



had come together to fight against the Israelites in the valley of Jezreel (*JEZ-ree-uhl*). How could Israel win against so many? Who would lead Israel?

Before this, God knew Israel's enemies were coming, so He began preparing a man named Gideon. Gideon had obeyed the word of the Lord by tearing down the altar to Baal and building an altar to the true God. Now God had an even greater work for Gideon to do.

When the Midianites and others joined forces to fight Israel, "the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet." Gideon sent messengers to call for men to help him fight the enemy.

Gideon wanted to be sure God would deliver the Midianites into his hands. So he asked God for another sign. He asked God to do something that, seemingly, was impossible. Gideon put a fleece (a sheepskin) on the ground. He asked God to let the *dew be only on the fleece* and let the ground be dry. (Dew usually covers all the ground overnight.)

When Gideon arose the next morning, it was just as he had asked. The ground was dry—but the fleece was so wet that Gideon wrung a bowlful of water from it!

Gideon wanted further assurance from God. He asked God to reverse the sign: to let *only the ground be wet with dew* and the fleece be dry. Sure enough, in the morning the ground was wet—but the fleece was dry! Gideon was finally convinced that God would be with him.

Gideon had called for men to fight the Midianites. When they arrived, he counted all the men who had come to help him. There were

# Church of God Sunday School

## GIDEON DEFEATS MIDIAN: GIDEON'S TRUMPETS

Judges 6:33 — 8:28

The people of Israel were in trouble. The Midianites (*MID-ee-uh-nites*) and the Amalekites (*uh-MAL-uh-kites*), with other people from the East,

32,000. Gideon might have thought that was not enough men (the enemy numbered about 135,000). But God told Gideon he had too many men! God could not get glory if the army was that large. The men would think they had won the battle themselves, saying, "Mine own hand hath saved me."

God told Gideon to tell the men that all who were afraid could go back home. Did everyone leave? Well, 22,000 men went home. Only 10,000 men stayed; they were willing to stay and fight. Surely, God would not tell Gideon to cut back any more.

Oh, but again God told Gideon he had too many men! God wanted to test the men. He told Gideon that whoever passed the test could fight and whoever did not pass the test had to stay behind.

This was the test. Gideon had to take the men down to the river to drink. The men who drank the water down on their knees, taking some in their hands, then drinking as a dog would—by lapping it with their tongues and looking around—were put in one group. The men who knelt and put their faces right into the cold water were put in another group.

There were only 300 men who drank as a dog drinks. God told Gideon to use those 300 men. Do you know why? They were the ones who drank carefully, and they watched for the enemy as they drank. Gideon had only 300 men to fight the Midianites, but God said they would

be enough. The victory would not come through *might*, but through *faith* in God.

God also knew that Gideon felt unsure about the battle. He told him to go down to the valley at night and listen to what the enemy said. So that night, Gideon took his servant and went down to the camp of the enemy. The Midianites and the Amalekites were so many that they covered the valley. They were like "grasshoppers for multitude," and their camels were like "sand by the sea side for multitude."

Gideon, or Jerubbaal (*jih-ruhbb-*



*BAY-uhl*), sneaked up to the outside of the enemy's camp. He was close enough to hear a man telling a dream to a friend. The man said, "Behold, I dreamed . . . a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along."

His friend said, "This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon . . . for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host." When Gideon heard that, he was greatly encouraged and worshiped God. He went back to the men to get them ready to fight.

Gideon divided the 300 men into three companies: 100 men in each group. He gave every man a trumpet and an empty pitcher with a light in the pitcher. The

trumpet was to be held in the right hand, the pitcher in the left. These were their weapons, not swords or spears. Then Gideon told each one of the groups to go to a different place around the camp of the Midianites.

The men were to watch Gideon and do as he did. When he blew on his trumpet, they were to blow on their trumpets and shout, "The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon!"

Then they were supposed to break the pitchers and let the lights shine. God would take care of the rest.

Remember, it was night. Very quietly the men went to their appointed places around their enemies. All eyes looked to where Gideon was. The men were waiting, to

see what he would do.

Suddenly, Gideon blew his trumpet and said, "The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon!" He broke his pitcher and held the light up. All the men blew their trumpets and shouted and broke their pitchers and held up their lights. "And they stood every man in his place round about the camp."

When the Midianites heard the loud blasts from the trumpets and the shouting, they did not know what the noise meant. The Midianites were confused! They could not see well in the dark. They began to run here and there and to fight with one another. "And the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow." Gideon and his men kept blowing on the trumpets. They did not have to fight, for God caused the Midianites to fight and kill each other.

When the Midianites began running away, the men of Israel chased after them. Gideon called for the men of Ephraim (*EE-fray-uhm*) to come and help them fight. They came and helped catch the two princes of the Midianites. The men from Ephraim killed them and brought their heads to Gideon, who was on the other side of the Jordan. Midian was at last defeated! No more did they rise up against Israel.

The men of Israel asked Gideon to be their ruler. They also wanted his son and his grandson to rule over them. But Gideon said no—neither he nor his son nor his grandson would rule over them—the Lord would be the One to rule over them. Israel had rest from their enemies for forty years, while Gideon lived.

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**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."*  
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—Zechariah 4:6

