

Judges 7:16-25-Trust leads to obedience; Obedience leads to victory

Delitzsch, TSK, HebrewLexicon, Gill, Geneva, JFB, Handfuls, Poole, Trapp, Pulpit, Clarke, Henry, INT, Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: Years ago I remember learning about Boyle's Law波义耳定律. It said that a volume of gas is inversely proportional to the pressure providing the temperature remained constant. And we used the formula $P_1V_1=P_2V_2$. If I followed that formula, I got the correct answer. Science, even in a fallen world, is remarkably accurate.

When we deal with a perfect and holy God (in the sphere of eternity) we can be even more confident in formulaic interaction公式化的互动with him. Today you will see one example of this. You will see how he prescribed that we trust him in order to obey, and when we obey him, how he brings victory. This formula is guaranteed. There is no luck or magic with God.

Our headings are:

Trust Led to Obedience

Obedience Led to Victory

Our goals are: **That you learn to strengthen your faith in God so that you will obey him and succeed in life.**

Trust led to obedience

16 Then **he divided** the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a **trumpet** into every man's hand, with empty **pitchers** 甃, and **torches** 火炬inside the pitchers.

1. Gideon's faith was strengthened when he personally experience God through miracles, through his Word, and through God's glorious providence. You will remember that he experienced God's providence when God brought him safely to the Midianite camp and he heard two Midianites talking about a dream about their destruction through Gideon. How his faith was strengthened! His trust was high!

2. Gideon's first act based on his resurgent复活faith was to prepare for battle. He strategically divided his men in 3 companies. **This is human responsibility.** Gideon didn't say: "I believe in the sovereignty of God, so if it is bound to happen, it will, and it doesn't matter what I do." **He knew that God's sovereignty and man's responsibility did not destroy each other; they worked in concert.**

3. When you have a strong faith - trust and confidence in God – you will obey. **So daily and weekly strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ by making use of his Word and Sacraments.** Never rob yourself of these nourishments滋润. **When you have strong faith, you will fully engage in the battles of life.** You will care what your children are taught in schools and protect them from these lies. You will be angry when your boss or school wants you to work on the Sabbath, and you will make other choices. You will be brought to tears when the Supreme Court protects murderers and promotes the murder of babies, and then you will support the weak, the sick, and infants! If you don't have a passion to act, then you need to ask God to strengthen your faith.

4. Gideon then prepared for battle with the weapons God had instructed him to use: Trumpets, pitchers, and torches that were inside the pitchers. **If their faith weren't in the true God...and if they did not have a basis for their faith...** they might have laughed at what God told them. But God's weapons are sometimes simple...like David's sling and stones. **All 3 of these things had symbolism.**

a. The trumpets had clear discernable可辨别sounds for the Jews for the beginning and ending of war. The trumpets picture **the announcement of God's justice and destruction he would bring on the wicked.**

Revelation 8:2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.

b. Pitchers, which had to be broken, made a terrible noise. The symbolism of the pitchers is that men (the Midianites, Amalekites, Arabians) were made of clay and could easily be broken.

c. Torches were essential for light for the homes of God's people, but they were also a source of death.

Israel headed to battle in the name of the Lord with symbols of the defeat of their enemies. But they went with the assurance that their God was real. They could win without conventional weapons.

5. Three points of application.

a. The weapons that you fight sin with are not guns, knives, and suicide vests...but the Sword of the Spirit...and it comes from your mouths. **You are the trumpet of God and you have distinguishing sounds so people are not confused.** Your Sword of the Spirit delivers the poor in spirit and it destroys the rich in arrogance傲慢. How loudly are you shouting it? How clearly are you announcing it? This is a life and death issue.

Revelation 19:21 And the rest were **killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse...**

b. Sometimes the world mocks嘲笑 your weapons. But God is pleased to use the simple Gospel to win the greatest victory in the world, like David's. And isn't it true that sometimes the Gospel seems so simplistic that you might wish there were something more technical...maybe include some human work? But God requires that you use **his Word and his Spirit** alone to conquer the world for Jesus! **The Apostle seemed to have alluded暗示 to this situation**...showing the weapon we have in our earthly bodies.

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

2Corinthians 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal肉体 but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 **casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God**, bringing **every thought into captivity** to the obedience of Christ,

c. Always remember that the ultimate victory was secured by Christ at the cross. You are mere servants. And he is always with you.

17 And he said to them, "**Look at me and do likewise**同样; watch, and when I come to the edge of the camp you shall do as I do: 18 "When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then you also blow the trumpets on every side of the whole camp, and say, '**The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!**'"

6. Gideon then called on the soldiers to follow him and imitate what he said and did. What a leader!

a. He did not lead from behind; he led from the front and **asserted his authority**. (He was not a wimp窝囊废.)

The people listened carefully for they did want not make mistakes and threaten the lives of this small army.

b. The people had to blow the trumpet...symbolizing war...

Ezekiel 33:4 'then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be on his own head.

c. The people had to say: "The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon." The assurance of victory did not negate否定 human action. So it was God's sword and it was Gideon's sword.

7. Some applications.

a. True leaders in the church must assert their rightful position. They must confront sin. And church leaders are not chosen by the people, as in a democracy. They are appointed by God. When leaders lead proper they honor God, they do good for the congregation, and will receive God's reward. In the home some parents are afraid of their children because they threaten to call the CAS. Sometimes parents *ask* their kids to do things-as if they have a right to refuse! That is harmful to the children. They'll have a weak view of God. Stop it.)

b. True leaders in the home, church, and civil sphere must set good examples in life and discipline for those under their charge. You, like Jesus, must be worthy of being followed. Men should follow you because you have the authority from God, but you must live in such a way that it is easy for others to follow you. Your word and testimony must match.

c. The congregation must listen carefully to instruction from leaders. Can you imagine the consequence for not listening carefully to instruction sometimes? Sometimes people can die! If you cut the wrong wire bad things can happen! And the same thing is true spiritually!

19 So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outpost of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just as they had posted the watch; and they blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers that were in their hands. 20 Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers—they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing—and they cried, "The sword of the LORD and of Gideon!"

8. About 10:00PM, the beginning of the middle watch, (Jews had 3 watches, the Romans 4), the 300 did what Gideon instructed them to do. (The Midianites were complacent and had no watches for security, but God's army weren't.) The 300 blew their trumpets, broke their pitcher, and cried out with loud voices. This caused utter pandemonium乌烟瘴气. The Midianites were probably drunk and sleepy. The loud noise echoing in the usually quiet valley would have been deafening震耳欲聋! Trumpets are quite loud. It was wonderful that Israel **submitted to this strange activity simply because that was what God**, in whom they trusted, said they should do.

9. God accomplishes much when his people are united as one. Jesus prayed for that unity. John 17.

Obedience Led to Victory

21 And every man stood in his place all around the camp; and the whole **army ran** and cried out **and fled**. 22 When the three hundred blew the trumpets, **the LORD set every man's sword against** his companion throughout the whole camp; and the army fled to Beth Acacia, toward

Zererah, as far as the border of Abel Meholah, by Tabbath.

1. Obedience led to victory. In this case the victory was a military victory. The noises and the shouting caused so much confusion that the enemy fought against each other. The sudden appearing of the light from the pitchers added to the confusion. The darkness did not help them. The Midianites thought the persona near them was the enemy, so they stayed in place and killed each other. Surely they thought that a much larger army was descending on them to bring them a violent death. When the fighting was unbearable, they ran. Not an arrow was shot, but God worked to secure freedom for his children. There was no doubt that this was the work of God. He set their sword against them.

23 And the men of **Israel gathered together from Naphtali, Asher, and all Manasseh,** and **pursued the Midianites.** 24 Then Gideon sent messengers throughout all the mountains of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites, and seize from them the **watering places** as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan." Then all the men of Ephraim gathered together and seized the watering places as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan. 25 And they captured two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb. They pursued Midian and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side of the Jordan.

2. Israel then pursued the 135,000 sans the dead. Gideon then called other men of Israel to come and reap the benefits of the fleeing enemy and recover what the Midianites were trying to steal. They recovered their watering places-either water for animals or places for crossing the river. They captured the kings, Oreb and Zeeb and killed them both. Oreb means "raven." Zeeb means "wolf." They were both wild and voracious 贪心. Both eat carrion 腐肉. Henry: "Their places of shelter became the places of their slaughter 屠宰."

3. Gideon called the rest of Israel because he wanted the other tribes to reap some benefits. Why? He knew that the 300 had not gained the victory. God did. So they did not keep everything for themselves. These were covenant 圣约 blessings for all of God's people. Even those who were afraid...and those who were selfish and careless and bent down to indulge 放纵 themselves in drinking from the river...enjoyed benefits. Even so, Gideon cared about the weak and the helpless...even those who are weak in spirit. This was not socialism. This was brotherly love. This is what we do together for the good of the body.

4. Why were God's children not afraid but the Midianites were? Israel had God with them. When people do not have God with them, they will be afraid of a leaf 叶子.

Psalm 91:5 **You shall not be afraid of the terror by night,** Nor of the arrow that flies by day,
Proverbs 28:1 **The wicked flee 逃跑 when no one pursues,** But the righteous are bold as a lion.

Conclusion:

Gideon's small army trusted God so they willingly obeyed. It did not matter that God's instructions were somewhat strange...it did not matter that the odds seem stacked 堆叠 against them. **Their obedience brought victory.** They got back their freedom so they would work to expand God's kingdom and bring glory to Jehovah.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. What wondrous victory God brought to you through his Son...the Bread of Life...who became a sword of judgment on the Devil, destroying his work, chaining him, and setting you free! God didn't need you for the job. You couldn't do that job. So rejoice that you get the benefits of Christ's work.

2. But don't forget that your deliverance 救出 is not in a bubble. Yes, your deliverance was for the good of man, but it was ultimately for God's glory. Are you living for the glory of God? Having been graciously brought into Christ's army, are you using the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, and the courage from the Holy Spirit, to fight wickedness in high places? Are you clearly speaking his message of life and death? This is the only way to protect the godly, save the lost, destroy the wicked!

Finally, if you are not a Christian you are trapped in sin and destined for hell. Only Jesus can set you free. Will you flee to him today to take away your sins and give you liberty from the tyranny 暴政 of sin? The Bible says in Hebrews 6:18 that the one who flees to him for refuge will find hope.