

Title: Servants of the Lord  
Text: Judges 6: 7-7: 22  
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Believers are *strong in spirit* when God has made us *weak in the flesh*—we are *weak in spirit* when we think we are *strong in the flesh*. Believers are *wise in spirit* when we are *ignorant in flesh*; we are *ignorant in spirit* when we think we are *wise in flesh*.

**Proposition:** God's child, his servants, those he uses to spread his gospel and bear witness of him are called through the gospel so that Christ is made the Power and Wisdom of God to us so that we go forth with no other weapon but the gospel.

**Context:** Israel had sinned against the Lord. The LORD had delivered them into the hands of the enemy. The LORD is calling Gideon to deliver them.

**Judges 6: 8:** That the LORD sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel...**11:** And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which *was* in Ophrah, that *pertained* unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide *it* from the Midianites.

## I. GOD USES WEAK AND FOOLISH THINGS—SINNERS.

**Judges 6: 12:** And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD *is* with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

Listen to Gideon's reply. He does not answer "If the Lord be with ME"—he counts himself a sinner right along with his brethren.

**Judges 6: 13:** And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where *be* all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

The LORD speaks to Gideon again.

**Judges 6: 14:** And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? [Now listen to Gideon's response.] **15:** And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family *is* poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house.

Gideon saw himself as poor, as the least. He was a weak man—a man without confidence in himself. Those are the gifts God gives. God does not use mighty "I's" only powerless "us's."

**Moses:** Exodus 4: 10: And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. **11:** And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD? **12:** Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

**David:** Jesse's sons were older, taller, not too pretty, but looked experienced. David was just the opposite.: 1 Samuel 16: 12: And he sent, and brought {David} in. Now he *was* ruddy, *and* withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this *is* he.---{Goliath tells us what men thought of David's appearance} 1 Samuel 17:42 And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was *but* a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance.

**Jeremiah:** Jeremiah 1: 6: Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I *am* a child. 7: But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. 8: Be not afraid of their faces: for I *am* with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. 9: Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth. 10: See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.

The strength of the servant of God is the Lord who calls him.

**Judges 6: 14: And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?**

Gideon's might, his valor was two-fold: 1) personally, he saw himself a transgressor and unfit for what the Lord called him to do; 2) The Lord sent him--"Have not I sent thee?" The Lord was Gideon's Wisdom and Power.

**Judges 6: 16: And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.**

There were millions of Midianites—the Lord says you will smite them as if they all were just one man.

## II. GOD CONQUERS THROUGH THE GOSPEL

**None will glory in God's presence.** Those who served with Gideon in his army are a type of believers united together, who fight under the immediate direction of Christ Jesus the Captain of our warfare.

**Judges 7: 2: And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that *are* with thee *are* too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.**

Israel represents those chosen of God in Christ. God's Israel—those Christ saves by his own blood and righteousness. God will see to it, we give him the glory for doing the saving. Not one whom God saves shall boast in giving themselves the victory. But each one shall give all the praise to the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

Isaiah 45: 25: In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.

Jeremiah 4: 2: And thou shalt swear, The LORD liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.

**The LORD whittles this army down using three kinds of trial.**

**A proclamation:** the first trial was through a "proclamation". The greater part—22,000—went away at the word which the Lord told Gideon to speak.

**Judges 7: 3: Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.**

Remember: the Lord Jesus preaching the necessity of being quickened by the Spirit, drawn by God and believing on Christ—the Gospel preaching the gospel—the Power of the Word.

John 6: 66: From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67: Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68: Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69: And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

These 22, 000 had the only thing Gideon had—the word of the Lord. Yet, they departed because of the word of the Lord.

**A trial of the LORD:** The second trial, the Lord said, “I will try them”. In this we see, it is the Lord who puts a difference between his people, who chooses whom he will and passes by whom he will.

**Judges 7: 4: And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people *are yet too* many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, *that* of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go. 5: So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.**

We can't discern what is good or bad in these men by the way they drank---the commentaries are at odds on what this manner of drinking means. But that seems to be the point—you and I can't tell who the Lord has chosen by looking at him—it is the LORD who does the choosing. The LORD did not tell Gideon which of these two styles of drinkers he was choosing, he just told Gideon that the Lord would do the choosing.]

Exodus 11:7: But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.

1 Corinthians 4: 7: For who maketh thee to differ *from another*? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive *it*, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received *it*?

**The trial of faith.** The third trial was of faith. Gideon sent home the group the Lord told him to send home and he went to battle with the group the Lord told to stay.

**Judges 7: 6: And the number of them that lapped, *putting* their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. 7 And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the *other* people go every man unto his place. 8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all *the rest of* Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.**

All of this teaches us that God's child, his servants, those he calls, those he uses to spread his gospel, have no strength in ourselves. God chooses foolish and base things. But through the gospel alone God makes Christ the Power and Wisdom of God to us. And the same way we receive mercy—through the word—so we go

forth with no other weapon but the gospel. By this God gets all the glory—and no flesh glories in his presence.

### III. VICTORY BY THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST ALONE!

**Judges 7: 16: And he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. 17: And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be *that*, as I do, so shall ye do. 18 When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that *are* with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, *The sword* of the LORD, and of Gideon. 19 So Gideon, and the hundred men that *were* with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that *were* in their hands. 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. 21 And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled. 22 And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Bethshittah in Zererath, *and* to the border of Abelmeholah, unto Tabbath.**

The victory was won through a light (Christ), a trumpet and a shout (the gospel preached) and a broken vessel (the sinner God uses). Before the light shined forth, or the trumpet was blown, or the voice shouted out—the vessel in which the light was, had to be broken. Those God uses are broken vessels.

2 Corinthians 4: 7: But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

1 Corinthians 2:5: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

1 Corinthians 1: 18: For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God....24:...Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God 25: Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men...29: That no flesh should glory in his presence.

AMEN!