

Judges Chapter 7 Part 4

When we approach the book of Judges, or for that matter, any book in the Old Testament, we have to understand there are cultural, historical and linguistic perspectives that we need to adjust to. I have mentioned this previously.

There is also the issue of spirituality. In the book of Judges, we see action in the physical world. We must also note the spiritual aspect to history. Here is a quote from Robbie Dean that expresses that when talking about the book of Judges:

I transcribed this from his Judges 2021 series lesson 6.

“In typical Old Testament Hebrew fashion that history is divided into two arenas: there is the material and there is the spiritual. And that in the material, physical, earthy realm where human beings lived their lives and make their decisions and exercise their volitional responsibilities or irresponsibility they reap the consequences whether it is blessing or whether it is judgment. But then, the other realm is the realm that intersects with the physical realm and that’s the realm where God in His providential care oversees human history. And He is working all things together for good. And that is a great verse, Romans 8:28 ‘That all things work together for good to those who love God to those who are called according to His purpose,’ because we know that God is working behind the scenes to bring everything together ultimately when all is said and done we will rejoice at the wisdom of God and the care of God and the way he provided for us in this world.”

The book of Judges has threads of that fabric of Scripture which intersect the physical and spiritual world. We have seen that Gideon was immersed in the worship of Baal and Asherah. But we saw God working not just behind the scenes but front and center by sending a prophet to

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Israel to alert them to their degeneracy. When that failed, he presented himself, the 2nd person of the Trinity, the pre-existent Christ to Gideon. Eventually, God the Holy Spirit “clothes” Gideon to provide him with leadership skills and spiritual insight. In the background, He finds a way to show Gideon the path to faith: God passes Gideon’s first test to identify Himself as the Angel of the Lord. Then He passes Gideon’s second test demonstrating that He is greater than Baal. God gives an unbelieving Midianite a dream, which when Gideon hears its interpretation, now trusts God. God did this for Gideon because Gideon was positive toward God. People live in history, but as Robbie Dean says, “...God in His providential care oversees human history.”

Tonight, I want to make an attempt to deal with the word “arise.” It has previously been dealt with tangentially. I cannot delve into great detail. But the goal is to provide you an appreciation of what God did in the time of the judges.

Judges 7:15 When Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation, he bowed in worship. Then he returned to the camp of Israel and said, “Arise, for the Lord has handed over to you the camp of Midian!”

He bowed in worship. This is a single word in the Hebrew. It means to bow. But, the implication in this and in other contexts is worship. The translation captures Gideon’s response. This is a demonstration of Gideon’s faith. The word faith does not appear, but as often is the case in the Old Testament, rather than use the word for faith, the text will describe a faith response. The human author, rather than just tell you someone had faith, shows you the actions of an individual that demonstrate that faith. As James says:

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James 2:18 But someone may well say, “You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”

So here in the book of Judges, the author shows you Gideon’s faith by his worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Gideon had repeatedly been given the promise that he was to deliver Israel. Yet fear controlled his thinking. But when he heard the promise on the lips of the enemy and the enemy’s fear of himself, he believed.

He returned to the Israelite camp. All of a sudden, he is full of confidence and he has a plan. As indicated last week, the dream was not fully interpreted. But Gideon understood the uninterpreted part of the dream. It was a mirror of what he was to do and the result of his actions.

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The Dream		The Execution	
Subject	Verb	Subject	Verb
Round Bread	Rolling (participle) into the camp	Gideon & 100 men	Came to the edge of the camp
	Coming to the tent	Gideon & 100	Came to the edge of the camp
	Striking the tent	Gideon & 300	Blew the shofars, broke the pitchers and shouted “The sword for the Lord and for Gideon!”
It (the tent)	Was falling	Midianites	All the Midianites ran, perhaps falling over each other
	Overturnd or was spinning		Shouted in terror. Their minds were spinning and overturnd, they were in a panic.
	Collapsed or laid flat		Historically, the Midianites would no longer be a problem for Israel – they had been “flattened.”

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This brings us to the first action of Gideon when he returns to the Israelite camp: He commanded the 300 to “arise.” I previously alluded to some of the uses of “arise” in the book of Judges. Let’s approach the meanings of this word as used in the book of Judges and then look at a broader context. This is an important word in the book of Judges, one of many important words. This verb is used some 42 times in this book, assuming I counted correctly. It is all through the book from Judges 2:10 to Judges 20:33. It is also used throughout the Old Testament, as many as 628 times as a verbal. So, it deserves more than passing attention.

Points on Arise:

1. Arise in Judges Chapter 7.

God is the first person in chapter 7 to use this verb. He commands Gideon to “arise” to go down to the camp because He had delivered it into Gideon’s hand. In God’s plan, this has already taken place. It’s a done deal. But Gideon is afraid. He has no faith at this point. As a result God gives an enemy soldier a dream, has another enemy soldier interpret the dream for Gideon so that he will believe. The enemy soldiers will likely be dead in a matter of hours, killed by errant Midianite swords. Having rejected the living God, their purpose in life was completed after providing Gideon what he needed to hear in order to believe.

There is a hidden irony here. It is as if the unbelieving enemy soldiers, hostile to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and now Gideon’s God, were giving Gideon the key good news information that would lead him to believe while they, acknowledging the power of Gideon’s God, still reject faith in Him. Ponder this for a moment.

There are people who, no matter how you present the gospel, will reject it. They have decided what is right in their own eyes. And the

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living God has no place in their world. But, they still deserve a hearing of the gospel.

Where there is the potential for faith, God will provide the information, the good news that is needed to trigger that faith. In times past, God has sent missionaries to Africa to evangelize the unbelievers there. I met a man from India who simply read John chapter 3 and believed in Jesus. No one presented the gospel to him. God used the text of the Gospel of John to evangelize him and the Holy Spirit convinced him of its validity. So he believed. As crazy as it may sound, an unbeliever who has heard the gospel can repeat it without believing such that another unbeliever hears it and believes. God can be a “sneaky” fellow. Whatever it takes.

That is grace!

So Gideon got the information he needed to trigger his faith from an unbelieving enemy soldier.

Immediately, he is full of confidence and has a plan. His first word is “arise!” He now gives to the 300 the same command that God had given him. This time, because of the Midianite dream, Gideon has a plan. In these two uses, “arise” has the effect of commanding an attack against the Midianites that is not an attack. They will fight without fighting. They will fight by just using faith.

Let me illustrate with an example from a Bruce Lee movie.

Video clip on YouTube at: <https://youtu.be/xNTToJwKE4F0>

There is a scene in the movie “Enter the Dragon” in which Bruce Lee says he has a technique of fighting without fighting. One of the men on the boat with Bruce going to a Kung Fu fighting tournament wants to see a demonstration of this technique. Actually, he insists on seeing a demonstration of this technique right that minute. Bruce

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gets the man to get into a lifeboat, ostensibly to go to a nearby island for the demonstration. Once the man is in the boat, Bruce lets out some of the line to the lifeboat so that it trails the boat he is in. If the man attempts to pull the lifeboat toward the boat, Bruce threatens to let go of the line. Bruce won the battle by tricking the other fighter. He fought without fighting.

That is similar to what happens in Judges chapter 7. The Midianites are tricked into killing each other. So the 300 become witnesses to a miracle from God. They witness God's technique of fighting without fighting. It is called grace. It is the result of just trusting God.

There are two other uses of the word "arise" in chapter 7 in Judges 7:19. These uses are interesting, and emphasized. This "arise" is used of the changing of the guards at the Midian camp. The guards arising arose. More on that when we get to verse 19.

2. Arise in the book of Judges

When reading the previous uses of this word in the book of Judges, there is an interesting pattern that begins to emerge. A table may be the easiest way to see this pattern.

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“Arise” in Judges chapter 1-7

Judges Verse	Partial Text	Verb	Comment
2:10	Another generation arose	Qal (Basic)	God’s Grace
2:16	The Lord raised judges	Hiphiel (Causative)	God caused it
2:18	The Lord raised judges	Hiphiel (Causative)	God caused it
3:9	The Lord raised a deliverer	Hiphiel (Causative)	God caused it
3:15	The Lord raised a deliverer	Hiphiel (Causative)	God caused it
3:20	(Eglon) arose	Qal (Basic)	The cue for Eglon to act (arise)
4:9	Deborah arose	Qal (Basic)	Prophetess of God
5:7	(Deborah) I arose	Qal (Basic)	Prophetess of God
5:12	Arise Barak	Qal (Basic)	Prophetess of God to Barak
7:9	Arise	Qal (Basic)	God to Gideon
7:15	Arise	Qal (Basic)	Gideon to the 300
7:19 (x2)	Posted the watch	Hiphiel Infinitive Absolute + Hiphiel Perfect (Emphatic) Causative	The cue for Gideon to act (arise)

It is obvious that God is involved in “arise” in many verses in Judges. Note that when God raised up a judge or deliverer, it is in the Hiphiel stem which is the causative stem. God caused it.

Note also, when the enemy “rises” up, this was a cue for the faith hero to rise up and act. When Eglon, the evil king in Judges chapter 3, then Ehud acts and slays him with his home made dagger. In Judges chapter 7, when the Midianites “rise” up the change of the watch, that is the cue for Gideon to rise up and take action. But in

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this case, God causes the Midianites to slay each other—fighting without fighting.

3. Arise in the Old Testament. I am going to skip this point for now with the option of returning to it at a later date. This by itself could take up an hour or more.
4. Arise in the New Testament

Primarily, I want to look at a single passage in the New Testament that illustrates what I am looking at in Judges. It uses the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word for “arise.” Indeed, the Septuagint translation of Judges 7:9 and 7:15 use the Greek word, *anistémi* meaning among other things, to raise up. This same root word is found in Ephesians 5:14. But you need the context in which it is used:

Ephesians 5:6 See that no one deceives you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Ephesians 5:7 Therefore do not become partners with them;

Ephesians 5:8 for you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (in other words, Paul is addressing believers)

Ephesians 5:9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),

Ephesians 5:10 as you try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

Ephesians 5:11 Do not participate in the useless deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;

Ephesians 5:12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.

Ephesians 5:13 But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.

Ephesians 5:14 For this reason it says, “Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you.”

The first point to observe in Ephesians 5:14 is that Paul is talking to believers. So the context is not salvation of the unbeliever.

The word “dead” is plural. It is not death, but dead people or corpses or as in some translations deaths.

Some say this is a paraphrase taken from

Isaiah 60:1 “Arise, shine; for your light has come, And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

“Arise” in Isaiah 60:1 is from the same word used in Judges chapter 7

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This brings us to points on death. This goes back to Thieme's list of types of deaths. This list came from one of Thieme's Basic courses.

Seven Types of Death

1. Physical death. Philippians 1:21
2. Spiritual death. Ephesians 2:1 Romans 5:12 6:23
3. The 2nd death; the Lake of Fire. Hebrews 9:23 Revelation 20:12–15
4. Positional death. Romans 6
5. Operational death. James 2:26
6. Sexual death. Romans 4:17–21 Hebrews 11:11–12
7. Temporal death; the carnal believer. Luke 15:24, 32 Romans 5:6 8:6, 13 Ephesians 5:14; James 1:15 Revelation 3:1

The last one is the type of death Paul is referring to, temporal death, the carnal believer, out of fellowship. The idea is you are not living the Christian life outside of faith fellowship with God. Our faith dependence on the Holy Spirit takes us to fellowship with Jesus Christ who takes us to fellowship with God the Father.

Why am I saying this? Because everything we do has a spiritual aspect to it. When God says to Gideon, “arise!” Gideon doesn't “arise.” At this point he lacks faith. After the interpretation of the Midianite dream, Gideon worships, demonstrating his faith. He now echos God's command and tells the 300 to arise. Now, they need to trust Gideon. Faith.

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I want to leave you with the passage that Robbie Dean quoted:

Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.