

What You Need to Know About GIDEON & SAMSON:

“The Dangers of Losing the Final Lap”

Study Number One – Judges 6:11-24

In order for us to get started, we need a little bit of a history lesson to get this passage in focus.

It was the late General Douglas MacArthur who said:

In this day of gathering storms, as moral deterioration of political power spreads its growing infection, it is essential that every spiritual force be mobilized to defend and preserve the religious base upon which this nation is founded. For it has been that base which has been the motivating impulse to our moral and national growth. History fails to record a single precedent in which nations subject to moral decay have not passed into political and economic decline. There has been either a spiritual reawakening to overcome the moral lapse, or a progressive deterioration, leading to ultimate national disaster.

(source unknown)

To help put this all into focus, God originally chose Abraham, way back there in Genesis 12. He obligated Himself to Abraham and to an unconditional covenant. Through him a nation was to be born. And through that nation, the seed was

going to come that had been promised.

There were no credentials in Abraham. God just sovereignly chose him. Abraham was fully cooperative in His plan.

Abraham ultimately, through Sarah, twenty-five years later—after many hardships and trials—had Isaac. Isaac and Rebekah had Jacob and Esau. Jacob was the one who was chosen.

And out of Jacob's mess came the twelve tribes of the nation Israel. And that's how God works. He takes a mess and makes a miracle happen and turns something bad into something beautiful.

Out of those twelve tribes of Israel God had also said that the seed would be in a land that was not theirs for over 400 years. And so as the book of Exodus opens, that seed has been down there now for some years.

Actually Joseph, one of the twelve sons, went down there and became a leading premier and then invited his whole family to come down. Jacob spent the last 17 years of his life with his family in the land of Egypt. He died and then Joseph passed off the scene at the age of 110 and that closes the book of Genesis.

When the book of Exodus opens Moses is the man whom God chooses to lead that seed out of Egypt and back to the land. Coming back to the land, after that marvelous intervention of

God through the plagues that are described in the book of Exodus, the people make the mistake that we all make. They came to the chosen land with the promises of God and they formed a committee.

When there's a committee there's a majority and a minority report. The majority came back and said, "We can't go in." The minority said, "We can! If God be for us, who can be against us?"

God said, "Well Joshua and Caleb, you're the only two that are gonna get to go in. After this generation passes off the scene then you'll have the privilege of going into the land."

For forty years they wander in the wilderness, which is described in the book of Numbers. They come back to the shores of the Jordan River and Moses gives his farewell address in the book of Deuteronomy.

And basically he was reminding the people that they are God's people and they need to be obedient to His word. And then he passes off the scene, not able to lead the people into the Promised Land.

Joshua, his young general and military chief, has the privilege of leading the people across.

We often think we'll get it all together and then we can't remember where we put it. And that's what happened with the nation Israel.

After they possess the land, Joshua in that closing and very dramatic scene, as he stands before the people, gives his farewell address. He said, “Choose for yourself today whom you’re going to serve. As for me and my house, we’re going to serve the Lord.” (see Joshua 24)

And the people said, “Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord and serve other gods.” Joshua returned by saying, “You are witnesses against yourselves, that you have chosen for yourselves the Lord to serve Him.” And they said, “We are witnesses! We’ll serve the Lord our God and we will obey His voice.” (see Joshua 22)

And so we have the opening of the book of Judges. The book of Judges is one of the most tragic books in the sense that we could write over it APOSTASY.

Judges 21:25 gives us the story and it tells us that there was no king in Israel in those days because everybody “did that which was right in his own eyes.”

And when we destroy absolutes, everything we do is right in our own eyes. We don’t have to justify it any longer.

We went through an era that God is dead so that frees us from moral responsibility. Now we throw down the Bible and say it doesn’t provide the basis for life today so we can do what we want. And we can justify it because it’s right in our eyes, whatever we want to do.

The book of Judges is filled with people with fantastic potential, also having the promises of God who dissipate those through disobedience.

With the opening chapters of Judges set before us, we notice that as the people came into the land they were commanded to drive out the inhabitants and fully possess it.

When we come down to the verses we immediately begin to see there is a problem. Judah took possession of the hill country but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley.

Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites, Manasseh did not take possession of Beth-shean, Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites, Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron. Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Acco. And if we want to go on we could probably say, Simeon, Gad and Issachar didn't drive out the inhabitants and so the people were living in disobedience.

And then we have the tragic statement before we launch into Judges 2 which says:

Judges 2:10, 11

There arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord, nor yet the work which He had done in Israel. Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and began to

serve the Baals.

The Baals, the god of the now generation—sex, silver, and Satan. The god of fertility and of good crops. “Live your own life! He’s the god of now—that’s the god of the past that our fathers worshipped.”

And so we face a very unstable society politically, morally and spiritually.

We find now in this kind of a circumstance that the people go through cycles—one right after another. There are seven of them. There’s a little phrase in the book of Judges that starts with, “And they did evil again in the sight of the Lord.”

Now when we do evil in the sight of the Lord, we can plan on consequences resulting. They were put into slavery or servitude.

Then they cried to God for deliverance after a period of servitude. For instance, they went into servitude to Mesopotamia for about eight years. And then they cried to God and said, “Oh God, get us out of this mess. Deliver us from there.”

And God would send a judge who would come—deliberator. And we see seven cycles through the book of Judges where “they did evil in the sight of the Lord,” they were put into servitude either for 8 years, 18 years, 20 years, 7 years, 3 years. They’ve been in servitude now for 7 years as the study

opens and unravels before us in this particular cycle.

And after they cried to the Lord the Lord would send this great deliverer who was a civil, political and religious leader who'd come to lead the people out of bondage. And then they'd go into a time of silence where everything would be rocking along great and then all of a sudden, "Boom!" they did evil again in the sight of the Lord.

As the scene of our story opens, they've been through three of these cycles. We're in cycle number four. They've been in bondage to the Midianites now for seven years. We can say that the nation is a picture of Proverbs 14:

Proverbs 14:34

Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.

Now they've been in bondage to the Midianites. The Midianites are really an interesting group. They left a residual force in Israel to keep the people in bondage. But they always showed up at harvest time. Kind of sounds like some of our relatives, doesn't it?

They came, they took what they wanted, they stayed as long as they wanted, and they left when they wanted. They ate everything during harvest time.

So the people would prepare harvest, and they took care of

crops, and then the Midianites would come in and cabbage it all up, eat everything, and then leave.

Now after seven years of this sort of a situation, we'd think that the people could see the tragically revolt of sin, but they don't. Is there anybody today that's got their head on straight enough to recognize the tragic result of sin?

It always leads to slavery, to bondage and unhappiness. But we think we're the exception. We can do our own thing and live our own life and get away with it.

We hear David say in Psalm 32: "Physically my body is wasted away. Emotionally my moisture has turned into the drought of summer. Spiritually your hand is heavy upon me. I can feel it wanting me to respond as your child."

Oh, the tragic results of sin. The missed opportunities of blessing that God could bring into our lives! But we resist Him.

There's no fruit for God, there's no light for others, and there's no sustenance for ourselves. But we have a nation poverty-stricken, in bondage for seven years, destitute. Why? Sin.

Romans 1:28

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper;

And that leads to the opening of our story.

v. 11 Then the angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak that was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress in order to save it from the Midianites.

“Then the angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak that was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress in order to save it from the Midianites.”

The angel of the Lord came down to the oak at Ophrah—that’s the town where he lived. He’s of the family of the Abiezrites, he’s of the tribe of Manasseh. And he is down there in the winepress beating out wheat.

Now is that the usual custom? No it’s not.

Where did they usually beat out wheat? Well they’d get on the threshing floor and that’s usually the highest point in the land where the wind blows.

Well they got on the high place and there in the high place they beat out the grain.

Why’s he down in the winepress? Where is the winepress? That’s the lowest place.

They put the winepress down in the bottoms so that when they were carrying the grapes they were going downhill. The vineyard's up on the hillside.

He is way down in the winepress where nobody can see him. Our hero now steps before us—our great liberator—beating out a little bit of grain for his family to keep body and soul together. And that last phrase says, “in order to save it from the Midianites.” Those cabbaging relatives who are going to move in here and take everything if it's not hidden.

If we were to summarize the life of Gideon with one verse, it's a verse we hope is never true of us. It's one of the most haunting verses in the New Testament:

Galatians 5:7

You were running well. Who cut in on you that you should not obey the truth?

“You were running well”—in other words, there was a time when we were doing a lot better than we are right now.

It's always good to put flesh and blood on an individual before we start studying his life. We use Tim LaHaye's book to determine a character's temperament.

Gideon is probably a MELANCHOLY PHLEGMATIC.
A melancholy phlegmatic is a sensitive person, a perfectionist.

They're analytical, a faithful friend, self-sacrificing, loyal, idealistic, and they have a good wit about them. They're dependable, practical, efficient, and good under pressure.

They enjoy humor, but have a tendency to be calm, easy-going and conservative.

But there are some weaknesses that often plague this temperament: pessimism. What's a pessimist? That's a person who has swallowed the neg, afraid to sit still for fear it might hatch. Afraid to move for fear it might break.

He's a perfectionist but he's also moody. Self-centered, critical, fearful and unmotivated. But a person who is very detail-conscious.

For instance, if someone were married to a melancholy phlegmatic, and they got up to go to the bathroom at three in the morning they'd come back and the bed would already be made.

That's Gideon.

v. 12 And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, "The Lord is with you, O valiant warrior."

"And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, 'The Lord is with you, O valiant warrior.'"

Does God have a sense of humor? Gideon probably fell out right there. Look at that verse and we realize he's down in the winepress beating out grain to keep body and soul together. He's very quiet. He doesn't want to raise anybody's fur. And the Lord comes along and says, "Gideon, the Lord is with you, O valiant warrior."

What principle do we get out of that?

God never looks at us as we are, but as we're going to be.

God does not see present failure, but always future potential. That's the excitement.

The Lord Jesus chose those twelve guys, not because of the fantastic possibilities that resided within them, but because of the potential He could see when He got through with them.

Romans 8:29

Whom he justified then he also glorified,

That's PAST TENSE.

God looks on us as already sinless, if we're His child. He sees the future potential and not the present failure.

Now Gideon's living in a time like the old west. Cattle rustling, stealing watermelons, hangings and the whole bit. He lost a lot of his brothers in the war at Tabor, when the

Midianites took over seven years ago. So he's scared, he's fearful.

And on top of that, his dad Joash is responsible for one thousand of the people in Israel. And right there on their farm they have a high place to the god Baal. Gideon's probably already been turned off by that ridiculous, ritualistic pagan cult that has invaded their society. He's already become negative toward Baal and suspicious about the whole thing, but still his dad is an idolater.

And notice that the Lord says in this first statement, "The Lord is with you, O valiant warrior."

It is John Wesley who said, "We can face any circumstance in life knowing that God is with us."
(source unknown)

v. 13 Then Gideon said to him, "Oh my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And 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."

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Underline two words in that verse:

“why” and

“where.”

Now it got personal, didn't it? What's the first question we always ask when the Lord comes to us with an invitation or an opportunity?

“Why does all this happen to us?”

“Why am I still lonely?”

“Why am I still single?”

“Why haven't You come yet?”

“Why? Why? Why?”

We can say to Gideon right now, “Gideon, you're too close to the forest to see the trees.”

Why has all this happened to Gideon?

We already know. It's the apostasy. It's the disobedience. It's the departure from the principles of scripture.

This is why it's happened. Why are they facing all this

harassment or all this poverty and all this destitution, and all of these problems? It's this worship of the god Baal.

Jonah's in a ship out in the middle of the sea. Why are they in a storm? Because Jonah's running away from the will of God. Pitch him overboard and things are going to get better.

Maybe God's saying to us, "Listen, if you'd get the message everything would be alright and the sea would settle down a little."

And Gideon raises that question when it's so obvious. It's that Baal worship.

Notice the second question. He says, "where are all your miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, 'Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?'"

Of course, "Why did that happen? Where are You?"

Isn't that the way it is? When things are falling apart and it's getting rough, we always ask, "God, where are You?"

Look at his conclusion. Talk about a false conclusion, but it's a conclusion filled with bitterness and resentment.

"now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

Who abandoned who?

Someone said, “If you and the Lord are at a distance, guess who moved.”

(source unknown)

Israel abandoned the Lord! The God of the Bible, from the very beginning to the end, is always pictured as wanting a relationship with man.

We’re as close to the Lord right now as we want to be, but not as close as He wants us to be.

We can lash out in our bitterness and resentment and ask, “God where are You? And why’s all this happening?”

He’s saying, “I didn’t abandon you. You’ve had your own plan. You’ve been doing it your own way. When you finally get frustrated and you come up with ashes in the whirlwind, then maybe you’ll turn around and understand that I do know a little bit about how to live life. And I’m ready to bring blessings.”

v. 14 And the Lord looked at him and said, “Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?”

“And the Lord looked at him and said, ‘Go in this your strength’—what strength? My strength—“and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?””

Philippians 4:13

I am ready for anything, through the strength of the One who indwells me.

“Have I not sent you?”

v. 15 And he said to him, “O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father’s house.”

“And he said to him, ‘O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father’s house.’”

“how shall I”

First it’s “why did it happen?”

Secondly, it’s “where are you?”

Then when the Lord finally reveals what He wants us to do, it’s “how am I going to do it?”

What’s wrong with that statement? That’s looking only at the horizontal resources without any consideration of the vertical resources.

That’s just like Philip and Andrew, when they’re confronted with five thousand opportunities to feed some people with five

loaves and a couple of fish, say, “Two hundred penny worth of bread would not be enough!” And standing right in their presence is the Bread of Life.

How inadequate we feel at times because we do not discern our divine resources. And how many times do we render a wrong judgment in situations like this? His focus isn’t right.

“how shall I deliver them?”

The Lord tries to change that.

v. 16 But the Lord said to him, “Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat Midian as one man.”

“But the Lord said to him, ‘Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat Midian as one man.’”

Now we’re reminded of the big battle that the Lord had with Moses to get him to go down into the land of Egypt back in Exodus 3. Moses first of all says, “Who should I be that goes to pharaoh, that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?” The Lord says, “I’ll be with you.” (see Exodus 3:11)

Then in chapter 4 Moses lays another one on Him: “What if they will not believe me or listen to what I have to say? For they will say, the Lord’s not appeared to you.” (ref. Exodus 4:1)

And then he asks the biggest one of all: “Uh, uh, Lord, I’m

very uh, uh, slow of speech and I'm just afraid I can't handle it." The Lord says, "Go and I'll be with you! And I'll teach you what you ought to say." (see Exodus 4:10)

To this point Gideon has had a **COMMAND**, he's had the promise of **COMPANIONSHIP**, and now the Lord has made a **COMMITMENT**.

"Gideon, I am going to deliver Israel through you from the Midianites."

You talk a melancholy phlegmatic into something like that and he's still scared.

v. 17 So Gideon said to Him, "If now I have found favor in Thy sight, then show me a sign that it is Thou who speakest with me.

"So Gideon said to Him, 'If now I have found favor in Thy sight, then show me a sign that it is Thou who speakest with me.'"

"Lord, now I know You've made a command and You've promised to be with me. You've made a commitment to success in this mission, but Lord let some big sign come out of heaven that will really show me and prove to me that this is what You want done."

He has it all laid out. Here's his little plan.

v. 18 “Please do not depart from here, until I come back to Thee, and bring out my offering and lay it before Thee.” And He said, “I will remain until you return.”

“Please do not depart from here, until I come back to Thee, and bring out my offering and lay it before Thee.’ And He said, ‘I will remain until you return.’”

Isn't the Lord patient?

v. 19 Then Gideon went in and prepared a kid and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour; he put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, and brought them out to him under the oak, and presented them.

“Then Gideon went in and prepared a kid and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour; he put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, and brought them out to him under the oak and presented them.”

Now remember where Gideon is. What's he doing?

He's beating out wheat in the winepress to get enough to keep his family together. He is poverty stricken.

Now what does he do to prepare a sacrifice? He goes out and gets a little goat out of the flock, gets that all prepared—sacrifices that. Then he gets an ephah of flour and some

unleavened bread. And all we're saying is if he had just believed God he wouldn't have had to sacrifice all of these things or gone through all of this to receive a sign to prove the fact that God really wanted him to do it.

But how many times do we bring ourselves to a point of destitution rather than moving ahead in confidence and faith that God is going to bless the endeavor?

It's amazing how patient the Lord is. He puts up with all of our excuses and fears and problems.

v. 20 And the angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And he did so.

"And the angel of God said to him, 'Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth.' And he did so."

v. 21 Then the angel of the Lord put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the angel of the Lord vanished from his sight.

"Then the angel of the Lord put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the

meat and the unleavened bread. Then the angel of the Lord”—poof—“vanished from his sight.”

v. 22 When Gideon saw that He was the angel of the Lord, he said, “Alas, O Lord God! For now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face.”

“When Gideon saw that He was the angel of the Lord, he said, ‘Alas, O Lord God! For now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face.’”

Now if that isn’t a fearful melancholy. He’s afraid he’s going to die. So the Lord ministers to his need again. Look at verse 23.

v. 23 And the Lord said to him, “Peace to you, do not fear; you shall not die.”

“And the Lord said to him, ‘Peace to you, do not fear; you shall not die.’”

Now break down that verse into three parts:

1. “Peace to you,”—peace will always be ours when our focus is right.

Isaiah 26:3

I will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.

Want to lose peace? Focus on our circumstances. Want to

maintain peace? Focus on the Lord.

“Peace to you”—“I’m the one that’s going to do this. Focus on Me!”

2. “do not fear;”

How many times in the scripture do we see that negative command, “do not fear”?

The Lord said it to Abram in Genesis 18. He said it to Mary in Luke 1.

Isaiah the prophet said:

Isaiah 41:10

Fear thou not; for I am with thee; do not be dismayed; for I’m thy God: I’ll strengthen thee; I’ll help thee; yea, I will uphold thee.

FEAR—“fear not”

3. “you shall not die.”

“Why would I have asked you to be My instrument to deliver the nation Israel from the Midianites if I were going to kill you? You’re not going to die.”

v. 24 Then Gideon built an altar there to the Lord and

named it The Lord is Peace. To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

“Then Gideon built an altar there to the Lord and named it The Lord is Peace. To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.”

Ask this question:

Have we been to the altar of peace? Do we know anything at all about peace in the kind of chaotic society we’re living in?

At the end of this first study we have Gideon in the right place.

God has called him, promised His companionship, and made a commitment to him. Now through the acceptance of his sacrifice, he’s ready to be used by God.

He’s at peace.

Are we there? If you are not a believer, have you come to that moment of peace?

Romans 5:1 says, “Therefore be made right with God, we have peace through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

That’s one of the very first indicators of the fact that someone is a Christian. The wicked know nothing of peace.

Do we know that peace? As a Christian, have we focused our mind on Him today at the beginning of the day? Are we at peace with Him? Peace in our relationship? Peace at the altar?

The hymn writer knew what he was saying when he said, “Oh what peace we often forfeit. Oh what needless pain we bear. All because we do not carry, everything to God in prayer.”

Our hope is you’re at peace, along with Gideon, as he faces the dramatic demands that are going to be upon him in the studies that are ahead.

Alright here are the lessons that come out of that particular study. Let’s take just a few minutes to focus now on these lessons as we prepare to conclude this first session.

Lesson #1: It is the Lord’s desire that we be obedient to His word.

This comes out of a whole historical context of this. It comes out of the tragic consequences of the people and it comes out of the study. The Lord just wants us to be obedient to His word.

Lesson #2: When we fail to drive out the enemy, there will always be negative results.

How oftentimes as Christians, after having received Christ, we discover small pockets of resistance that still remain. There are the little things—bad temper, critical spirit, taste for certain books and pictures that contaminate, selfish

attitude toward money and possessions, anxiety, fear, jealousy, bitterness, lust, lack of discipline, lack of direction.

And yet we never deal with those things in the power of the Spirit. We've decided there are enemies in the boundaries of the land. There will always be negative results as long as we allow those to be there.

What keeps those enemies there? Our pride. We don't want to admit that we have a need.

We're so filled with pride we won't admit it when the scripture makes an analysis of the situation so we'll avoid it. We won't admit that there are giants in the boundaries of our land. We'll excuse it, blame it on others—righteous indignation.

Fear and anxiety always comes when we focus on our own ability.

2 Corinthians 7:1

Having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Lesson #3: Like the prodigal son, the results are serious when we respond negatively or incompletely to the commands of the Lord.

Lesson #4: The Lord always sees future potential and not

present failure.

God sees us right on the brink of fantastic potential as we forget those things which are behind and press toward those things which are in front.

Lesson #5: Our questions are why, where, and how. And the Lord's response is, "Go and I'll be with you."

Lesson #6: The patience of the Lord, in getting us ready to believe that He is God and that He will accomplish His will through us.

He said to the disciples, "Come, let's launch out into the deep and catch some fish!" We don't want to launch out into the deep because there are going to be some winds out there. There are going to be some waves. We're going to get scared.

Lesson #7: The Lord's so patient. He always meets us with promises of peace when we're most fearful with blessing.

Gideon is still scared. He's given to that. Fear will plague him through the whole biography.

Lesson #8: The right response by Gideon is our response, too. And that is one of worship and praise of the Lord who is peace.

Lesson #9: The Lord always has promised His presence. He has not abandoned us.

Lesson #10: Peace is the result of relationship and fellowship.

Understand that? Peace is the result of a relationship with Jesus Christ. That's the first ingredient, according to Romans 5:1. And it's also the result of fellowship for the Christian.

Take a peace check when we walk with God.

Lesson #11: You're as close to the Lord right now as you want to be, but not as close as He wants you to be.

Could it be that the cry of the Garden of Eden is the cry of God to our heart?

"Adam, where are you?!"

"Well Lord, I'm hiding, full of guilt and sin."

He's saying, "Where are you? Where have you been all this time?"

"I've been off in the far country having a good time."

Where are you? Come to the altar of peace. Let God do significant work.

Father, how precious these moments have been. We realize we need to learn how to take time to be with You. No person has ever become a godly person without spiritual discipline. The

discipline to take time and to be still and know that You're God. Lord, there are those who have never come to Jesus Christ as Savior. They have preconceived notions and ideas, feelings and concepts that they cannot satisfy, intellectual hang ups and doubts about whether You're really there. We would pray Your Holy Spirit will really break through that facade and invade the inner man with the peace that You bring when Christ comes in. Lord, we realize that so many are Christians. They have a lot of reasons personally why they're bitter and resentful and lonely. And they're asking the same questions Gideon asked. Why has all this happened and where are You? How can I ever do anything for You? Lord, enable us to be mature enough to recognize that our pride keeps us from opening up and focusing upon You and upon ourselves from Your perspective. And Lord may Your Holy Spirit break through loud and clear with a message that You're waiting and seeking a closeness that we've not known before and that You're desirous of. You've done all that's necessary for us. You wait for us to come to the altar of peace, humbly and brokenly, to allow the Spirit of God to do a good work. In the Savior's name we pray. Amen.

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v. 11 Then the angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak that was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress in order to save it from the Midianites.

v. 12 And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, “The Lord is with you, O valiant warrior.”

v. 13 Then Gideon said to him, “Oh my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And 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.”

v. 14 And the Lord looked at him and said, “Go in this your strength and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?”

v. 15 And he said to him, “O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father’s house.”

v. 16 But the Lord said to him, “Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat Midian as one man.”

v. 17 So Gideon said to Him, “If now I have found favor in Thy sight, then show me a sign that it is Thou who speakest with me.

v. 18 “Please do not depart from here, until I come back to Thee, and bring out my offering and lay it before Thee.” And He said, “I will remain until you return.”

v. 19 Then Gideon went in and prepared a kid and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour; he put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, and brought them out to him under the oak, and presented them.

v. 20 And the angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And he did so.

NOTES

v. 21 Then the angel of the Lord put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the angel of the Lord vanished from his sight.

v. 22 When Gideon saw that He was the angel of the Lord, he said, "Alas, O Lord God! For now I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face."

v. 23 And the Lord said to him, "Peace to you, do not fear; you shall not die."

v. 24 Then Gideon built an altar there to the Lord and named it The Lord is Peace. To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Judges 6:11-24 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. Who do you think the angel of the Lord is in verse 11?

3. How does the Lord address Gideon in verse 12?

4. What are the questions that Gideon asks in verse 13?

5. From Gideon's statement in verse 15, who is going to be doing the delivering?

6. What does Gideon ask for in verse 17?

7. What is Gideon's response to the action of the angel of the Lord in verse 22?

8. How does the Lord respond in verse 23?

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

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LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: It is the Lord's desire that we are obedient to His command.

LESSON #2: When we fail to drive out the enemy, there will be negative results.

2 Corinthians 7:1

Having therefore, these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

LESSON #3: Like the prodigal son, the results are serious when we respond negatively or incompletely to the commands of the Lord.

LESSON #4: The Lord always looks upon us as though we were completed, rather than as we are now. He sees future potential and not present failure.

LESSON #5: Our questions are often why these things happen, where is the Lord and how am I going to do it? When the Lord's response is, "Go, and surely I will be with you."

LESSON #6: How patient the Lord is with the process involved in getting us to really believe that He is the Lord God, and he is capable of meeting every need or demand that He places upon us.

LESSON #7: The Lord always meets us with promises of peace when we are the most fearful.

LESSON #8: The right response by Gideon is our response, too. And that is one of worship and praise of the Lord who is peace.

LESSON #9: The Lord always has promised His presence. He has not abandoned us.

LESSON #10: Peace is the result of relationship and fellowship.

Lesson #11: You're as close to the Lord right now as you want to be, but not as close as He wants you to be.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:
