



**Five Things Dreamers Must Face
When Dreaming About Their Future
(Isolation)**

November 1, 2020

Big Question: How Well do you Manage Seasons of Isolation?

Series Introduction:

1. **Isolation:** You learn a lot about yourself when you are alone (What have you learned about yourself when you were completely alone?)
2. **Advantage:** You learn a lot about yourself when you have an advantage (How will our leaders manage their advantage?)
Note: We are going to jump ahead in this story and come back to three important lessons
3. **Fear:** You learn a lot about yourself when you are confused (Judges 7:2-3; Have you ever been put in a situation where fear paralyzed those around you?)
4. **Distractions:** You learn a lot about yourself when distracted people leave (Judges 7:4-8; Have you ever worked with people that did not pay attention?)
5. **Change:** Are you able to see another way to be successful? (**Judges 7:19-20**)

I. The Isolation of Gideon

The Setting: People are crying out for help and God sends a normal guy named Gideon

- **The people were dominated by the Midianites** (Can you remember being abused?)
- **Judges 6:1–3 (NIV):** The Israelites **did evil in the eyes of the Lord**, and for seven years **he gave them into the hands of the Midianites**. 2 Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, **the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds**. 3 Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country.

B. The people were warned by a prophet (Can you remember being warned?)

- **Judges 6:7–10 (NIV):** 7 When **the Israelites cried out to the Lord because of Midian**, 8 he sent them a prophet, who said, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: **I brought you up out of Egypt**, out of the land of slavery. 9 I rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians. And I delivered you from the hand of all your oppressors; **I drove them out before you and gave you their land**. 10 **I said to you, ‘I am the Lord your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.’ But you have not listened to me.**”

II. What God Says to Gideon In Isolation

Judges 6:11–14 (NIV)

A. Gideon works in isolation to protect his investment and future

- 11 **The angel of the Lord came and sat down under the oak** in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son **Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress** to keep it from the Midianites.

B. Gideon's frustration with God and religion surfaces in a conversation

- 12 When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior."
13 "**Pardon me**, my lord," Gideon replied, "but **if the Lord is with us, why** has all this happened to us? **Where are all his wonders** that our ancestors told us about when they said, '**Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt?**' **But now the Lord has abandoned us** and **given us** into the hand of Midian."

C. God Ignores Gideon's verbal outbreak and challenges him to face his real problem

14 The 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?"

1. He had to face his personal insecurities

Judges 6:14–16 (NIV): 14 The 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 "**Pardon me**, my lord," Gideon replied, "but how can I save Israel? **My clan is the weakest** in Manasseh, and **I am the least** in my family." 16 The Lord answered, "**I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites,** leaving none alive."

2. He had to face his need for confirmation (What confirmation: are you waiting on?)

Judges 6:17–18 (NIV): 17 Gideon replied, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, **give me a sign** that it is really you talking to me. 18 Please **do not go away until I come back** and bring my offering and set it before you."

Note: Four Things God Did to Help Gideon With His Insecurities

1. God **burned up a sacrifice** on an altar (6:19-21)
2. God **protected him** after he tore down his family's altar to Baal (6:25-32)
3. God **allowed him to ask** for a fleece (or proof) before he went to fight (6:33-40)
4. God **gave him a victory** with three hundred men (7:1-25; Out of 32,000 men only 300 stayed)

III. How God Called Gideon to Fight in Isolation

A. He had to release the Fearful (Are you surrounded by people who are easily intimidated?)

2 The Lord said to Gideon, "You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, 'My own strength has saved me.' 3 Now announce to the army, '**Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.**' " **So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained.**

- ### B. He had to release the Distracted (Are you surrounded by distracted people?)
- 4 But the Lord said to Gideon, "**There are still too many men. Take them down to the water,** and I will thin them out for you there. If I say, '**This one shall go with you,**' he shall go; but if I say, '**This one shall not go with you,**' he shall not go."



5 So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the Lord told him, **“Separate those who lap the water with their tongues as a dog laps from those who kneel down to drink.”** 6 **Three hundred of them drank from cupped hands, lapping like dogs.** All the rest got down on their knees to drink.

7 The 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 others go home.”

8 So Gideon sent the rest of the Israelites home but kept **the three hundred, who took over the provisions and trumpets of the others.** Now the camp of Midian lay below him in the valley.

C. He had to fight with new weapons (Trumpets, jars, torches, and a confession v19-20)

“A sword for the Lord and for Gideon”

Question: Are you willing to fight with other weapons (the internet, technology, one-on-one)

Next Time: Managing Your Advantage

Read Ahead: Judges 8:22-35