



The Setting

THEN the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. **23** And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you. **24** And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.) **25** And they answered, We will willingly give them. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey. **26** And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred shekelsof gold; beside ornaments, and collars, and purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that were about their camels' necks. **27** And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah: and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house. **28** Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more. And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon. (Judges 8:22-28)

In preceding texts leading up to the men of Israel asking Gideon to be their king, Gideon was a young shepherd of small stature. He was called upon by the Lord to defeat the Midianites and Amalekites who fielded an army of 132,000. In the economy of God, it is possible to have too large of an army to go forth to battle. Gideon mustered 32,000 men for battle, but God told him that number was too large. He asked all who needed to return home to do so, but still 10,000 remained which the Lord said was too many. Finally, Gideon took the men down to the waters of Harod at the command of the Lord. "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.” (Judges 7:6-7)

There is a time and place for everything under the sun according to Solomon – a time to bow the knee, but also a time to be vigilant for battle and not to bow the knee. Gideon was left with the 300 who did not bow the knee. With these 300 men, he divided his forces in three parts in the face of the enemy – not wise by human military tactics, but God’s thoughts are not our thoughts. Gideon routed and defeated all of the great host of the enemy with only these three hundred men. Whose victory do you suppose this was? Was it Gideon’s, of the three hundred, or was it God’s victory? It was God’s victory beyond any doubt!

The Result

T*HEN the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian. 23 And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you.” (Judges 8:22-23)*

Who needs a worldly king who loses great battles as did the king of the Midianites when God will serve far better with such a small number as Gideon had in defeating that king of Midian. We have King Jesus as our King, or we are forlorn of worth and hope. For the first two hundred years of our existence as a nation, America had a High King to guide and govern the nation through the hands and minds of honorable men. Now what!

Gideon Sleeps with His Fathers

A*ND Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. 33 And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baalberith their god. 34 And the children of Israel remembered not the LORD their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side: 35 Neither shewed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, namely, Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had shewed unto Israel.” (Judges 8:32-35)*

Does this situation sound familiar to you? The Providence of the Lord God oversaw our founding as a nation through able and godly men such as Washington, Jefferson, Henry, and a host of others. Yet, our history books do not credit God or these great men with any accomplishment at all; preferring rather to pay homage to those who advocate the destruction of the American Republic! Abimelech was a son of Gideon by his concubine in Shechem. He was jealous, LIKE UNTO Ishmael, for power and killed his own brethren at Ophrah, seventy men altogether. But Jotham, the young son of Gideon survived! Then, all the men of Shechem and of Milo made Abimelech king over them.

The Parable

A*ND when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. 8 The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. 9 But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? 10 And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us. 11 But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? 12 Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. 13 And the vine said*

unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? 14 Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. 15 And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.” (Judges 9:7-15)

It is my hope that those American patriots among those who read these lines (and this parable) will take heed to the warning of it. There is a great political lesson, as well as spiritual, to be learned herein. Godly rulers will not strive for the power of the crown, but will happily defer that role to God Almighty. All of the works and duties of such man as Washington, Jefferson, Adams, Madison, Patrick Henry, Lee and others, will be directed toward satisfying the higher law of God – not the whims and fads of men. Just as was Washington disposed to want, they prefer to tend to their farms and homes rather than rule over a nation. But there are disreputable men who will seek the crown at all cost, not caring for the law of God, but preferring the wicked ways of the Deceiver. The two diverse groups are described in the parable.

The People of a Nation are Described as Follows:

THE trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them.

The First Class of God-Fearing Men

AND they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us. **9** But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? **10** And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us. **11** But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees? **12** Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us. **13** And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?” Great men do not seek to possess power, it falls into their hands from the Throne of God; and to execute that power based upon his dictates as did Gideon. Each of the types of trees mentioned produces fruit. The Bramble does not!

The Second Class of Power Hungry Scoundrels

THEN said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us. **15** And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.”

Please consider the present moral demise of America – a land once-beloved with pristine values and high standards of moral compunction. What happened to our beloved land? Have we not opted for the bramble to rule over us in all three branches of our government? Who shall we blame at our coming fall – the rulers into whose hands we have entrusted the diadem of government or those who knowingly placed such men of decadent and licentious character in office? “Then said all the trees!” Friends, the majority of the American people opted for the lowest standard in government, and even the righteous must suffer along with the unrighteous the outcome of God’s wrath.

I dare not pray God will bless America in her present downfallen state – a state that she has chosen for herself. Instead, I pray that God will bring a purifying judgment of wrath upon the fair prairies and mountains of our once-great country – not to destroy it, but to save it from fools and sinners!

This Saturday is Independence Day – the day our great Declaration of Independence was signed. On such a day, let us remember Concord, Lexington, Valley

Forge, Yorktown, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Flanders Fields, Iwo Jima, Bastogne, and Normandy. We may do well to remember the courageous men of Chosin Reservoir, of Bong Son, of Long Binh, of Fallujah, and a thousand other battlefields unheralded in our day upon which American blood and valor was spent that we might have liberties that are being threatened by our present regime! And, too, "Remember the Alamo!" Remember Lee and Grant; remember Davis and Lincoln. History is prologue to the future.