

“God Declares The Victory”

By Mrs. Sojourner



Have you ever done something that you were sure the Lord had prompted you to do, but your efforts seemed to fail or have no effect? Usually in an event like this, most people would either think they failed or they just did not hear the Lord. This line of thinking assumes that our obedience will always end with applause, sweetness and light, or the like. This is not always the case.

Consider this scripture:

7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. 8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. 9 "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. Isaiah 55:7-9 (NIV)

Following the line of thinking that God's ways are not our ways, consider that just

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because the person you witnessed to did not get gloriously saved after they hung on every word you said, does not mean that you failed. If God told you to tell your testimony to that person and you did so, you succeeded. God declares the victory on his system, which is based on our obedience to him.

Think back to people in the Bible. Daniel was obedient and he spent time in the lion's den, David was obedient and he ran for his life for years, and Jesus was obedient and he was crucified. They were all, in the end, honored for their obedience.

Let us remember that obeying God is the important thing, and that victory in our lives may not always bring applause from, or be understood by people around us.

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...with The Sojourner

“God's Battle Method” (Teaching Sketch)

Judges 7:8,-23 (NIV)



We are continuing to look at the story of Gideon found in the Book of Judges. We pick up at the point where Gideon prepares his small army of 300 to go into battle with Midian. Gideon, you see, had done as he had been instructed and sent back all but 300 men of 32,000! This battle method would not make much sense to a person being “realistic” about proper battle methods. God, however, has his own battle method.

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servant named Purah. God actually named who he was to take with him. Now Purah's name means a bough of green leafy foliage. This then could easily represent a living covering, God is represented in the meaning of the servant's name. We will only mention the symbolism of the shade from the Tree of Life.

It is also important to remember that, in Israel, two is the number of adequate witness to a thing. Thus both Gideon and Purah hearing a thing would establish the truth of it.

If You Are Afraid

Remember, Gideon's army is still in the camp of preparation, which is situated by the spring of fear. God then instructs Gideon, if he is afraid, to “go down to the camp with your servant named Purah and listen to what they are saying.” Gideon, being still afraid, did go down and listen to what the enemy was saying about Israel and the approaching battle. It seems interesting that God would instruct Gideon to take his

The Enemy Fears

Scriptures tell us that as a person thinks in his heart so is he. This is strongly proven as Gideon and Purah listen to some Midianites discuss and interpret a dream one of them has had. This dream has been dwelt upon by the Midianites to the point they are experiencing powerfully growing fear.

Please note: This is a teaching sketch only and not the complete teaching.

Scripture:

Judges 7:8_b-23 (NIV)

^{8b}Now the camp of Midian lay below him in the valley. ⁹During that night the LORD said to Gideon,^[a] "Get up, go down against the camp, because I am going to give it into your hands. ¹⁰If you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah ¹¹and listen to what they are saying. Afterward, you will be encouraged to attack the camp." So he and Purah^[b] his servant went down to the outposts of the camp. ¹²The Midianites, the Amalekites and all the other eastern peoples had settled in the valley, thick as locusts. Their camels could no more be counted than the sand on the seashore. ¹³Gideon arrived just as a man was telling a friend his dream. "I had a dream," he was saying. "A round loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the Midianite camp. It struck the tent with such force that the tent overturned and collapsed." ¹⁴His friend responded, "This can be nothing other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite. God has given the Midianites and the whole camp into his hands." ¹⁵When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped God. He returned to the camp of Israel and called out, "Get up! The LORD has given the Midianite camp into your hands." ¹⁶Dividing the three hundred men into three compa-

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[a] Gideon = Feller, i.e. Warrior
[b] Purah = bough, green leafy foliage
[c] Beth Shittah = house of the acacia (a thorny tree wood for temple furniture)
[d] Zererah (Tseredah)= pierce, puncture
[e] Abel Meholah = Meadow of dancing
[f] Tabbath = famous

nies, he placed trumpets and empty jars in the hands of all of them, with torches inside. ¹⁷"Watch me," he told them. "Follow my lead. When I get to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do. ¹⁸When I and all who are with me blow our trumpets, then from all around the camp blow yours and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.' " ¹⁹Gideon and the hundred men with him reached the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just after they had changed the guard. They blew their trumpets and broke the jars that were in their hands. ²⁰The three companies blew the trumpets and smashed the jars. Grasping the torches in their left hands and holding in their right hands the trumpets they were to blow, they shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" ²¹While each man held his position around the camp, all the Midianites ran, crying out as they fled. ²²When the three hundred trumpets sounded, the LORD caused the men throughout the camp to turn on each other with their swords. The army fled to Beth Shittah^[c] toward Zererah^[d] as far as the border of Abel Meholah^[e] near Tabbath^[f]. ²³Israelites from Naphtali, Asher and all Manasseh were called out, and they pursued the Midianites.

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Clay With Fire

Anyone who possesses only a small knowledge of scripture knows that in the Book of Genesis we are told that man is made of the "dust of the earth." It is, therefore, not a large leap to see the parallel of clay representing man and fire representing the Holy Spirit of God. So now, when we see that the men of Israel are instructed to carry their torches within jars of clay and their trumpets into battle we can in hind sight see the plan of God for the battle. This understanding of God's plan may not have been so apparent to the army of Gideon, but that did not matter since they were operating in faith.

Proclaim Victory

Gideon instructs his men to follow his lead and do as he does. This is the cry of nearly every person called to lead people into spiritual battle. It is a very important instruction and necessary to victory no matter how illogical and preposterous the battle plan may seem. The Israelites were instructed to proclaim what they were doing as they broke the clay jars to let the fire out and

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blew the trumpets. This is a great example of God's battle method, to work through people of faith and rout the forces of fear.

The first part of their shout was for the Lord and the second part of their shout was for God's chosen leader. This was not a pride issue on Gideon's part but an acknowledgement of submission to godly empowerment.

Each Held Position

Each man held his position, we are told, and the enemy, in fear, turned on itself. Faith held and the fearful failed. God, God's man, and God's army prevailed. We know that these things are not accomplished by might or power but by the Lord's Spirit.

If you will but hold the position God has given you after preparation you will find you will have more provision than you need and more victory by the Lord's Spirit than you can possibly imagine.