

# Gideon: God's Strength in Man's Weakness



Judges 6



# OUR CULTURE LOVES A SUPERHERO





# ISRAEL'S OPPRESSION (1-5)

- The Means of God's Oppression:

Eradicating their produce

Raiding the Livestock

Killing of the People

- Living under the Curse of God

**Deuteronomy 28:29-31 (NASB95) – 29** and you will grope at noon, as the blind man gropes in darkness, and you will not prosper in your ways; but you shall only be oppressed and robbed continually, with none to save you ... **31** "Your ox shall be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat of it; your donkey shall be torn away from you, and will not be restored to you; your sheep shall be given to your enemies, and you will have none to save you.

# THE LORD ANSWERS THE CRY OF HIS PEOPLE (6-10)

"the Lord sent a prophet to the sons of Israel"

"you have not obeyed Me"

"We should not miss the kindness of God in all this. One of the kindest things that God does for us is to bring us under the criticism of His Word to expose the reasons for our hopelessness and misery." (Davis).



# THE LORD CALLS GIDEON TO DELIVER HIS PEOPLE (11-16)

## A. Gideon's Calling (11-12): "The LORD is with you"

## B. Gideon's Response (13-15): 4 results that disobedience brings:

### **1) Lack of Reverence-** "O my lord"

*"You will never glory in God till first of all God has killed your glorying in yourself" (Spurgeon)*

### **2) Spiritual Ignorance-** "if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us?"

**Ephesians 4:17-18 (NASB95) – 17** *So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;*

**3) Unbelief-** *"where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."*

### **4) Lack of Faith-** "O Lord how shall I deliver Israel?"

## C. Gideon's Assurance (16): "Surely I will be with you"

- The LORD spoke these words to Moses (EX 3:12)
- He also spoke them to Joshua (Joshua 1:5)
- Now to Gideon



# A REQUEST FOR THE FIRST SIGN (17-23)

## Intro to the request for signs:

- There would be those who would look at this passage and look at it as a type of template and an approved process for decision making
- The Scriptures always upholds acting in faith over the request for a sign
- There are times in Scripture when due to a lack of faith that the Lord does provide signs but it is not an approved or normative practice that we should follow.
- The NT condemns this practice

## Jesus states ...

**Matthew 16:4 (NASB95) – 4** "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah." And He left them and went away.

## Paul also states ...

**1 Corinthians 1:22-23 (NASB95) – 22** For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; **23** but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness,

**Summary:** The Lord permits signs to be given at certain times in Scripture but it is usually done in response to a weak faith. We are to respond IN FAITH and signs are not a template we should apply when we make decisions

# A REQUEST FOR THE FIRST SIGN (17-23)

*"We western Christians do not understand Gideon's agony. Such talk is strange to us. We long to reach our warm hand through the print of our Bible page, pat Gideon's shoulder, and soothe him with:*

*"Don't worry brother Gideon, God's not really scary like that-if only you had a New Testament"*

*This sort of talk is strange to us because we have no real sense of the terror and awesomeness of God, for we think intimacy with God is an unalienable right rather than a indescribable gift. There is nothing more amazing about grace as long as there is nothing more fearful about holiness." (Davis)*



# GIDEON RESPONDS TO THE LORD'S CALL (24-32)

- 1) Erects an altar to YHWH: "The LORD is peace" (Jehovah Shalom)
- 2) Tears down the altars or Baal and the Asherah poles

Joash the Evangelist



# A REQUEST FOR A 2ND AND 3RD SIGN (33-40)

**Sign 2:**

**Wet the fleece and keep ground dry**

**Sign 3:**

**Wet the ground and keep the fleece dry (more miraculous)**



# APPLICATION

## **While we lack faith at times, YHWH is always faithful**

*In these parts of the narrative Gideon's imperfections serve only to magnify the grace of God; it is Yahweh's conduct, rather than Gideon's, which is exemplary (Webb)*

- There is only one who has been tempted yet without sin
- There is only one who was truly abandoned by God on our behalf
- There was only One who perfectly obeyed God
- There was only One who is the Gospel

And it is in this Savior alone that we trust in

## **Our Strength is in the Lord**

*Communion with God is the right arm of our strength; and if this be broken, we are weak as water. Without God, we can do nothing; and in proportion as we attempt to live without Him, we ruin ourselves. Alas! that the man who has seen the face of the Strong One, and has been made mighty, should forget where his great strength lieth, and so become sick and enfeebled! (Spurgeon)*