

Series: Lessons From the Lives of the Judges

# WHY HAST THOU SERVED US THUS

## JUDGES 8:1-3

Text: Judges 8:1

### **Judges 8:1**

<sup>1</sup> 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 chide with him sharply.

Introduction:

As we considered last week the plan of God is not always the plan of our choosing or the plan that makes the most sense, but God's plan is always the best plan.

God took a 300 man army and used them with no weapons to defeat the enemy.

In reality there was no way possible that 300 men could do in themselves what was done. Only God could have brought about what happened.

Quote:

Little is much when God is in it AND He will get in it if we give Him our little or what we've got.

No sooner was the enemy, the Midianites, defeated; the children of Israel were ready to quarrel among themselves.

Remember it's often after a victory that testing come.

If Gideon had not handled this with a great deal of wisdom and grace it may have broken out into a flame of fatal consequences.

Note as we consider the question posed to Gideon; "Why hast thou served us thus?"

## 1. THE ACCUSATION (VS. 1)

### ***Judges 8:1***

<sup>1</sup> *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 chide with him sharply.*

Notice their pettiness

They were angry that Gideon did not send for them to begin the attack on Midian.

But note:

- Gideon was called of God, and must act as He was directed.
- Why did not the Ephraimites offer themselves willingly to the service?

They knew the enemy was in their country, and had heard of the forces that were raising to oppose them, to which they ought to have joined themselves, in zeal for the common cause, though they had not a formal invitation.

Quote:

It's often those who are sitting on the sidelines who want to tell those on the field how best to play the game.

The case itself called them; they needed not wait for a call from Gideon.

I think it's important to consider another possibility.

- Gideon had saved their credit in not calling them.

If he had sent for them, no doubt many of them would have gone back with the faint-hearted, or been dismissed with the lazy, slothful.

Cowards will seem valiant when the danger is over.

Those who consult their outcome when danger is near never put themselves in the midst of the battle.

Note not only The Accusation but also:

## **2. GIDEON'S ANSWER**

### ***Judges 8:2-3***

*<sup>2</sup> And he said unto them, What have I done now in comparison of you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer? <sup>3</sup> God hath delivered into your 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.*

His answer was very calm and peaceable.

Note He Answers Them:

- With a great deal of meekness

He did not resent the affront, nor answer anger with anger, but mildly reasoned the case with them.

His victory over his own passion was as great as the victory over the Midianites.

Often when we accomplish a degree of success we often feel as if we are due a great measure of respect.

Remember it's not about you or me.

***Proverbs 16:32***

*<sup>32</sup> He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.*

He Also Answered Them:

- With a great deal of modesty and humility

He magnified their performances above his own.

Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim, who picked up the stragglers of the enemy, and cut off those of them that escaped, better than the vintage of Abiezer - a greater honour to them, and better service to the country, than the first attack Gideon made upon them?

He basically says that their gleaning was better than his gathering.

In magnifying their achievement he diminished his own performance; but in doing so he didn't take any glory from God's crown to adorn theirs.

Note

**Judges 8:3**

<sup>3</sup> **God hath delivered into your 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.

Gideon stands here a very great example of self-denial, and this instance shows us:

1. Humility is the best way to remove envy.
2. Humility is the surest way of ending strife.

**Proverbs 13:10**

<sup>10</sup> *Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.*

3. Humility is most admirable in the midst of achievement and advancement.
4. Humility will esteem others better than ourselves, and in honor to prefer

Close

Now what was the issue of this controversy? The Ephraimites had chided with him sharply.

### **Judges 8:1**

<sup>1</sup> *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 chide with him sharply.*

They forgot the respect due to their general and one whom God had honored.

Their behavior and actions are like those who behave themselves similar today is a sign of weakness, and envy.

But Gideon's soft answer turned away their wrath.

### **Proverbs 15:1**

<sup>1</sup> *A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.*

Their anger was abated towards him.

### **Judges 8:3**

<sup>3</sup> *God hath delivered into your 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.*

Very great and good men must expect to have their patience tried by the unkindness and follies even of those they serve and must not think it strange.