tents, do as I do.

18 I and all those with me will blow the horns. Then you blow the horns all around the tents, and say, ‘For the Lord and for Gideon!’”

After these things happened, Gideon no longer focused on his own fears. Instead, he focused on God’s power and control over all things. He returned to the men of Israel. He shared his confidence in God’s plan. Gideon’s confidence began to grow among God’s people. Gideon led God’s chosen army of 300 men. He led by example. He showed them what to do.

The men might have been confused by God’s plan. Soldiers do not usually fight with

horns and pots and fire sticks. Soldiers usually fight with swords and shields and helmets. But the army of Israel obeyed with confidence in God. They chose to trust God's plan.

Gideon Has Faith (Judges 7:19-22)

19 So Gideon and the 100 men who were with him came to the side of the tents. It was late in the night. Different soldiers had just come to keep watch. Then the men blew the horns and broke the pots that were in their hands.

20 All three groups blew their horns and broke their pots. They held the sticks of fire in their left hands and horns to be blown in their right hands. And they called out, "A sword for the Lord and for Gideon!"

21 Each man stood in his place around the tents. And all the Midianite army ran. They cried out and ran away.

22 When the 300 horns were blown, the Lord made every man fight the man next to him among the tents. And the army ran away as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah. They went as far as the land of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath.

Gideon's confidence in God led him to act in faith. The army of Israel formed three small groups. They surrounded the camp of the Midianites. They blew their horns. They made loud noises by breaking pots. They held up their fire sticks. They shouted to the Lord. And the Midianites ran away.

Without God's encouragement, Gideon might have given in to his own fears. He could have placed his faith in the army of Israel. He could have relied on his own ideas and his own wisdom. He could have led the men to fight in a way that made more sense to them. He could have led them to fight with strong weapons. But Gideon's courage led him to choose faith over fear.

Things to Think About

1. Who are your favorite Bible heroes? What have you admired about their lives?
2. What gives you courage in the middle of hard times?
3. How can you share your confidence in God with someone who needs it?
4. What keeps you from acting in faith like Gideon? What step of faith can you take in a battle you are facing right now?
5. What reasons can you find to choose faith over fear?

Things to Remember

God met Gideon in the middle of his fear and doubts. In the same way, he will come to you if you seek Him. Just like Gideon, God knows every detail of your life. He knows your hopes and disappointments. He knows your challenges and your losses. He knows your strengths and your weaknesses. Even more, He cares about these

things. Most importantly, God is in control. When we obey Him, His knowledge and power can work for good. We can act in faith when we remember God's power and goodness. Follow Gideon's example. Choose faith over fear.

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