

The Judges: Gideon Defeats the Midianites

Review: Rollercoaster Religion and Casserole Creeds

Last week we looked at both the eclectic and cyclical nature of Israel's behavior during the time of the judges. **Judges 2:16-19** summarizes the pattern that we will see repeatedly in **Judges: 16 Nevertheless, the LORD raised up judges** [judges, governors, vindicators, punishers, _____ leaders] **who delivered** [saved, delivered, gave victory to] **them out of the hand of those who plundered them. 17 Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the harlot** [explicit unfaithfulness] **with other gods, and bowed down to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers walked, in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do so. 18 And when the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and harassed them. 19 And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.**

Preview: How Can I Be Sure?

In today's lesson, we meet Gideon—an initially reluctant hero. Gideon is famous for his request for _____ from God to confirm God's message (some things never change).

Key thought: Even though He uses men to accomplish His purpose, _____ is the hero of the Bible

Read & Explain (What does it mean?): Judges 6-7 (Author = Samuel?)

Judges 6

Midianites Oppress Israel

6 So Israel was greatly impoverished [laid low—the implication is that they were _____]

7-8 Who was this prophet? Are you willing to go unaccredited in God's plan of redemption?

Gideon

11 Now the Angel of the LORD [Jesus] came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon [_____] threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide it from the Midianites.

13 Who really had forsaken whom?

17 Then he said to Him, "If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign [sign, signal, token, ensign, standard, miracle, _____] **that it is You who talk with me.**

25-26 God tells Gideon to throw out the _____. This is a beautiful example of the 'put-off-put-on' principle taught in **Ephesians 4:20-24**.

Gideon Destroys the Altar of Baal

31 But Joash said to all who stood against him, “Would you plead for Baal? Would you save him? Let the one who would plead for him be put to death by morning! If he *is* a god, let him plead for himself, because his altar has been torn down! [Finally, a wise perspective about gods]”

34-35 Small steps of obedience will _____ your faith

The Sign of the Fleece

36-40 God responded to all of Gideon’s questions/requests. This is the last thing Gideon asked of God.

Judges 7

Gideon’s Valiant Three Hundred

1 Then Jerubbaal (that *is*, Gideon) and all the people who *were* with him [we find out in a minute that 32,000 men came] rose early and encamped beside the well of Harod, so that the camp of the Midianites [we know from **Judges 8** that there were 135,000 enemies present] was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley.

4-7 God did not use the 99%, He used the ___%

11b Then he went down with Purah his servant to the outpost of the armed men who *were* in the camp [meaning Gideon was still _____].

17 And he said to them, “Look at me and do likewise [this is 100% pure _____—do what I do]

22 God caused Israel’s enemies to _____ themselves

24-25 David Guzik: God did the great work through this small number of men; but once the great work had begun, He wanted as many as who could to get involved in the work

Apply (What is the point?)

1. God can handle all of your _____, but at the end of the day, He wants your obedience
2. God can handle all of your _____, but at the end of the day, He wants your obedience
3. God is the real hero and will use whatever is in your _____ to fulfill His purposes

Personalize (What do I do with that?)

1. Question, but obey
2. Fear, but obey
3. Use what is in your hand for God