

# Judges 7:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

## Analysis

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God instructs Gideon to observe how soldiers drink from the water: 'every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.' The test distinguishes drinking methods—lapping water quickly with hands to mouth while standing alert versus kneeling to drink directly from the water. The dog comparison emphasizes the first group's alertness—maintaining surveillance while refreshing themselves. This test identifies warriors combining necessary rest with continuous vigilance.

## Historical Context

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Armies on campaign required regular water access, especially in Palestine's heat. How soldiers drank revealed their tactical awareness and discipline. Those who knelt to drink directly placed themselves in vulnerable positions—difficult to rise quickly if attacked, obscured vision, incapable of immediate defense. Those who scooped water to their mouths while standing maintained readiness to fight instantly. Ancient military leaders valued such tactical awareness in selecting elite troops.

## Related Passages

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**Psalm 19:1** — Heavens declare God's glory

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. How does the drinking test illustrate the importance of spiritual alertness even during necessary refreshment and rest?
2. What practices help Christians remain spiritually vigilant during legitimate recreation and relaxation?
3. Why does effective spiritual warfare require combining needful rest with sustained watchfulness?

## Interlinear Text

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וְיָדָה	אֶת	בָּשָׂר	אֶל	הַמִּם	וְאַמְרָה	הַלְּשׂוֹן	מִן
So he brought down	H853	the people	H413	of the water	H4325	said	and the LORD
	H3381		H5971		H3952	H559	H3068
אֶל	גַּדְעֹן	כֹּל	אֲשֶׁר	אֶל	בְּלִשּׂוֹן	מִן	
H413	unto Gideon	H3605	H834	Every one that lappeth	with his tongue	H4480	
	H1439				H3956		
בְּאַשְׁר	רְבָבָה	אֶל	לְבָבָךְ	בְּאַשְׁר	תִּתְּצַדְּקָה		
of the water	H834	Every one that lappeth	H3952	as a dog	him shalt thou set		
	H4325			H3611	H3322		
אֲשֶׁר	וְכֹל	לְבָבָךְ	אֲשֶׁר	בְּכֹל	עַל		
H853	H905	H3605	H834	by himself likewise every one that boweth down	H5921		
				H3766			
בְּרַךְ יְהָוָה	לְשָׁתֹות:						
upon his knees	to drink						
H1290	H8354						

