
SERMON: "BATTLE WON IN WEAKNESS" – BY MARY M. BODIE

Jdg.7:1 "Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley."

Here, we read of a battle that was won in weakness.

Jdg.6:12-13 "And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. 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."

They were in great trouble, just like The Church is today. The Midianites would come up and steal their things; but God singled Gideon out to be the leader. Although Gideon was weak and helpless to begin with, God called Gideon a "**mighty man of valor**" because that was what He was going to make him.

Jdg.6:15 "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."

Notice that Gideon was a weak man, not a strong man of valor.

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

Gideon had to take a hold...in faith. He did not feel great or mighty, but he took a hold of the Lord and things began to happen.

Jdg.6:34 "But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered after him."

A great army of trained men, who were warriors from the different tribes, came up to help him. Gideon can still hardly believe that God could use such a poor, helpless creature. That is just the opposite of man's thoughts; they would think that the wise and learned were to be chosen to lead the battle. God chose Gideon because he was little. All those soldiers who came up to help Gideon were well-equipped to fight in this natural battle. This natural battle is symbolic of the spiritual battle we are waging today.

Reading again from Judges 7:1 (cited earlier); **Jerubbaal** (his name means "*the idol-challenger*") threw down the idols. As we read in Judges 6, Jerubbaal (who is Gideon) went out during the night, trying to hide the thing he was doing and threw down the idols of his father (which was the altar of Baal). We too have to learn to challenge the idols in our lives by knocking them down and throwing them out.

Harod (means "*trembling*").

At that time, it was a day of sifting. It is the same today, God is sifting His people.

Jdg.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."

The Lord tells Gideon that there are too many people with him. God didn't choose these people, but they chose themselves. The Lord says He wants the little crowd to fight for Him; the big crowd takes all the glory to themselves.

Jdg.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."

Here, we have a time of sifting. Just think, out of the 32,000 men Gideon had with him, only 10,000 remained.

Jdg.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."

The Lord is still sifting. Don't you think that Gideon would have felt terrible if the Lord hadn't comforted him with His Word? Christ wants us to do something, but He wants us to be small enough so that He can work. This is a time of sifting and a time of trouble; we must lay a hold of the Lord.

Jdg.7:5 "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."

These men who knelt down on the ground would have some difficulty rising up and chasing the enemy if he should come along. So it is with those today who are not looking to see if the devil is watching them. They would be taking in error by bowing down and drinking the water.

God is jealous and has a best place for His saints, but they have to be qualified. We have to have faith that makes us bold like a lion; then, we can run through a troop and jump over a wall [2Sa.22:30, Psa.18:29]. What have we to fear? If God be for us, who can be against us? Why shouldn't we go on and jump over every hindrance in our way? The Mighty God is our eternal refuge and strength. Why should we turn back in the day of trouble and say, "We can't go on?" Don't be afraid, when God is for us. He will take us through!

Those 22,000 who gave up and went back were afraid. They saw themselves as grasshoppers. We aren't grasshoppers; we are God's select

company! When one is worth much to God, He may even call that one away from His family. Uncle Sam calls men away from their families even if they don't like to go. Just like those who go at Uncle Sam's bidding, we must go at God's bidding. You may hide away from Uncle Sam's bidding, but he will fetch you out. So, it is with God; when He is after someone, He gets them.

This is a different battle than that on the earth. God calls us to a life of consecration; He will take nothing else. If we aim for God's best, we will get the best; but, we have to take God's training.

Some people want to enjoy life, but what enjoyment is there in the world? There are only temporal pleasures; but, God has something eternal that will never pass away! Our place will be wonderful forever and forever! You have nothing in this world as wonderful as what God offers you. God has never offered to the children of men what He is offering to those who believe and overcome (to reign with Christ for 1,000 years on a beautiful throne).

God won't fail anyone who wants to overcome; and, He will never let you fail. Sometimes you may think that you cannot stand the trials but God will give you the strength and faith to overcome.

Jdg.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."

Those who "**lapped**" the water, putting their hand to their mouth, were the victors. They took it (water) little by little and they could see if the enemy was approaching.

There are such things as the race, the price, and The Bride. There are some people who are going to win this battle, but it will be the lesser number. Tell the Lord you want to win in the race and He will set you on the race course — standing back of you to see that you go that way. We must be absolutely devoted to Him.

When we were first saved, the Lord seemed to carry us around on a pillow and we didn't have trials at first; so we didn't see anything hard about this way. It is just like it is in school where you first start out on something easy and learn little by little about the harder things.

They blew the trumpet and shouted that the battle was won. We can leave our case with the Lord and stand in faith to the last mile!

