

EPISODE NO. 107

Judg. 7:1-25

God Defeated the Midianites

1 Early in the morning, Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and all his army set up their camp beside Harod Spring. The Midianite army was north of him, in the valley at the bottom of the hill called Moreh. 2 Then the Always-Present One said to Gideon, “You have too many men for Me to give you a victory over the Midianites. I do not want the Israelites to brag, thinking that they saved themselves. 3 So now, make this announcement to your army: ‘Anyone who is trembling or full of fear may leave Mount Gilead; you may go back home now.’ ” Then 22,000 men returned home. But 10,000 men remained.

4 Then Yahweh said to Gideon, “There are still too many men. Take the men down to the water, and I will separate them for you there. If I say about one: ‘This man will go with you,’ then he will go with you. But if I say to you, ‘That one will not go with you,’ then he will not go.”

5 So, Gideon led the men down to the water. The Always-Present One said to him, “Those who put their mouths down to the water will be in one group. But those who bend down on one knee and scoop up the water to drink will be in the other group. Separate them into those two categories.” 6 There were 300 men who used their cupped hands to bring water to their mouths. All the rest of the men got down on their knees to drink water like a dog.

7 Then Yahweh said to Gideon, “Using those 300 men who drank the water that special way, I will save you. And, I will give you victory over the Midianites. Tell everyone else to go home. 8 So, Gideon sent everybody else home, but he kept the 300 men. Gideon got the clay jugs and the trumpets from his soldiers.

Now, the Midianite camp was in the valley, below where Gideon was located. 9 That night, the Always-Present One spoke to Gideon. He said, “Get up. Go down and attack the camp of the Midianites, because I have given to you the victory over them. 10 However, if you are still afraid to descend upon the camp, take your young assistant, Purah, with you down there. 11 You will overhear what they are saying. After that, you will get the courage to go down and attack the Midianite camp.

So, Gideon and his young helper, Purah, decided to go down to the edge of the front lines of the Midianite camp. 12 The Midianites, the Amalekites, and all the eastern peoples were camped along that valley. There were so many of them that they were like

a swarm of locusts. They had more camels than one could count — they were as many as the grains of sand on the beach!

13 When Gideon got there, listen, he overheard a man talking. That man was telling his friend about a dream that he just had. This is what he was saying: “Look, I dreamed that a loaf of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian. But it hit the main tent with such force that the tent turned over and collapsed!”

14 The man’s friend said, “Your dream can only mean one thing — it is about the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, a man of Israel. The one true God will let Gideon gain a victory over Midian and the whole army!”

15 When Gideon overheard the telling of this dream and what it meant, he worshiped God. Then Gideon and his helper returned to the camp of Israel. He called out to them, “Get up, because Yahweh has already defeated the army of Midian for you!” 16 Then Gideon divided his 300 men into three groups. He gave a trumpet and an empty clay jug to each man. And there was a torch burning inside each clay jug.

17 Then Gideon told his men, “Watch me, and do what I do. Look, when I get to the edge of the Midianite camp, do exactly what I do! 18 Let’s surround their entire camp. Then I, and everyone with me, will blow our trumpets. When we blow our trumpets, you blow your trumpets, too. Then shout this: ‘For Yahweh and for Gideon!’ ”

19 So, Gideon and the 100 men who were with him went to the edge of the camp of the Midianites. They got there right after the time when the Midianites had changed guards. (It was during the middle watch of the night.) Then Gideon and his men blew their trumpets and shattered the clay jugs that were in their hands. 20 All three groups of Gideon’s men blew their trumpets and shattered their clay jugs at the same time. They held the flaming torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands. They shouted: “A sword for Yahweh and for Gideon!” 21 Each of Gideon’s men stayed in his place around the Midianite camp. But inside the camp, all the Midianite men began shouting and rushing around in a panic. They wanted to escape.

22 When Gideon’s 300 men blew their trumpets, in the confusion, Yahweh caused all the Midianites to fight each other with their swords — the whole camp! The Midianite army ran away to the town of Beth-Shittah, toward the town of Zererah. They ran as far as the border of the town of Abel-Meholah. It is near the town of Tabbath. 23 Then the men of Israel from the tribes of Naphtali, Asher, and all the men of Manasseh were called out to continue chasing the Midianites.

24 Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill-country of Ephraim. They said, “Come down to attack the Midianites! Capture the water-crossings ahead of them, as far

as Beth-Barah and also the Jordan River. Do this before the Midianites can get to the river and cross it!” So, they called out all the men of Ephraim. The Ephraimites took control of the waters of the Jordan River Valley, as far as Beth-Barah. 25 And they continued to chase after the Midianites. The men of Ephraim captured two princes of Midian named Oreb and Zeeb. They executed Oreb at “The Rock of Oreb.” And, they killed Zeeb at “Zeeb’s Winepress.” They cut off the heads of Oreb and Zeeb and brought them to Gideon who was next to the Jordan River.