

God is Our Deliverer

Judges 6:7-27

⁷ When the Israelites cried out to the Lord because of Midian, ⁸ he sent them a prophet, who said, “This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: I brought you up out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ⁹ I rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians. And I delivered you from the hand of all your oppressors; I drove them out before you and gave you their land. ¹⁰ I said to you, ‘I am the Lord your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.’ But you have not listened to me.”

¹¹ The angel of the Lord came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. ¹² When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.”

¹³ “Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “but if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about when they said, ‘Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt?’ But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian.”

¹⁴ The Lord turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?”

¹⁵ “Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.”

¹⁶ The Lord answered, “I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive.”

¹⁷ Gideon replied, “If now I have found favor in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me. ¹⁸ Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you.”

And the Lord said, “I will wait until you return.”

¹⁹ Gideon went inside, prepared a young goat, and from an ephah of flour he made bread without yeast. Putting the meat in a basket and its broth in a pot, he brought them out and offered them to him under the oak.

²⁰ The angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread, place them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And Gideon did so. ²¹ Then the angel of the Lord touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of the staff that was in his hand. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the Lord disappeared. ²² When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the Lord, he exclaimed, “Alas, Sovereign Lord! I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face!”

²³ But the Lord said to him, “Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die.”

²⁴ So Gideon built an altar to the Lord there and called it *The Lord Is Peace*. To this day it stands in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

²⁵ That same night the Lord said to him, “Take the second bull from your father's herd, the one seven years old. Tear down your father's altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it. ²⁶ Then build a proper kind of altar to the Lord your God on the top of this height. Using the wood of the Asherah pole that you cut down, offer the second bull as a burnt offering.”

²⁷ So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the Lord told him. But because he was afraid of his family and the townspeople, he did it at night rather than in the daytime.

God Speaks (vv. 11-13)

¹¹ *The angel of the Lord came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites.* ¹² *When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.”*

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The angel of the Lord came and sat down. It was **the Lord** who came to Gideon.

In verse 8, it was **God** who sent a prophet in response to the cry of the people. Here, **God** sends an angel to raise a leader to liberate the people from their oppression. It is **God** who calls out to **His** people to return to **Him**.

It is evident that **the Lord** has **not** abandoned **His** people. **God** wants to have a conversation, but the people have been avoiding Him. They were busy pursuing their own desires, replacing God with idols. They would not listen to a God that they have silenced.

1. What does this tell you about listening to God?
2. What does this tell you about shutting God out?

“The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.” (v. 12)

These words were said to a man hiding in fear of the Midianite raiding parties. Gideon quickly replied, “if the Lord is with us, why all this is happening?” Gideon believed that the troubles the people were facing is a sign that the Lord has abandoned them. He still did not fully understand the message of the prophet that God had sent. **God did not abandon His people; it is the people who have abandoned God.**

3. Have you made the mistake Gideon made, in assuming that your hardships are a sign that God has abandoned or forgotten you?
4. If you are in a tough spot facing surmounting challenges and the Lord calls you a ‘mighty warrior’, how would you respond?

God reminded Gideon that He is with His people. These words were given to give hope and comfort but instead these words raised more question and brought pain. To Gideon, these words were far from true, perhaps mocking in some ways.

- Sarah laughed when the Lord told her that she would conceive in her old age.
- The disciples felt abandoned when Jesus slept during a storm.
- Mary and Martha said to Jesus “If only you were here, Lazarus would not have died.”

5. What does this tell you about faith?

God is in control. He speaks and works through our circumstances.

Yet, sometimes we are so focused on our circumstances that we completely miss what God is saying and doing.

I am sending you; I will be with you (vv. 14-16)

¹⁴ *The Lord turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?”*

¹⁵ *“Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.”*

¹⁶ *The Lord answered, “I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive.”*

“Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?” (v. 14)
Gideon is living in fear of the Midianites; unable to do anything about them. God commands Gideon to go with the strength he has and deliver Israel out of Midian’s hand saying this time **it will be different because I am sending you.**

1. How would you respond if God says this to you?
2. What is the difference between doing it on your own and being sent by God?

“Pardon me, my lord,” Gideon replied, “but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.” (v. 15)

Again, Gideon finds God’s response troubling, leaving him to wonder, “Why would God do this? Why would God send me?”

The bible tells us again and again, that God chooses the weak.

3. Why does God choose the weak and despised? Read the following verses:

1 Corinthians 1:26-27

²⁶ *Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.*

Deuteronomy 7:6-9

⁶ *For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. ⁷ The Lord did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. ⁸ But it was because the Lord loved you and kept the oath he swore to your ancestors that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt. ⁹ Know therefore that the Lord your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.*

God responds to Gideon’s objections, “you will be able to do this **because I will be with you.**” (*“I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive.”* v. 16)

4. Is the presence of God with you? What does the ‘presence of God’ mean to you? Are you being transformed in His presence? The Lord invites us to discover this.

The Lord reveals Himself to Gideon and reminds him that He is with His people and will deliver them. The Lord is their Deliverer and yet the Lord insist that Gideon be the instrument of deliverance. He commands Gideon to take the lead, and fight the enemy.

5. Why does God want Gideon to be the instrument of deliverance when He can easily deliver Israel Himself?

Matthew 28:18-20, ¹⁸ *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

God has chosen us to be His witnesses and we are given the command to make disciples.

6. Why does it matter to God that you play a part in His initiative?
7. Do you want to play a part in God's initiative for salvation and reconciliation?
8. What does this verse tell you about God's call on your life?

God is with us and we must learn to acknowledge His presence. Worship, obedience (seeking His will; listening to His word), and joining Him in His work are ways we acknowledge His presence ("Your Kingdom come; Your will be done" Matthew 6:10). This is our God-given privilege.

Restoration of true worship (vv. 25-26)

²⁵ *That same night the Lord said to him, "Take the second bull from your father's herd, the one seven years old. Tear down your father's altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it. ²⁶ Then build a proper kind of altar to the Lord your God on the top of this height. Using the wood of the Asherah pole that you cut down, offer the second bull as a burnt offering."*

The cause/root of Israel's problem is a spiritual one. The source of the problem is not the Midianites, but **idolatry**. Before taking on the Midianites, Gideon is instructed to tear down the household idols.

Idolatry keeps us in bondage. What does this passage tell you about **worship**?

Prayer Items

1. God will guide us through this season. We will learn to discern His voice.
2. God will raise us to be His instruments of love, hope, grace, and healing.
3. God will deliver us from this pandemic.
4. Front-liners: medical officers; armed forces
5. Leaders & government: wisdom, compassion, righteousness
6. Economy: especially those who are badly affected: poor, homeless, more vulnerable people (refugees, foreigners)
7. Salvation of souls & opportunities to witness
8. Binil & Asmita: God's protection; safe delivery
9. Melissa: Surgery