

Judges 7:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

Jerubbaal (Gideon) and his army camp at the spring of Harod, while the Midianites camp in the valley north of them by the hill of Moreh. The geographical positioning is strategic—Israel holds high ground near a water source while the enemy masses in the valley below. The name Harod (charod, חָרוֹד) derives from charad (חָרָד, 'to tremble'), foreshadowing verse 3's test. That Gideon is now called Jerubbaal emphasizes his transformation from fearful thresher to bold reformer. The contrast in army sizes (32,000 Israelites vs. 135,000 enemy per 8:10) sets up God's miraculous reduction strategy.

Historical Context

The spring of Harod (modern Ain Jalud) flows at the foot of Mount Gilboa in the Jezreel Valley. The hill of Moreh rises prominently north of the valley, providing the Midianite coalition a defensible position. This same valley saw Saul's final battle against the Philistines (1 Samuel 28-31). The site's strategic importance—controlling east-west and north-south trade routes—made it perpetually contested territory.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does Gideon's name change to Jerubbaal demonstrate God's power to transform identity through faithful obedience?
2. What does the army's positioning—Israel above, enemies below—symbolize about spiritual warfare from position of strength in Christ?
3. Why does Scripture emphasize geographical details rather than just recording the battle outcome?

Interlinear Text

וְכֹל גָּדוֹל וְהַזָּהָר יָרַב עַל
that were with him rose up early Then Jerubbaal H1931 who is Gideon H3605
H7925 H3378 H1439

וְכֹל הַבָּעֵם וְאֶת וְאֶשְׁר רְאָתָה וְאֶת וְאֶשְׁר רְאָתָה
and all the people H834 H854 and pitched H5921 H2583

בְּרֵד וְמִתְּמִימָן הַמִּדְיָן לְבִבְיָה
beside the well of Harod so that the host of the Midianites H1961 H0
H5878 H4264 H4080

מִצְפָּה וְמִגְּבָעָה הַמּוֹרֵךְ בְּעֵמֶק
were on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley H4176 H6010
H6828 H1389

Additional Cross-References

Judges 6:32 (Parallel theme): Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.

Genesis 12:6 (Parallel theme): And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 (Parallel theme): Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

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