

BOOK OF JUDGES  
THE CYCLE CONTINUES-#4-GIDEON PT 1  
JUDGES 6:1-6:32

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**Introduction**

Tonight we're going to begin to see how the **LORD** raised up **yet another JUDGE** to deliver the **CHILDREN OF ISRAEL** from **yet another OPPRESSION** brought on **yet again by their SIN!**

We've been seeing in this book that the **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND** of this **TIME** was marked by a series of the same **CYCLE** occurring over and over again: **Sin** —> **Suffering and/or Servitude**—> **Supplication**—> **Salvation**—>**Silence.**

We saw as we left last time that after **DEBORAH** and **BARAK** delivered **ISRAEL**, the nation entered into a period of **SILENCE** or **REST** for 40 years. (*Judges 5:31b*)

Tonight we see **ISRAEL** make a mess of things again! When they finally cried out to the **LORD**, **HE** uses a young man by the name of **GIDEON** to deliver them the **OPPRESSION** and **SUFFERING** brought on by their **SIN**. We begin the same way as before...

**I. WE SEE ISRAEL'S SIN! (*Judges 6:1a*)**

**II. WE SEE ISRAEL'S SUFFERING! (*Judges 6:1b-6a*)**

This particular time **ISRAEL'S SUFFERING** was for a period of **seven years** at the hand of the **MIDIANITES**. This was the **LORD'S DIVINE JUDGMENT** for **ISRAEL** having **FORSAKEN HIM!**

For **seven years** bands of **MIDIANITES** had swooped down on the farms of the **ISRAELITES** and **pillaged and plundered** them at will.

For **seven years** the defenseless **ISRAELITES** ran away in terror leaving their homes and possessions to the **MIDIANITES**.

**III. WE SEE ISRAEL'S SUPPLICATION! (*Judges 6:6b*)**

When **ISRAEL** finally had enough, they **CRIED** unto the **LORD!** So, the **LORD** sent **ISRAEL** an unnamed **PROPHET** with a message telling them what their problem was! (*Judges 6:7-10*)

**IV. WE SEE ISRAEL'S SALVATION!** (And here is where we will plant ourselves for the rest of this message this evening and, **LORD** willing, the message the next week or so as well!)

**We See This Time That The LORD Raised Up And Called A Man By The Name Of GIDEON To Lead HIS People In Battle Against The MIDIANITES. (*Judges 6:11-12*)**

The name "*Gideon*" means "*he who cuts down or cuts to pieces; it can also mean a great warrior.*" We see that when the **LORD** appeared to him in *verse 12*, **HE** called **GIDEON** a **MIGHTY MAN OF VALOUR**. We are not told, but I envision here that **GIDEON** was quite possibly looking around to see who the **LORD** was talking to!

Understand that the **LORD** knew beforehand *the mighty man of valour* that **GIDEON** would become for the **LORD** and **ISRAEL!**

**I. WHEN THE ANGEL OF THE LORD FIRST CAME TO GIDEON HE WAS HIDING HIS WHEAT THRESHING ACTIVITY FROM THE MIDIANITES! (*Judges 6:11-12a*)**

The reason for that was because of what we see the **MIDIANITES** doing in *verse 4*. For **GIDEON** and his family to eat, he had to hide what he was doing or the **MIDIANITES** would confiscate his dad's wheat!

In the eyes of the world, **GIDEON** would probably have been one of the least likely candidates for a national **DELIVERER!**

After all, **he was helping his dad FARM and was not a SOLDIER!** What he was used to "*cutting down*" was wheat! We'll also see later, that early on, he demonstrated very little **LEADERSHIP ABILITY.**

This was, no doubt, one of the reasons why the **LORD** chose **GIDEON!** Because when the **VICTORY** was ultimately obtained, it would be obvious that the **LORD** was the **ONE WHO FOUGHT IT** and **WROUGHT IT** among **ISRAEL!**

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Understand that the **LORD** is not necessarily looking for those who have all kinds of **SKILLS or ABILITIES** that **HE** can use! In reality, the only **ABILITY** the **LORD** wants in our life is our **AVAILABILITY to HEAR HIM and OBEY HIM!**

If we make ourselves **AVAILABLE** to **HIM**, **HE** both **CAN** and **WILL EQUIP US** and then **MOLD US** and **MAKE US** into the **SERVANTS HE WANTS US TO BE FOR HIS GLORY!**

II. **WE SEE THAT, IN SPITE OF GIDEON'S HIDING AND IN SPITE OF HIS DOUBTS ABOUT HIMSELF, THE LORD WAS WITH HIM AND CALLED HIM TO DELIVER ISRAEL!**  
(*Judges 6:12b-16*)

III. **WE SEE THAT AT FIRST GIDEON'S FAITH WAS WEAK!**  
(*Judges 6:14-24*)

A. **GIDEON'S Weak Faith Is Shown In His Initial FOCUS On His Own LIMITATIONS And WEAKNESSES Rather Than On The LORD!** (*Vs 14-15*)

Because **GIDEON** was focused on self instead of the **LORD**, he failed to see how the **LORD** could use him for anything at all!

**Note how he freely confesses three things:** (*Vs 15*)

1. **He Confesses That He Was An Insignificant Man!**  
That may have been true in some respects, but *verse 27* indicates that **he had at least ten servants.**

But even had he been a **significant** man in the eyes of man or in his own eyes, he would still be **insignificant** compared to the **LORD!** *Psalms 39:5*–“...*verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity.*”

So, in reality, everyone who the **LORD** calls is truly **insignificant** no matter no matter how **significant** they or anyone else thinks they are! (*The Lord Jesus said in John 15:5*– “...*for without me ye can do nothing.*”)

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*2 Corinthians 3:5*–“*Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;*”

*He Confesses That He Was An Insignificant Man...*

2. **He Confesses That He Was From A Poor And Insignificant Family!**

Again, he had **at least ten servants** (*Vs 27*) and **his father owned an altar unto Baal that had a grove beside it** (*Vs 25*).

3. **He Confesses That He Was The Least In His Father's House!** (*Vs 15*)

We don't know if this was just his own perspective or if it was indeed a reality. **But it doesn't really matter.** (*e.g. Both Joseph and David*)

B. **The Call Of The LORD On GIDEON'S Life Trumped His Weak Faith!** (*Vs 14b, 16*)

*1 Corinthians 1:26–29*–“*26 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.*”

So we see that the call of the **LORD** was on **GIDEON'S** life in spite of his **PERCEIVED INSIGNIFICANCE** and **INADEQUACIES.** And we will see how the **LORD** used him mightily at this very important time in **ISRAEL'S** history.

C. **GIDEON'S Weak Faith Is Seen In His Interaction With The Angel Of The LORD!** (*Vs 17-24*)

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Before we move on, let's think about the **FAITH** of **CHRIST'S DISCIPLES!** It took **GREAT FAITH** to accomplish what we see in the early **CHURCH!** However, we read on more than one occasion, before the **RESURRECTION** of **JESUS**, that the **DISCIPLES' FAITH** was described as being "*little*" by the **SAVIOUR!** (**JESUS said to them "O ye of little faith" Matthew 6:30; 8:26; 14:21; 16:8**)

But just as **GIDEON'S FAITH** increased, so did theirs!

**IV. WE SEE GIDEON'S FIRST ASSIGNMENT FROM THE LORD!**  
*(Judges 6:25-26)*

We will get to the familiar story of **GIDEON'S** great victory over the **MIDIANITES** with his reduced army of 300 next week, **LORD** willing, but there was another battle that **GIDEON** had to fight first.

After all, the **MIDIANITES** were not the main problem here. They were an effect of the real problem. What good would it do to rid the land of the **MIDIANITES** if they didn't get rid of what brought the **MIDIANITES** to the land?

**ISRAEL'S** greatest problem was not **MIDIAN**; it was **BAAL!** Their **SPIRITUAL problem** was greater than their **PHYSICAL problem!** It was their **IDOLATRY** and **WORSHIP OF BAAL** that had caused the **LORD** to send the **MIDIANITES** to oppress them!

The **LORD** was not going to take away the **MIDIANITES** until they disposed of **BAAL!** **BAAL** would have to be renounced before **MIDIAN** could be driven out of the land!

So, the **LORD** put **GIDEON** to the test! **HE** instructed **GIDEON** to:

- 1) Tear down the altar of **BAAL** that his father had,
- 2) To cut down the **GROVE** beside it, and
- 3) To build an altar to the **LORD GOD** and sacrifice his father's seven year old bull using the wood he got from cutting down the **GROVE!**

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Before **GIDEON** could be trusted to **DELIVER** his nation, he first had to **DELIVER** his family! Before he could do war with the **MIDIANITES**, he had to declare war on **BAAL!** First things first!

In order for **GIDEON** to do this he had to deal with his **FEARS**—The **FEAR** of his father and the **FEAR** of the men of his city!

**V. WE SEE GIDEON OBEYED THE LORD, BUT HE DID SO AT NIGHT!** *(Vs 27)*

He did it by night because he was afraid of both his kinfolk and the men in his city.

**VI. WE SEE THE UPROAR BY THE MEN IN THE CITY FOR WHAT HAD BEEN DONE BY GIDEON!** *(Vs 28-30)*

When it was discovered that **GIDEON** was the one who had torn down the altar of **BAAL** and cut down the **GROVE** beside it, the men of the city sought his life and wanted his father to bring his son out to them!

**VII. WE SEE THAT GIDEON'S FATHER CAME TO HIS DEFENSE!** *(Vs 31)*

Responding to the men of the city, **GIDEON'S** father actually came to his son's defense and argued that if **BAAL** were god he would not need them to plead for his son's life. **BAAL** could plead for his son's life himself.

**GIDEON** had acted with **FAITH** and **OBEDIENCE** at a time when most were afraid to live for the **LORD!** **GIDEON'S FAITH** was based on the **WORD OF GOD!**

**GIDEON** was then given another name by his father—"Jerubbaal", which means "*let Baal plead.*" *(Vs 32)*

**Conclusion**

And that is where we will leave off our study for this evening and then, **LORD** willing, we will come back next week and deal with the rest of **GIDEON**, the **LORD'S DELIVERER!**