

# GOD'S LEADERS, GOD'S PEOPLE

## 3. GIDEON

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### Judges 6–8

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#### Judges 6

**6:1** Then the sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian seven years.

**6:6** ... and the sons of Israel cried to the LORD.

**6:8** ... the LORD sent a prophet to the sons of Israel, and he said to them, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘It was I—I brought you up from Egypt and I brought you out from the house of slavery.’”

**6:9** I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all your oppressors, and I drove them out before you and I gave you their land,

**6:10** and I said to you, “I am the LORD your God .... But you have not obeyed My voice.””

**6:12** The angel of the LORD appeared to him [Gideon] and said to him, “The LORD is with you, O valiant warrior.”

**6:13** Then Gideon said to him, “O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles that our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian.”

**6:14** The LORD looked at him and said, “Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?”

**6:16** But the LORD said to him, “Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat Midian as one man.”

**6:34** So the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; and he blew a trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called together to follow him.

**6:36** Then Gideon said to God, “If You [really] will deliver Israel through me, as You have spoken,

**6:37** behold, I will put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If there is dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I will know that You will deliver Israel through me, as You have spoken.”

**6:38** And it was so. When he arose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece, he drained the dew from the fleece, a bowl full of water.

**6:39** Then Gideon said to God, “Do not let Your anger burn against me that I may speak once more; please let me make a test once more with the fleece, let it now be dry only on the fleece, and let there be dew on all the ground.”

**6:40** God did so that night; for it was dry only on the fleece, and dew was on all the ground.

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## Judges 7

**7:2** The LORD said to Gideon, “The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, for Israel would become boastful, saying, ‘My own hand has delivered me.’”

**7:3** Now therefore come, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, “Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him return and depart ....”

**7:9** Now the same night it came about that the LORD said to him, “Arise, go down against the [enemy] camp, for I have given it into your hand.”

**7:16** He [Gideon] divided the 300 men into three companies, and he put trumpets and empty pitchers into the hands of all of them, with torches inside the pitchers.

**7:20** When the three companies 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 cried, “A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!”

**7:21** Each stood in his place around the camp; and all the [Midianite] army ran, crying out as they fled.

**7:22** When the 300 trumpets blew, the LORD set the sword of one against another even throughout the whole army ....

**7:23** The men of Israel were summoned from Naphtali and Asher and all Manasseh, and they pursued Midian.

**7:24** Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, “Come down against Midian ....”

## Judges 8

**8:2** But he said to them [the Ephraimites], “What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?”

**8:3** “God has given the leaders of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb into your hands; and what was I able to do in comparison with you?” Then their anger toward him subsided ....

**8:5** ... ‘I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian.’”

**8:21** ... So Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the crescent ornaments which were on their camels’ necks.

**8:22** Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, “Rule over us, even you, even your son, even your son’s son, for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian.”

**8:23** But Gideon said to them, “I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you.”

**8:24** Yet Gideon said to them, “I would request of you, that each of you give me an earring from his spoil [of war against Midian].” ...

**8:25** ... So they spread out a garment, and every one of them threw an earring there from his spoil.

**8:26** The weight of the gold earrings that he requested was 1,700 shekels of gold, besides the crescent ornaments and the pendants and the purple robes which were on the kings of Midian, and besides the neck bands that were on their camels’ necks.

**8:27** Gideon made it into an ephod ... and all Israel played the harlot with it there, so that it became a snare to Gideon and his household.

**8:31** His concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, and he named him Abimelech.

**8:33** Then it came about, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the sons of Israel again played the harlot with the Baals, and made Baal-berith their god.

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