

THE OBSTACLE BECOMES THE WAY

JUDGES 6-7 | ERIC SIMPSON | MAY 30TH, 2021

"The impediment to action advances action. What stands in the way becomes the way." – Marcus Aurelius

Judges cycle:



Gideon = hacker, warrior

- Where absence is presence.

Judges 6:12-13

¹²When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, "The LORD is with you, mighty warrior."¹³"But sir," Gideon replied, "if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian."

Gideon's everyday life = oppressive, invaded, ruined, ravaged, impoverished

The Midianites are on the scene not as a result of God's absence but as an instrument of His loving presence.

- Where weakness is strength.

Judges 6:14-16

¹⁴The LORD turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?"¹⁵"But Lord," Gideon asked, "how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."¹⁶The LORD answered, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together."

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

⁹But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.¹⁰That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Perhaps when we're at our lowest, God stands the tallest.

- Where reduction is preparation.

Judges 7:2-7

²The LORD said to Gideon, "You have too many men for me to deliver Midian into their hands. In order that Israel may not boast against me that her own strength has saved her,³ announce now to the people, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.'" So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained.⁴But the LORD said to Gideon, "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will sift them for you there..."⁵So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the LORD told him, "Separate those who lap the water with their tongues like a dog from those who kneel down to drink."⁶Three hundred men lapped with their hands to their mouths. All the rest got down on their knees to drink.⁷The LORD said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the other men go, each to his own place."

For Gideon, the battle got larger before there was breakthrough.

Why?

It's one way God combats self-reliance.

Judges 7:15-18

¹⁵...He [Gideon] 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 companies, 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.' "