

FAITH SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

March 21st, 2010

Who am I?

The call of Gideon

Focal Passage: Judges 6:11-40

Cross References: Judges 6:1-10, Judges 7-9, Romans 8, Hebrews 11:32

Central Idea: In desperate need of deliverance Israel is saved by God through an unlikely hero. In the calling of Gideon we see the power of God in the lives of those who are even the least bit willing.

Lesson Idea: God can use anyone to accomplish His purposes. The clearest portrayal of faith is obedience. If we truly believe God is who He says is and we are who He says we are then we will obey Him. God is always looking to use willing people to demonstrate His power and glory.

Historical Context: The situation in Israel and gone from bad to worse. The people continued to disobey the Lord and reaped the consequences. Midian along with some other countries would come into the land during harvest time and take what they wanted. Israel could do nothing and cried out for deliverance. God chose to hear them and deliver them from the hands of the Midianites.

The Gideon cycle, extending to one hundred verses, is the longest segment of the book, with four more verses than those given to the Samson episodes. Chapter 9 might also be counted as part of the Gideon story, since it describes the rule of his son. Under the inspiring leadership of Gideon, the Israelites won a victory even more astonishing than that of Deborah and Barak.

The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Volume 3. 416. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, © 1992.

Bible in a Year Daily Readings

March 14th - 21st, 2010

Mar 14 Judges 4-5
Mar 15 Judges 6-8
Mar 16 Judges 9-10
Mar 17 Judges 11-13
Mar 18 Judges 14-16
Mar 19 Judges 17-19
Mar 20 Judges 20-21
Mar 21 Ruth 1-4

Read the Bible Through
Highlights of the Week:

March 14th - 21st, 2010

Judges 4-5 Deborah, Barak, and Jael
Judges 6-8 The rise and fall of Gideon

Judges 9 Abimelech and Jotham

Judges 11

Jephthah's vow of sacrifice

Judges 13-16 The life of Samson

Judges 17 Micah and his idols

Judges 18 The tribe of Dan

retreats and runs.

Judges 19 The murdered

Concubine, the evil of Israel.

Judges 6:11-24

Gideon Challenged by an Angel of the Lord

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 *"But sir," Gideon replied, "if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and put 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 *"But Lord," Gideon asked, "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 together."*

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 in, 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 *With the tip of the staff that was in his hand, the angel of the LORD touched the meat and the unleavened bread. 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, "Ah, 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.*

QUESTIONS

To hide the wheat and himself from the Midianites, Gideon was threshing in a winepress, a pit carved out of rocky ground. Normally threshing floors were located in exposed areas so that the wind could easily blow away the chaff.

Wolf, Herbert. "3. Gideon challenged by the angel of the Lord (6:11-24)" In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*.

Gideon was concerned about his own preservation.

1. What did God seem concerned with?
2. What does the Angel's greeting say about God's plans for Gideon?
3. In Romans, Paul tells believers that we are more than conquerors. What is that claim based on?
4. Why did Gideon build an altar to God?

5. How do we mark meaningful experiences with God today?

Judges 6:25-32 The Statues of Baal

- 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 men of the town, he did it at night rather than in the daytime.*
- ²⁸ *In the morning when the men of the town got up, there was Baal's altar, demolished, with the Asherah pole beside it cut down and the second bull sacrificed on the newly built altar!*
- ²⁹ *They asked each other, "Who did this?" When they carefully investigated, they were told, "Gideon son of Joash did it."*
- ³⁰ *The men of the town demanded of Joash, "Bring out your son. He must die, because he has broken down Baal's altar and cut down the Asherah pole beside it."*
- ³¹ *But Joash replied to the hostile crowd around him, "Are you going to plead Baal's cause? Are you trying to save him? Whoever fights for him shall be put to death by morning! If Baal really is a god, he can defend himself when someone breaks down his altar."*
- ³² *So that day they called Gideon "Jerub-Baal," saying, "Let Baal contend with him," because he broke down Baal's altar.*

QUESTIONS

1. Compare V. 30 to God's original command to the people to drive out the other nations. Where were there allegiances?
2. Why does God have Gideon tear down the idols instead of just commanding the people to stop idol worship?
3. God appeared to Gideon then immediately called him to action. What does this say about faith and works? (James 1:22)

Judges 6:33-40 The Fleece

- ³³ *Now all the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples joined forces and crossed over the Jordan and camped in the Valley of Jezreel.*
- ³⁴ *Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, summoning the Abiezrites to follow him.*
- ³⁵ *He sent messengers throughout Manasseh, calling them to arms, and also into Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali, so that they too went up to meet them.*
- ³⁶ *Gideon said to God, "If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised—*
- ³⁷ *look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said."*
- ³⁸ *And that is what happened. Gideon rose early the next day; he squeezed the fleece and wrung out the dew—a bowlful of water.*
- ³⁹ *Then Gideon said to God, "Do not be angry with me. Let me make just one more request. Allow me one more test with the fleece. This time make the fleece dry and the ground covered with dew."*
- ⁴⁰ *That night God did so. Only the fleece was dry; all the ground was covered with dew.*

QUESTIONS

1. What has changed in Gideon from v. 11 to v. 34?
2. How does our definition of who we think we are, sometimes limit what God can do through us?
3. Are verses 36-40 only a description of what Gideon did or are they also a prescription of what all followers of God should do? (Compare to Deut. 6:16 and Luke 4:12).
4. What can happen if doubt controls us?

5. With God what had Gideon become?
6. What does that say to believers who are willing to submit themselves to God? (See Matthew 19:26)

APPLICATION

Sin has infiltrated every area of our world and our personal lives. On our own we are incapable and unable to bring about any dramatic change in the world, in our lives, or in the lives of people around us. God desires to do His work through people who are willing to be obedient. Romans 8 tells us that God's love and power will have victory and we will be victorious if we remain committed to Him.

We read the rest of Gideon's story in Chs. 7-9. Notice how God moved mightily through Gideon. Then how Gideon made it about himself. How Abimelech and Jotham in different ways emulated their father's example.