# Lesson 60 – The Earlier Judges Part II

**based on Judges 8 through 10.**

1) What did Gideon do in the previous lesson?
   **Judges 7:16-18** And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a _____ in every man's hand, with empty _____, and _____ within the pitchers. And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The _____ of the LORD, and of Gideon.

The sleeping army was suddenly aroused. Upon every side was seen the light of the flaming torches. In every direction was heard the sound of trumpets, with the cry of the assailants. Believing themselves at the mercy of an overwhelming force, the Midianites were panic-stricken. With wild cries of alarm, they fled for life, and, mistaking their own companions for enemies, they slew one another. As news of the victory spread, thousands of the men of Israel who had been dismissed to their homes returned and joined in pursuit of their fleeing enemies. The Midianites were making their way toward the Jordan, hoping to reach their own territory, beyond the river.

In this signal defeat not less than one hundred and twenty thousand of the invaders perished. The power of the Midianites was broken, so that they were never again able to make war upon Israel. The tidings spread swiftly far and wide, that Israel's God had again fought for His people. No words can describe the terror of the surrounding nations when they learned what simple means had prevailed against the power of a bold, warlike people.

2) What is the real secret to success?
   **Proverbs 15:33** The _____ of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.

The leader whom God chose to overthrow the Midianites occupied no prominent position in Israel. He was not a ruler, a priest, or a Levite. He thought himself the least in his father's house. But God saw in him a man of courage and integrity. He was distrustful of himself and willing to follow the guidance of the Lord. God does not always choose for His work men of the greatest talents, but He selects those whom He can best use.

The most complete system that men have ever devised, apart from the power and wisdom of God, will prove a failure, while the most unpromising methods will succeed when divinely appointed and entered upon with humility and faith. Trust in God and obedience to His will are as essential to the Christian in the spiritual warfare as to Gideon and Joshua in their battles with the Canaanites.

3) What has God promised?
   **Ephesians 3:20** Now unto him that is able to do _____ abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

He is just as willing to work with the efforts of His people now and to accomplish great things through weak instrumentalities. All heaven awaits our demand upon its wisdom and strength.

4) When Gideon came back victorious, did the area celebrate?
   **Judges 8:1** And the men of Ephraim said unto him, Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did _____ with him sharply.



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They were jealous and angry, as though Gideon had been led by his own will and judgment. They did not discern God's hand in the triumph of Israel, they did not appreciate His power and mercy in their deliverance; and this very fact showed them unworthy to be chosen as His special instruments.

5) What was Gideon's reply to the crowd?
**Judges 8:2-3** And he said unto them, What have I done now in comparison of _____? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer? God hath delivered into _____ hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their anger was abated toward him, when he had said that.

The spirit of jealousy might easily have been fanned into a quarrel that would have caused strife and bloodshed; but Gideon's modest answer soothed the anger of the men of Ephraim, and they returned in peace to their homes. Firm and uncompromising where principle was concerned, and in war a ***"mighty man of valor,"*** Gideon displayed also a spirit of courtesy that is rarely witnessed.

6) In time, what was proposed to Gideon?
**Judges 8:22** Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, _____ thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.

The people of Israel, in their gratitude at deliverance from the Midianites, proposed to Gideon that he should become their king, and that the throne should be confirmed to his descendants. This proposition was in direct violation of the principles of the theocracy. God was the king of Israel, and for them to place a man upon the throne would be a rejection of their Divine Sovereign.

7) Did Gideon accept the offer?
**Judges 8:23** And Gideon said unto them, I will _____ rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you.
8) What did Gideon ask for?
**Judges 8:24-25** And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the _____ of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.) And they answered, We will _____ give them. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey.
9) What did he do with the loot?
**Judges 8:27** And Gideon made an _____ thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah: and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.

Gideon was betrayed into another error, which brought disaster upon his house and upon all Israel. The season of inactivity that succeeds a great struggle is often fraught with greater danger than is the period of conflict.

Because he had been commanded to offer sacrifice upon the rock where the Angel appeared to him, Gideon concluded that he had been appointed to officiate as a priest. Without waiting for the divine sanction, he determined to provide a suitable place, and to institute a system of worship similar to that carried on at the tabernacle. With the strong popular feeling in his favor, he found no difficulty in carrying out his plan.

From the material thus furnished, Gideon constructed an ephod and a breastplate, in imitation of those worn by the high priest. His course proved a snare to himself and his family, as well as to Israel. The unauthorized worship led many of the people finally to forsake the Lord altogether, to serve idols. After Gideon's death great numbers, among whom were his own family, joined in this apostasy. The people were led away from God by the very man who had once overthrown their idolatry.



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10) What is our only safety, personal and national?
**Matthew 16:24** Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his _____, and follow me.

Those who stand in the highest positions may lead astray. The wisest err; the strongest may falter and stumble. There is need that light from above should be constantly shed upon our pathway.

11) What was the legacy of Gideon?
**Judges 8:33-34** And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after _____, and made Baalberith their god. And the children of Israel remembered _____ the LORD their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side:

After the death of Abimelech, the rule of judges who feared the Lord served for a time to put a check upon idolatry, but erelong the people returned to the practices of the heathen communities around them. Among the northern tribes the gods of Syria and Sidon had many worshipers. On the southwest the idols of the Philistines, and on the east those of Moab and Ammon, had turned the hearts of Israel from the God of their fathers. But apostasy speedily brought its punishment. The Ammonites subdued the eastern tribes and, crossing the Jordan, invaded the territory of Judah and Ephraim. On the west the Philistines came up from their plain beside the sea, burning and pillaging far and near. Again, Israel seemed to be abandoned to the power of relentless foes.

12) After suffering for a long time what did the people finally do?
**Judges 10:10** And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, saying, We have _____ against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.

Sorrow had not worked true repentance. The people mourned because their sins had brought suffering upon themselves, but not because they had dishonored God by transgression of His holy law. True repentance is more than sorrow for sin. It is a resolute turning away from evil.

13) Did God answer?
**Judges 10:11-12** And the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Did not I _____ you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines? The Zidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, did oppress you; and ye _____ to me, and I delivered you out of their hand.
**Judges 10:13-14** Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you _____ _____. Go and cry unto the gods which ye have _____; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

14) What similar thing will happen in the future?
**Revelation 20:11-12** And I saw a great _____ throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the _____ were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

At that tribunal must they render an account who have devoted their God-given talents of time, of means, or of intellect, to serving the gods of this world. They have forsaken their true and loving Friend, to follow the path of convenience and worldly pleasure. They intended at some time to return to God; but the world with its follies and deceptions absorbed the attention. Frivolous amusements, pride of dress, indulgence of appetite, hardened the heart and benumbed the conscience, so that the voice of truth was not heard. Duty was despised. Things of infinite value were lightly esteemed, until the heart lost all desire to sacrifice for Him who has given so much for man. But in the reaping time they will gather that which they have sown.



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15) What is at the heart of the issue?
**Proverbs 1:24-26** Because I have called, and ye _____; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my _____, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;
**Proverbs 1:27-29** When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they _____ upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not _____ the fear of the LORD:
**Proverbs 1:30-31** They would _____ of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the _____ of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

16) What promise is for the saved?
**Proverbs 1:33** But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be _____ from fear of evil.

17) What did the Children of Israel do in those days?
**Judges 10:15-16** And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; _____ us only, we pray thee, this day. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the LORD: and his soul was _____ for the misery of Israel.

A deliverer was raised up in the person of Jephthah, a Gileadite, who made war upon the Ammonites and effectually destroyed their power. For eighteen years at this time Israel had suffered under the oppression of her foes, yet again the lesson taught by suffering was forgotten.

As His people returned to their evil ways, the Lord permitted them to be still oppressed by their powerful enemies, the Philistines. For many years they were constantly harassed, and at times completely subjugated, by this cruel and warlike nation. They had mingled with these idolaters, uniting with them in pleasure and in worship, until they seemed to be one with them in spirit and interest. Then these professed friends of Israel became their bitterest enemies and sought by every means to accomplish their destruction.

18) Can there be harmony between God's people and the Worldly?
**John 15:18** If the world hate you, ye know that it hated _____ before it hated you.
**1 John 3:13** Marvel not, my brethren, if the _____ hate you.

Like Israel, Christians too often yield to the influence of the world and conform to its principles and customs, in order to secure the friendship of the ungodly; but in the end it will be found that these professed friends are the most dangerous of foes. The Bible plainly teaches that there can be no harmony between the people of God and the world.

Satan works through the ungodly, under cover of a pretended friendship, to allure God's people into sin, that he may separate them from Him; and when their defense is removed, then he will lead his agents to turn against them and seek to accomplish their destruction.

**Can you see that God has to come First in everything?**

**Would you like to live in peace?**

**When is it time to humble yourself before the LORD?**



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