

# Judges 7:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands.

## Analysis

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The timing was precise: 'the beginning of the middle watch' (around midnight), just after the guard change. The freshly posted sentries would be most alert but also most isolated from the sleeping main camp. Gideon's company approached the camp edge, then 'blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands.' The simultaneous actions—trumpet blasts and shattering pottery revealing torches—created a shocking sensory assault. The coordination demonstrated military discipline despite the small force and unconventional tactics.

## Historical Context

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Ancient armies divided night into three watches (evening, midnight, morning) or four watches (Roman system). The 'beginning of the middle watch' placed the attack at midnight when most of the camp slept deeply. Guard changes were vulnerable moments—new sentries adjusting to darkness, old guards departing to rest. The element of surprise was maximized because no army expected attack at this hour, especially by inferior forces. The multiple simultaneous sensory inputs (trumpet sounds, breaking pottery, sudden lights) created cognitive overload preventing rational response.

## Related Passages

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**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How does the precise timing demonstrate the importance of divine wisdom in spiritual warfare?
2. What does attacking during the middle watch (deepest darkness) symbolize about God's power to bring light into darkness?
3. When has God's timing in your life seemed delayed until the perfect moment for maximum impact?

## Interlinear Text

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וְיָבֹא אִתּוֹ that were with him came H935	גִּדְעוֹן So Gideon H1439	וּמֵאָה and the hundred H3967	אֲנָשִׁים men H376	אֶת H834	וְאֶת H854
בְּקֶצֶה unto the outside H7097	הַמַּחֲנֶה of the camp H4264	רִאשִׁית in the beginning H7218	הַשָּׁמֶר watch H821	הַתְּיָכוֹן of the middle H8484	
אֲנִי and they had but H389	יָדָוּ newly H6965	יָדָוּ newly H6965	אֶת H853	הַשָּׁמֶר the watch H8104	וַיִּזְקְעוּ and they blew H8628
בְּשֵׁי וּפָרֹת the trumpets H7782	וַיִּזְקְעוּ and brake H5310	הַכִּדְּיִם the pitchers H3537	אֲשֶׁר H834	בְּיָדָם that were in their hands H3027	