

Judges 6:36-7:25

There's a lot packed into this week's reading: Gideon's fleece before the Lord and the meaning of the dew. God's reduction to 300 of Gideon's army. The meaning of blowing the shofar. The dream of the barley cake and the Resurrection. And the destruction of the enemy army.

Judges 6:36-38 - "And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said. And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water."

Gideon saw that by human strength alone he would be utterly helpless to repel the countless hosts of the marauders. The thought that he was "the least in his father's house" seems still to possess him, and he can hardly believe it possible that he is to save Israel. In his humility he craves a sign that he is indeed chosen and called.

Is this "putting a fleece before God" a sign of unbelief or an evidence of faith?

One clue is that Gideon is listed in the "roll call of faith" in Hebrews 11.

- **Hebrews 11:32-33** - "And what more shall I say? Time will not allow me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions"

But Gideon did need fresh infusions of faith and confidence, which God was willing to supply.

The dew on the fleece laid upon the threshing floor reflected the Holy Spirit that came upon and settled on Gideon in verse 34. The threshing floor was the place of testing and proving for the grain by separating the grain from the chaff, just as this challenging time was a test for Gideon and Israel.

Rashi points out that the ground was not completely devoid of dew, because God had made a covenant with the dew "that it should not cease." In fact, the withholding of dew, as of rain, is a curse (**2 Sam. 1:21; 1 Kings 17: 1; Hag. 1:10**). There was simply much more dew on the fleece than on the ground.

Dew is a symbol of fertility and refreshment. It is also a type of resurrection:

- **Isaiah 26:19** - "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

The "dew of the Resurrection" is stored up in 'Arabot, the highest heaven (Ḥag. 12b). By this dew the dead are revived (Yer. Ber. v. 9b; Yer. Ta'an. i. 63d, with reference to Isa. 26:19). In Ḥag. 12b, **Ps. 68:10 (9)** is referred to: "Thou didst send a plentiful rain to revive thine inheritance." This verse is construed to allude to an incident at the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. "When God appeared amidst the trembling of the earth on Sinai, life fled from the people of Israel and from all the living people in the land of Israel; and the angels said: 'Dost Thou desire to give Thy Law unto the dead or unto the living?' Then God dropped the dew of Resurrection upon all, and they revived."

We talked about this previously - The Children of Israel died and were resurrected at the giving of the Law, just as at Pentecost the consuming fire over the head of each disciple was a type of their acceptance by God as a living sacrifice.

Isaac passed on Abraham's blessing to his son Jacob (thinking it was Esau) expanding on it to include mention of the "dew of heaven":

- **Genesis 27:28-29** - "Therefore may God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be those who bless you!"

"The dew of heaven" in this passage refers to Zion, the rabbis said, pointing to **Psalm 133:3** "the dew of Mount Hermon..."

- **Psalm 133:1-3** - "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

Manna is associated with dew:

- **Numbers 11:9** - "And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it."

The rabbis said: Only on account of Israel does dew come as a blessing upon the world: on account of Jacob, who studied the Torah, or for the sake of Job, whose doors were kept wide open for the needy (Gen. R. 66.). "God promised Abraham under an oath never to let dew cease to bless his descendants, and therefore Elijah could not stop its fall by his words" (Yer. Ta'an. i. 63d; compare Bab. 3a, b).

But what about Gideon's other request -

Judges 6:40 - "And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did

so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground."

The Jews believed there was not only good dew, but there was "hurtful dew."

According to Enoch 60:20, "the spirit of the dew dwells at the ends of the heaven, close to the chambers of the rain, and its course is in winter and in summer." Winds coming from the middle of the twelve portals bring beneficial dew of prosperity; from other portals, hurtful dew accompanied by locusts and other calamities (Enoch 76:8 et seq.). This is also in accordance with rabbinical tradition: "In the sixth heaven, Makon, there are treasuries of hurtful dews and of beneficial dewdrops" (Hag. 12b). "Between Pesah and Shabu'ot a prayer is offered that God may preserve the people from the hurtful dews" (Lev. R. xxviii., with reference to Jer. v. 24). The two loaves of bread offered on Shabu'ot are waved to and fro in symbolical petition to the Ruler of heaven and earth and of the four winds to keep off the unpropitious winds and dews (Suk. 37b; Lev. R. l.c.). - Jewish Encyclopedia

So the dew in this second request by Gideon represents this "hurtful dew accompanied by locusts and other calamities." The Midianites, Amalekites and children of the east would not be able to come as locusts, as they had done previously, to settle over the land and devour Israel. So the dew settled on the ground around it, but not on the fleece.

Putting out a Fleece

Gideon was asking God for a sign, not demanding one. His "fleece" is not an ultimatum for God. God won't be manipulated.

Nor was this superstition - like when people say, "if the third car that passes is a Honda, that means God is telling me I don't need to study for my exams."

In fact, Gideon's 'fleece-putting' wasn't to determine God's will; God had already told him what was going to happen. It was to ask God to prove to Gideon that God would really do what he had already said he was going to do. Or maybe to prove that he heard God correctly, that this wasn't a hallucination.

It appears Gideon didn't distrust God, he distrusted himself. At each step he had to see through his own inadequacies to recognize God's strength within him.

In the Old Testament, signs like this were permitted:

- **Genesis 24:12-14** - Abraham's servant Eliezer asked the Lord for a sign, that whoever came alone to the well would be the bride for Isaac:

"And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water: And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee,

that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master."

- **1 Samuel 14** - Jonathan proposes a sign as to whether God would be with them in attacking the Philistines.

- **Isaiah 7** - God instructs Ahaz to ask for a sign from Him.

This is part of the general subject of guidance. In the Old Testament, God used numerous ways to guide - the pillar of fire and cloud in the wilderness, the Urim and Thummim on the High Priest's breastplate, as well as hearing the voice of God directly as the prophets did, or in a visitation from an angel or THE Angel of the Lord.

In the New Testament, believers have the indwelling Holy Spirit, and God speaks to us through His Son. More often than not, this happens through scripture.

- **Hebrews 1:1-2** - "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds"

Peter calls this a more sure word even than the voice from the Father in heaven that told Jesus, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

- **2 Peter 1:16-19** - "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn"

- or "we have the prophetic word made more sure" (NASB)

Not only the assurance of guidance, but we know the focal point of all past prophecy has been Jesus, who we now live in and He lives in us.

Jesus said, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test" (**Matthew 4:7**). Believers already know the God they worship is genuine.

Jesus, when He was tempted to respond with a sign, instead responded with scripture:

- **Luke 4:3-4** - "And the devil said unto Him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, 'It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'" (Luke 4:3-4)

- **James 1:5** - "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men

liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed."

In relation to Gideon, this should tell us that we already know what God is doing through the scriptures. If we need more confirmation, God can give that to us. He meets us where we are, no problem.

But for us, the "dew" will usually settle on a scripture passage that pertains to our situation.

The Well of Harad and the Hill of Moreh

Judges 7:1 - "Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley."

Well of "Harod" = trembling, to shudder with terror, anxiety, rout of an army

"Moreh" = archer or teacher, with the idea of seeing/looking and instructing.

Moreh is also translated as the early rain.

- **Joel 2:23** - "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain (moreh), and the latter rain in the first month."

- **Psalms 84:6** - "Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain (moreh) also filleth the pools."

(Not the Plain of Moreh of Abram, which is 25 miles away at Shechem - **Genesis 12**)

But the site of the Temple is said to be on Mount Moriah (**1 Chronicles 3:1**)

In **Genesis 22** Abraham is told to take Isaac and go to the Land of Moriah where the Akeda would take place.

Rashi makes a connection between Moriah and the Hebrew word *Moreh* for "instruction" (הוראה); the Hebrew term for teacher, *moreh* or *morah* (מורה), comes from the same Hebrew word. According to this understanding, the name "Moriah" means "land of teaching" or even "land of Torah" (See **Isaiah 2:3** or **Micah 4:2**: "for from Zion shall go forth Torah").

The Aramaic Targum Onkelos renders it "to the land of Worship." This is because worship in the Temple included incense, which included myrrh (*mor* in Hebrew). Thus Moriah can mean "place of myrrh" and therefore "the place where God is worshipped."

(See <http://www.jtsa.edu/examining-the-word-moriah>)

Back to Gideon - The enemies of Israel were arrayed beside the hill of Moreh, while Israel's tribes were gathered at the well of Harad.

It points to God's great victory that would "rout" (*harad*) the enemy. Gideon's fear would be transformed and transferred through faith into fear in the enemy camp. The rout would take place at the hill of *Moreh* (instruction, teaching) which would lead to worship and praise of God.

Too Many Men

Judges 7:2 - "And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me."

The Midianites were 135,000 in number (**Judges 8:10**), and Gideon's forces only 32,000 (**Judges 7:4**). Gideon probably was thinking he didn't have enough men. God thought he had too many, and Israel might be able to praise their own skill after the battle instead of God.

The idea is reflected in Psalm 44:

- **Psalm 44:3** - "For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favor unto them."

Judges 7:3 - "Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand."

"afraid" = *hared* - related to *Harad*, as in the Well of Harad above.

"Gilead" - maybe rather Gilboa - Gilead was on the other side of the Jordan. Or it may refer to another Gilead named in remembrance of the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh. Gideon was of the same tribe, half of which was on one side of Jordan, the other half on the farther side.

Sending away the fearful was a standard rule for war:

- **Deuteronomy 20:8** - "And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart."

Another Test - Forces Further Reduced to 300

Judges 7:4 - "And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go."

Judges 7:5 - "So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lapped of the water with his tongue, as a dog lapped, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that bowed down upon his knees to drink."

Judges 7:6-7 - "And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place."

Another famous company of 300 - the Spartans - fought to the last man against a host of Persians in 480 B.C. Gideon's fight took place maybe 800 years earlier, and it's an entirely different outcome.

Scholars have debated the meaning of this last test. Was it totally random?

The test is described as a trial or a "purification" - The Jewish translation has it: "bring them down to the water, and I will purify (ṣāraḇ) them for you there" The word is the same used to "prove" precious metals by removing the dross and impurities.

Like baptism or other cleansing immersions in the Torah, going to the water here will purify, but in the sense of ridding the army of anything undesirable or a hinderance.

"Every one who laps with his tongue" - putting their hand to their mouth - are the ones chosen. They remained alert, still able to spring up in response to an attack.

Those who "bowed down upon their knees" were solely interested in quenching their thirst without regard to the safety of their brothers-in-arms.

But the rabbis had an additional insight.

Rashi - Set him (i.e., he who kneels) separately away from your group because they will not go with you, since they are thus accustomed to kneel before idols.

This is strikingly like the division of people described on Judgment Day:

- **Matthew 25:32-33** - "And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."

In fact, blowing the shofar is linked to Judgment Day:

- **Joel 2:1** - "Blow the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord comes, for it is close at hand."

- **Revelation 11:15** - "The seventh angel sounded, and great voices in heaven followed, saying, 'The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of His Messiah. He will reign forever and ever!'"

[But Josephus has the opposite opinion. It was those who lapped who were fearful and nervous, but God chose them so that a battle won with such poor quality soldiers would give him even more glory.]

Judges 7:8 - "So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley."

The 9,700 men who were sent home gave over their provisions, stored in pitchers, to the remaining 300. Each war band or contingent would have also had a ram's horn for signaling. All these were also given to the remaining 300. That's why they had 300 shofars to blow and 300 pitchers to break when the time came.

But Gideon was still harboring some self doubt.

The Dream of the Barley Cake

Judges 7:9-11 - "And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand. But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host: And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host."

God is here saying Gideon could take the 300 men and attack the Midianites immediately. But knowing Gideon's susceptibility to fear and misgivings, he gives him another option so his "hands would be strengthened" with confidence.

"Phurah" = branch, a bough or limb of a tree. If Gideon is the tree, then Phurah was his branch, sharing a common purpose and will. He was probably his armor bearer or aide-de-camp. He would also serve as a witness to verify the dream.

Judges 7:13-14 - "And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host."

Apparently the language of the Midianites was either so similar there was no problem understanding, or the Israelites had learned it after seven years of dealing with them.

Rashi - "barley Bread": Symbolizing the merit of the Omer sacrificed on Passover.

Barley was considered poor man's bread, suitable for animals. In this respect it is a symbol of humility. But it was also the first grain to ripen, and thus was used for the First Fruit Offering in the Temple just after Passover.

The first-fruits was a sheaf of barley which was made into an omer of a meal offering in connection with the Feast of Unleavened Bread, directly following the Passover. It was being waved by the priests in the Temple as Jesus was being raised from the dead in his tomb. The Counting of the Omer is the traditional counting of the 49 days from this first fruit offering until Pentecost.

Barley figures in the dream heard by Gideon because it represents the hope of the resurrection. That is what empowers us to be the vessels for God's victory. The earthen pitchers are shattered and broken, as we must be as earthen vessels.

At the same time, the shofars are blown. When the shofar is blown on Rosh Hashanah it is said to confuse Satan. When it is blown ten days later on Yom Kippur, it completely removes Satan's power.

In the dream, the barley cake is said to be a type of the "sword of Gideon." Both are energized by the Resurrection. The rolling barley cake overturned the main tent of Midian, the king's or general's tent according to Josephus, turning it upside down, as the phrase in the Hebrew text describes it; it fell with the bottom upwards; it was entirely demolished, and there was no raising and setting it up again.

The tumbling - *hāpāk* - or "rolling" of the barley cake suggests the rolling away of the stone from the tomb at the Resurrection of Jesus. The overturning of death by Jesus was foreshadowed by the overturning of the tent of the Midianites by Gideon.

hāpāk can also mean a transformation, a conversion, to change oneself. We each are changed by the resurrection when the enemy is overturned within us. When WE are overturned!

The same word *hāpāk* is used to describe the "whirling flaming sword that flashed back and forth" that God placed guarding the Garden of Eden. (**Genesis 3:24**) Thus the connection to the sword of Gideon.

Consider another dream, this one by Joseph:

- **Genesis 37:6-7** - "For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf."

Joseph's sheaf (probably also a barley sheaf) "arose." This also represents Resurrection.

The victory would go to what in the natural appears weak, mean and contemptible to our senses - the 300 men allied with Gideon, a poor man himself who is least in his father's house, and a harmless barley cake of little value.

This whole story is an illustration of Paul's statement:

- **2 Corinthians 12:8-10** - "And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.'"

Judges 7:15 - "And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian."

Instead of having Gideon have a dream, God did even more. He had one enemy dream it, and another enemy give its interpretation predicting their own destruction.

The dream confirmed to Gideon that the Midianites were already beginning to fear him and were on the verge of panic.

The barley cake, the army of only 300 men - were both foolish things in human eyes.

- **1 Corinthians 1:27** - "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty"

The Battle

Judges 7:16-18 - "And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers. And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon."

Rashi says the torches were to reflect "the merit of the giving of the Law." The Torah is often compared to light by the rabbis.

The Light is contained in earthen vessels, represented by the clay pitchers. The light is revealed when the pitchers are broken. Our brokenness and repentance releases the light of God.

- **2 Corinthians 4:7** - "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

- **John 8:1** - "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

The sudden appearance of the Light of Jesus and the Gospel puts Satan into a panic, as happened to the Midianites.

The sounding of the shofar had been demonstrated by Joshua at Jericho. But the shofar was also used for signaling in battle, as it is used here.

The shofar acts as a two-sided sword.

On one hand, the rabbis said, Rosh Hashanah is Judgment Day, and Satan on that day acts as accuser. Having seduced man to sin, he then returns to accuse him of the very sins which he incited. But when he hears the sounds of the shofar, he becomes so confused that he loses track of the proceedings and is unable to prosecute effectively.

Like the pillar of fire at the Exodus, it is confusion to the enemy, but light to God's people.

- **Psalm 89:15** - "Happy is the people who know the sound of the shofar; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance."

Rabbi Josiah says, " It means happy are those who know that the Shofar can move the Almighty - who know that its sound can lift Him from the throne of strict judgement to the throne of mercy."

The blowing of the shofar by Gideon's men carried all these meanings.

Judges 7:17 - "And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do."

Here Gideon is a type of Christ. Jesus' call to the disciples was "Follow me."

- **1 Corinthians 11:1** - "Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ."

- **Hebrews 12:2** - "'Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God'."

- **1 Peter 2:21** - "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps"

God's instructions through Gideon of this battle meant none of the soldiers could hold their weapon - They were holding torches and pitchers in one hand and shofars in the other!

This seems even crazier than Joshua's circling of Jericho and blowing shofars. They didn't even charge or rush toward the enemy. They "stood every man in his place." But the outcome was victory.

Panic and Rout in the Enemy Camp

Judges 7:22 - "And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Bethshittah in Zererath, and to the border of Abelmeholah, unto Tabbath."

See a similar rout in **2 Chronicles 20:21-22**, when the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites, turn against one another in panic before the army of Jehoshaphat.

Then Gideon sent messengers to call back the men he had sent home, and calling for support from Ephraim too, to try to cut off what was left of the fleeing enemy as they tried to cross the Jordan.

Judges 7:25 - "And they took two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb; and they slew Oreb upon the rock Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the winepress of Zeeb, and pursued Midian, and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side Jordan."

The spots were named after these chiefs, Oreb, "the Raven," and Zeeb, "the Wolf" recalling their deaths there.

This battle stands as another type of God's final victory against all enemies at Armageddon - the hill of Meggido or the Valley of Jezreel where this took place (**Revelation 16:16**).

Gideon's victory is remembered by the prophets as another type of the complete victory by God. Isaiah compares it to the destruction of the Egyptians at the Red Sea:

- **Isaiah 10:26-27** - "And the LORD of Hosts will brandish a whip against them (Assyria), as when He struck Midian at the rock of Oreb. He will raise His staff over the sea, as He did in Egypt. On that day the burden will be lifted from your shoulders, and the yoke from your neck."

Bottom Line

Faith

- **Luke 17:4-6** - "Even if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times returns to say, 'I repent,' you must forgive him." The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" And the Lord answered, "If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you can

say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you."

A similar verse:

- **Matthew 17:18-20** - "Then Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy, and he was healed from that moment. Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, 'Why could we not cast it out?' And Jesus said unto them, 'Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.'"

To the father of a boy with an evil spirit:

- **Mark 9:22-24** - "'It often throws him into the fire or into the water, trying to kill him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.'" "If You can?" echoed Jesus. "All things are possible to him who believes!" Immediately the boy's father cried out, "I do believe; help my unbelief!"

- **Romans 12:3** - "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

- or "as God has distributed or measured out to each a portion of faith."

Jesus spoke of people with no faith, little faith, and great faith

As the "author and finisher of faith" (**Hebrews 12:2**) Only Jesus can increase our faith.

We can't pump it up or generate it. It is a gift from God.

- **Ephesians 2:8-9** - "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."

It is listed as one of the gifts of the Spirit

- **1 Corinthians 12:9** - "To another faith by the same Spirit..."

(But this can also mean "faithfulness.")

Best illustrated by Peter walking on the water:

— **Matthew 14:29-31** - "And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

The important thing here is Peter takes his eyes off Jesus and puts his attention on the surrounding circumstances - that's when he starts to think.

The good news is that Jesus catches him despite his doubt. Keep your eyes on Jesus!