

Gideon's Army

Scripture Reading — Judges 7:1-24

“. . . or Israel would boast against [the Lord, saying], ‘My own strength has saved me.’” — Judges 7:2

Gideon was unsure of himself, so he gathered an army of 32,000 men, as many as he could find. But then the real Commander of the army reduced the troops to 300. How could Israel now hope to defeat the vast army of Midian and their allies?

That was exactly the point. The size of Gideon’s army had little to do with defeating the Midianites. To be sure, the shock and awe of the trumpets, torches, shouting, and breaking of jars in the darkness were intimidating, but they were only instruments in God’s hand. And “if God is for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31).

There was no standing army—fully trained and ready for a fight— in Israel. The people Gideon had gathered were ordinary Israelites. No wonder Gideon was afraid to attack. But the Lord would give them victory.

The struggle for faith often seems impossible. Not only do we ourselves struggle to hold on, but the path of destruction by sin and death can be overwhelming. Every day people suffer and die—from disease, war, famine, corruption, abuse. All this can make it difficult to hold on to God.

Fear not! One Soldier, trained in humility and subordinate to the Commander’s will, shattered the bonds of death when he rose from the grave! So now we can ask, “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” (1 Corinthians 15:55).

Prayer

By your Spirit, Lord, help us to trust in you. Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord! Amen.

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