

OUR GOD'S FAILURES & FAITHFULNESS

STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Part 9 — “What We See & What God Sees” — July 13, 2025

Introduction: A Matter of Perspective

In studying the book of Judges, we gain insight into Israel's history from both a human and a divine vantage point. These perspectives intersect in the stories of individuals, challenging us to reflect on how our own lives may be understood in light of both. What we see about ourselves and our lives is limited by what is and what has been. The Lord, however, views us from the perspective of what will be in the future because of His divine power and provision.

Main Point: The calling of Gideon shows us that God works _____ to _____ His people to carry out His purposes in the world.

Judges 6:1-35

The account of Deborah and Barak introduced the image of a reluctant judge who is nevertheless used of God for His purposes. The Gideon account (Judges 6-8) is even more detailed in its depiction of a man who, in spite of own hesitation and weakness, is patiently prepared by God and used to deliver His people.

Exposition:

1. Israel again abandoned the Lord and so He permitted them to be oppressed by enemies from the South. (6:1-6)

Judges 6:1,5—¹The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian seven years...⁵ For they would come up with their livestock and their tents; they would come like locusts in number—both they and their camels could not be counted—so that they laid waste the land as they came in.

Israel's Oppressors: The _____ (aided by the Amalekites and people of the East)

The Midianites were nomadic or semi-nomadic, moving with their flocks and herds. They conducted _____ throughout Israel, devastating crops and livestock. The people of Israel sought to hide themselves and their produce from these raiders and their allies.

2. In response to Israel's oppression, God sent forth His Word among them. (6:7-11)

- *The Word of the Lord _____ the people came by way of a _____ sent to them.*

⇒ The prophet's message recounted God's faithfulness and His promises but also _____ the people for their apostasy.

Judges 6:10—And I said to you, 'I am the Lord your God; you shall not fear the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.' But you have not obeyed my voice."

- *The Word of the Lord _____ the people came by way of 'the _____ of the Lord' sent to a certain man.*

⇒ The Angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon in order to prepare him for the work of delivering Israel.

Judges 6:11—Now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from the Midianites.

Israel's Deliverer: _____ (*'he who breaks/cuts down'*)

Gideon was from the tribe of _____ and was from a family and community which were characterized by Israel's general unfaithfulness and apostasy.

3. The Angel of the Lord patiently encouraged Gideon's _____ with His promises and His power. (6:12-24)

Observations:

1. The setting of the encounter is important to keep in mind.

"under the terebinth... which belonged to Joash"

"beating out wheat in the wine press"

2. The Lord's greeting to Gideon has multiple layers to it.

"The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor"

3. In his responses, Gideon demonstrated his lack of confidence in both the Lord and himself.
4. In his responses to Gideon, the Lord placed the focus on Himself as adequate for the situation.
5. Rather than berate him for his lack of faith, the Lord gave a demonstration of His power and authority which brought Gideon to a place of fear and reverence.

Key Points: 1. In His grace, the Lord often meets us in a place of fear in order to encourage us to _____ Him.
 2. Genuine _____ is what prepares us to serve the Lord.

4. Having encouraged Gideon, the Lord gave him a specific task that was intended to further _____ him up in his faith. (6:25-35)

Observations:

1. Having demonstrated His own power, the Lord commanded Gideon to carry out an action that would demonstrate the impotence of _____.
2. The manner in which Gideon carried out the instructions of the Lord gives a picture of where he was in his faith journey.

“The fact that Gideon does this with significant help and under the protective darkness of night indicates that he is not yet the “mighty hero” that the messenger predicted; however, a metamorphosis has begun.” —Boda & Conway

3. Joash’s words to angered the followers of Baal and showed that the Lord’s purpose had been fulfilled.
“Jerubbaal”
4. Having personally witnessed God’s power and Baal’s impotence, Gideon summoned the forces of Israel to resist the Midianites.

Assessing Gideon

Although the manner in which Gideon eventually obeyed the Lord can be _____, that he progressed from hiding in a winepress to raising an army demonstrated the effectiveness of God’s work in his life.

Applying the Text

1. God is at work in us on His own _____ in order to form us more and more in the image of Christ.
 1 Tim. 1:16—But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.
2. As we take our eyes off of ourselves and our circumstances and look to _____, our fears and anxieties are put in their proper place.
 Phil. 4:4-7—⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

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Assessing Gideon

- Although Gideon eventually responds in faith to the power and presence of the Lord, issues with his character which are highlighted in the account do not bode well for his future.

Applying the Text

1. God is at work in us on His own timeline in order to form us more and more in the image of Christ.

1 Tim. 1:16—But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.

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