

10. Focused on War

The story of Gideon and his three hundred is one of the primary Old Testament stories that must shape our understanding of God through us.

We are pulling forward the story of Gideon to follow right after Eliezer bringing the bride to Isaac for two reasons. Because of the urgency of the present hour, we need the focus that Gideon's story gives us, first to know how to respond effectively as sons of God, and second, to shape how we understand the upcoming lessons.

With Eliezer, we bring the Church to Jesus, and with Gideon, we protect her and teach her to fight.

Be Ready. Let your waist be girded and your lamps burning; and you yourselves be like men who wait for their master, when he will return from the wedding... Blessed are those **servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. ...Therefore you also be ready** (Luke 12:35-40).

And the dragon stood before the woman to devour her child as soon as it was born... And they overcame him... (Revelation 12).

The serpent kills by calling God a liar, that man is not His image and likeness. Cain, representing the beast, that is, all human rule-over, kills by striking down the one who offers a lamb between himself and God.

Marriage and War. The fruit of union with Christ is the entrance of the knowledge of God into all creation. And the knowledge of God enters into creation through our human hearts together, as we love one another.

Adam was ready to eat of life at the very moment the serpent struck his first mighty blow – *Did God really say?* Those words successfully prevented “Christ lives in your heart through faith.” That is the murder.

In the proving of Christ, marriage and war are utterly tied together. It is the entrance of the knowledge of God through us that is the target.

The Entrance of God. As we saw in “A Bride for Isaac,” there is no entrance of the knowledge of God through us apart from the Church, millions of believers in Jesus all across the earth.

God required me to take my brethren with me when He showed me my union with Christ. I could not know Christ living as me without also receiving Christ living as those with whom I disagreed. More than that, the revelation of God is love one another, without one another, there is no knowledge of God.

God will have a woman clothed with the Lord Jesus Christ, and she alone will birth the knowledge of God into all.

All GONE! The entrance of the knowledge of God through the Church into this world, that is, love one another made visible and complete, eliminates two things from the human experience.

We must understand the word “eliminate.” It means GONE; it means no memory left. There is no negotiation, no compromise, no peace treaty. It is total annihilation.

Those two things are first, the contempt of Adam, ALL human rule-over, and second all demons in the human experience. – GONE! The dragon and the beast, all demons and all political power of whatever form it takes, vanish from this earth as a result of the entrance of that child.

To Murder Jesus. A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more (Matthew 2:18).

Satan and Herod together sought to murder the revelation of God, yet Mary and Jesus escaped, protected, in this case, by the readiness of Joseph and by the angel of the Lord.

Again, as we are as Eliezer in bringing the Church to Jesus, so we are as Joseph in protecting the Church and her gathering together as the revelation of Christ. Yet Satan knows what is at stake and ALL human political government right now is given utterly to him.

The Hosts of Spiritual Wickedness. This is our setting and context, then, into which we bring the story of Gideon and his three hundred immediately after “a bride for Isaac.”

In God’s patterns throughout the Old Testament, pagan kings and pagan armies are always representative, not only of ruling demons and all the hosts of heavenly evil, but also of their continuous union with the kingdoms of men in their assault against the revelation of God.

All human kings, outside of the kings of Israel, represent Satan and his most powerful lieutenants and the pagan armies are the hosts of spiritual wickedness against which we wage war.

War against the Lamb. And the dragon gave to the beast his power and his throne and great authority. – And the ten horns which you saw **are ten kings who... receive authority as** kings for one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and they shall give up their own power and authority to the beast. These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is the Lord of lords and King of kings; and those with Him are called and chosen and faithful (Revelation 13 & 17).

We must have this clear. All human government joins with Satan to make war against the Lamb, Cain against Abel, especially the government of the United States of America.

An Impoverished Church. And so, in Gideon’s day, this same combination of heavenly and earthly evil were the armies of the Midianites and their two princes, Oreb and Zeeb. Notice what they did. They would encamp against them and destroy the produce of the earth as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance for Israel.

This is why Jesus paired our readiness to fight with our giving His people bread to eat. The two go hand in hand.

So Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites. – Jesus lives in the hearts of all our brethren, but they are impoverished because Nicene theology and the serpent's gospel have stolen from them what that means.

To Steal and to Destroy. Christ lives inside of your hearts through faith – Acknowledge the good things of Christ inside of you. Life is knowing the Father through knowing Jesus Sent into us, every Word God speaks written all through our hearts.

The thief does not come except that he might steal and might kill and might destroy. I came that they might possess life and may possess it abundantly [excessively – beyond all expectation] (John 10:10).

Our brethren have received Jesus, yes, but only inside of a “gospel” that has stripped from them all knowledge of Father-with-me and Father-through-me.

Identity Issues. Gideon was struggling with identity issues, and it took a bit of back and forth between him and the angel of the Lord before he was ready to accept God's hand upon him. We have been the same, most certainly.

Then Gideon was instructed to tear down the false gospel and to offer the true in the sight of Israel, but he was afraid and did it when no one could see. If that isn't a description of me, I don't know what is!

God chooses the weak, as Moses was weak, but He also chooses those who, despite all their stumbling agony, will believe that God is telling them the truth.

Three Groups. When Gideon finally accepted God-with-me, he gathered 32,000 Israelites in order to go up against the Midianites. The details of the story you have from your own reading; what I am after is the truth applied to us right now.

God split the 32,000 men into three groups – 22,000 – 9,700 – and 300. This is his pattern all the way through, outer court, holy place, holy of holies. Hardly knowing God – knowing God in-part – knowing God in full.

But why does God do it this way? He states His reason clearly – Lest Israel claim glory for **itself against Me, saying, ‘My own hand has saved me.’**

No Flesh Shall Boast. The foolish things of the world God has **chosen, ...and the weak things... and the despised, ...so that He might bring to nothing that which is existing, so that** no flesh might boast in the presence of God (1 Corinthians 1:27-29).

The move of God fellowship believed emphatically that salvation was OF US and not of God, that we would know God-through-us only AFTER we had proven full obedience. All Nicene Christianity believes the same.

This belief, that we ourselves must struggle against sin in the flesh BEFORE we can truly know Christ, is kept out of the knowledge of God in the Holiest by God Himself.

The Proving of Christ. We must look at the end of this story, however, before we look at the separation taking place.

Gideon and his three hundred did NOT strike the victory against the enemies of God. All 32,000 of those men who first followed Gideon DID, along with thousands more who had not bothered to show up in the first place. Removing the “too many” has nothing to do with the final victory, but only with the proving of Christ.

Gideon and his three hundred stood in the place of all – as firstfruits – for one reason only, so that all Israel could see and know that they were well able to cast down the enemy.

The Dividing Lines. The first dividing line came between those who were willing to drink of God's Spirit versus those who were afraid that if they asked God, they would get a demon.

It is not doctrinal "belief" that pits people against the flow of the Spirit into their souls, but fear and unbelief. It is the second dividing line, however, that is most important to us.

Ten thousand men went down to the river to drink of God's Spirit in all joy. Three hundred of them remembered that right on the other side of the river were one hundred thousand enemies raging against Christ.

I Teach You to Fight! Look across many of the charismatic circles, look across the union with Christ groups, look across those who teach present grace, including many in ultimate reconciliation circles. Most of them teach that there is NO MORE WAR.

I teach everything of the Spirit, everything of union with Christ, everything of present grace that they also teach. I teach you to rejoice in all the abundance of the Spirit.

AND – I teach you this word as well. A woman enclothed with the sun... And having a child in her womb, she screams, being in travail... And the dragon stands in the face of the woman to devour her child.

Our Eyes on the Enemy. Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight (Psalm 144:1 – KJV). And they **overcame the accuser...**

Those who are drinking of Spirit only do not actually know the gospel. They rejoice in the good things of Christ, but they do not know what anything is about.

The three hundred whom God has chosen do not lose sight of the serpent's attack against Jesus – *Did God indeed say?* – and against His Church, even while they partake of all that God intends in the outpouring of the Spirit. You are of that three hundred.

The Moment of Victory. Gideon's three hundred never took their eyes off of war, not for themselves, but for all Israel – for the sake of the Church.

Let's go next to the moment of victory. 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!” And every man** stood in his place all around the camp...

That's it. That is all they did. UNTIL – all Israel came out to destroy the enemy, only then did the 300 also fight.

Authority and Permission. I reject the statement, “Well, God will take care of everything.”

God has NO authority to “take care of” anything inside of heaven or earth BECAUSE He gave all authority to the Jesus who lives inside of our hearts and who reveals Himself through us, His body, BUT with our willing permission.

Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power (Psalm 110 – KJV).

The Sword of the Lord. And the Lamb will overcome them, because He [has the authority to do so]; and those with Him are called and chosen and faithful.

We are calling “all Israel” as “one hundred million believers in Jesus all across this earth.” They do not know the gospel, for they have been robbed.

Gideon and his three hundred did five things. They stood in their places; they raised their earthen vessels filled with the light of fire; they shattered those earthen vessels so that the light could be seen by all; they blew their trumpets; and they shouted, “The sword of the Lord.”

Our Picture Now. And so I have taught you to do all five of these things, and so we have done and continue to do. But in the space remaining, I want to look again at our larger picture inside our present day.

Like Gideon, I am a frightened little man, afraid to put this word that I share out into the larger arena. But like Abraham, though I am small, I believe that God is telling me the truth.

And like David, I am willing to throw my little pebble against all that death bearing down upon the Church BECAUSE I KNOW that God is with me.

ATTACK, but in Weakness. Then I look at the path of my life, and I am startled to discover that God has taught my hands to make war and my fingers to FIGHT.

And God has given me the fascination of reading stories of battle and how to WIN, something I have been doing since we left Blair Valley.

And when I look at the insanity swallowing up our world and the DEATH bearing down even now upon the Church, I find one thing inside – the heart of Horatio Nelson. ATTACK. Attack – attack – attack. Yet we never leave the wisdom of Gandalf and Aragorn sending Frodo and Sam, for we remain weak and of no significance.

I Intend to Fight. And we do not strike the air blindly. We know our enemy; we know ourselves; and we know our God. You see, you and I are faced with a simple choice. Either we fall into a ditch alongside the road and die (I mean that literally), or we fight for the Church.

David and his stone were the same as Gideon. It was the entire Israeli army that defeated the Philistines, but David showed them all that it could be done. We have a little stone, a tiny little stone. Yet our God is with us, and He will cause our little stone to prevail.

I intend to fight, but not alone. I will cast down all death and accusation alongside of you for the sake of the Church.

Reading for Next Time. I have packed so much into a small space. But it is this picture of the firstfruits of proving Christ that I want us to have as we go forward from here. And that takes us straight into the next lesson, “Contending with God,” the central point of Jacob’s story.

Read Genesis 25:19-34, then 27:1-34, then all of Chapters 28 and 32. Add Romans 9:6-13 and Hebrews 12:14-17 to your reading as well. We will draw from these scattered readings to understand a conniver who contended with God. – “I will NOT let You go until You bless me!”