

## AGAPE LESSON 39

## THE ARK OF DELIVERANCE

[A people prepared for the LORD]

Put together by Bongie Kuzwayo

**Judges chapter 7:**

Gideon = hewer – to destroy anything. The salutation by the Angel, “Man of valour” is appropriate.

Midianite = strife and contention.

Jerubbaal = let Baal contend – if he is a god, let him defend himself.

Amalekite = dweller in the valley.

[Luke 1v17] “He will also go before Him in the power and spirit of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, **to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.**”

**The Lord prepares His (300) “Ark of deliverance”**

[Judges7v4—6] But the Lord said to Gideon, “the people are still too many; bring them down to the **water**, and I will test them for you there. Then it will be, that of whom I say to you, ‘**This one shall go with you’ the same shall go with you;** and of whoever I say to you, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ the same shall not go.” (5) So, he brought the people down to the **water**. And the Lord said to Gideon, “Everyone who laps from the **water** with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set aside by himself, likewise everyone who gets down on his knees to drink.” (6) **And the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men,** but all the rest of the people got down on their knees to drink water.

**Water** is a constant picture of the word of God. [Ephesians5v25—26] Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, (26) **that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of the water by the word,** (27) that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

The dividing factor is **the speed at which we, the people, assimilate the word of God.** This is the factor that will qualify us to be prepared as part of God’s “Ark of deliverance, (the three hundred/the One Loaf).”

[Judges7v7—8, 16, 20] Then the Lord said to Gideon, “By the **three hundred** men who lapped, I will save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hand. Let all the other people go, every man to his place.” (8) So, the people took provisions and their trumpets in their hands. And he sent away all the rest of Israel, every man to his tent and retained those three hundred men. Now the camp of Midian was below him in the valley. (16) Then he divided the three hundred men into **three companies**, and he put a trumpet into every man’s hand, with empty pitchers, and torches inside the pitchers. (20) Then the three hundred blew their trumpets and broke the pitchers—they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing—and they cried, “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.”

These people going to war had no weapons to fight with. The above looks and sounds very foolish. This picture reminds me of the instruction given to Jehoshaphat and all Judah and Jerusalem. [2Chronicles20v15b—17] “Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God’s. (16) Tomorrow, go down against them. They will surely come up by the ascent of Aziz, and you will find them at the end of the brook before the wilderness of Zeruel. You will not need to fight in this battle, position yourselves, **stand still and see the salvation of the Lord**, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem! Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow, go out against them, for the Lord is with you.

Jehoshaphat and his people had no weapons of war with them, yet they were facing three nations who were coming up against them; Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir. When God’s instruction sounds foolish – don’t dare calculate and rationalise because God’s arithmetic is only compound interest. [1Corinthians1v18—19, 25] For the message of the cross is **foolishness** to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. (19) For it is written, “**I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing, the understanding of the prudent.**” (25) - - - the foolishness of God is wiser than men.

However foolish God’s instruction may sound – ours is to **respond promptly in complete obedience**. [Genesis22v3] So, Abraham **rose early** in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.

**Let us take a closer look at Gideon’s three hundred:**

The Bible records that the Midianites and Amalekites, and all the people of the East, were lying in the valley **as numerous as the locusts, and their camels were without number, as the sand by the seashore in multitude** (Judges7v12). Gideon and his men were dismally outnumbered and did not have weapons of war.

[Judges7v16—20] Then he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet into every man’s hand, with empty **pitchers**, and **torches** inside the pitchers. (17) And he said to them, “**Look at me, and do like-wise**; watch, and when I come to the edge of the camp **you shall do as I do**; (18) When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, and you also, blow the trumpets on every side of the whole camp, and say, ‘The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!’” (19) So, Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outpost of the camp at the beginning of the middle **watch**, just as they had posted the watch; and they blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers that were in their hands. (20) Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers—they held the pitchers in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing—and they cried, “The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!” (21) And every man stood in his place all around the camp, **and the whole army ran and cried out and fled**.

- **Pitchers** (earthen vessels) is a metaphor for believers who carry within themselves the Seed of Christ. [2Corinthians4v7] But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.
- **Torches** (the Light) is a metaphor for Christ, who is the Light of life. [John8v12] Then Jesus spoke to them again saying, “**I am the Light of the world, he who follows Me, shall not walk in darkness, but have the Light of Life.**”
- **Watch** – a symbol of wakefulness, alertness, to be on guard. [Jeremiah51v12] Set up the standard on the walls of Babylon; make the guard strong, set up the watchmen, prepare the ambushes. For the Lord has both devised and done what He spoke against the inhabitants of Babylon. [1Corinthians16v13] Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. [1Pet1v13] Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

- *Trumpet – a symbol of judgement. [Joshua6v5, 16] “It shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with a ram’s horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat. And the people shall go up every man straight before him.” (16) And the seventh time it happened, when the priests blew the trumpet, that Joshua said to the people: “Shout, for the Lord has given you the city. The trumpet is also a symbol of gathering: [2Samuel 18v16] And Joab blew the trumpet, and the people returned from pursuing after Israel: for Joab held back the people. The trumpet is also a symbol of the coming of Christ: [1corinthians15v51–52] Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed— (52) in a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, at the **last trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*
- *Look at me, and do likewise/You shall do as I do: [1Corinthians11v1] Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.*

*The numbers three and three hundred, carry a lot of significance when it comes to God delivering His people from the enemy. I said the that “**Gideon’s three hundred**,” is the ark of deliverance. We see a similar picture in Noah’s ark; the length of which was three hundred cubits, and its height was three stories of ten cubits high each. **Noah’s ark was a vessel of deliverance** that saved eight people from the flood; that is, righteous Noah and his family. The ark was thirty by fifty by three hundred (Genesis6v13–16). **The number three hundred in the Bible speaks of complete deliverance/of victory in conflict.** And when it is used in the Bible, you often find **number three used with it.***

*[1Kings10v17] He also made three hundred **shields of hammered gold**; three minas of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the House of the forest of Lebanon.*

- **Shields** are implements of war. [Ephesians6v16] above all, taking the **shield of faith**, with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.
- **Gold** speaks of that which is of God, divine
- **Hammered gold** speaks of that which has been processed under a hammer. [1Peter1v6–7] In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, (7) that the genuineness of your faith, being **much more precious than gold** that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.