



Lesson 80

Gideon Defeats the Midianites – Part 1

Story Elements

- **Text:** Judges 7:8-23
 - **Setting:** circa 1249 B.C. near the valley of Jezreel
 - **Main Characters:** God and Gideon (Jerubbaal)
 - **Plot:** Gideon defeats the Midianite horde with a small army.
 - **Key word(s):** “the _____ of the LORD” (7:18,20)
- **Climax: Judges 7:20** *And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.*

Review

1. (6:33-7:7) Gideon, ever struggling with the need for assurance in God’s promises, tested God twice by “putting out the fleece.” God graciously acquiesced to Gideon’s weakness, but responded with two tests for Gideon’s faith: reducing his army’s number from thirty-two thousand down to ten thousand and then again down to a mere _____.

Barley Cake Dream

2. (vv 9-12) The same night of the fleece-sign, God told Gideon to attack the Midianite camp; but if he was too afraid to begin the assault, he could have one more sign of sure victory:
 - a. Gideon was instructed to go down to the edge of the Midianite encampment along with his servant _____. There he would hear something that would embolden him for his mission.
 - b. Gideon did so, and, with Phurah in tow, they reconnoitered the Midianite camp and overheard two soldiers talking:
 - i. (v 13) One soldier told his comrade that he had a dream wherein a _____ cake rolled into a Midianite tent, knocked it down, and turned it inside out.
 - ii. (v 14) The other soldier gave the interpretation of the strange dream, saying, “This is nothing else save the sword of _____ the son of Joash, a man of Israel: *for* into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.”

APPLICATION → A barley cake is an appropriate symbol for Gideon since he was visited by an angel while he threshed wheat (6:11) and made a cake of unleavened flour for his angelic visitor (6:19). Additionally, barley cake was considered by many as a “_____ food,” which coincides with Gideon’s estimation of himself (cf 6:15). Furthermore, the humble barley cake was also a fitting representation of Gideon’s small army, whose chances of defeating the Midianites were the same as a small barley loaf sturdy army tent being destroyed by.

- iii. Hearing the dream’s interpretation, Gideon immediately _____ God. His faith emboldened, he returned to his band of three hundred and announced, “Arise; for the Lord hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.”

APPLICATION → God gave Gideon this final assuring sign the very night he was to attack the Midianites. Matthew Henry notes, “Divine consolations are given in to believers not only strongly but _____.”¹

¹ Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 344.

