



Sunday July 27, 2013 God's Man of Valor

All of us desire to "make our mark", leave our stamp on time, be "history-makers".

Desiring to be a history-maker is easy, but being one is another thing.

We glean lessons from the life of Gideon recorded in Judges chapters 6-8, on what it takes to be God's man of valor, a history maker, and some pitfalls to avoid.

A Little History

The book of Judges describes Israel's history in about a 350 year period between Joshua, Moses' successor till the prophet Samuel. There are twelve of these judges mentioned, or rather thirteen, as Deborah the prophetess also judges Israel (Jdg_4:4); but there are only eight (Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson), who are described as performing acts by which Israel obtained deliverance from its oppressors. Of the other five (Tolah, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon) we are merely told that they judged Israel so many years. The judges (shophetim) were men who procured justice or right for the people of Israel, not only by delivering them out of the power of their foes, but also by administering the laws and rights of the Lord (Jdg_2:16-19).⁽¹⁾

Gideon was the fifth judge over Israel in the book of Judges.

A Land In Need Of Deliverance

After 40 years of peace brought by Deborah's victory over Canaan, the Israelites again "Did evil in the sight of the Lord." and were attacked by the Midianites and Amalekites. When the Israelites planted, the Midianites came in and destroyed the crops. Israel was 'greatly impoverished' by the Midianites and driven to live and hide in dens and caves in the mountains. This continued for about 7 years.

**Because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made for themselves the dens, the caves, and the strongholds which are in the mountains. (6:2)
destroy the produce of the earth as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep nor ox nor donkey. (6:4)
So Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites,.. (6:6)**

What do we see around us today:

- A city and a nation in need.



- A church that needs revival. So much of the church is either bound in dead traditionalism, or in cheap compromise.

You Could Be An Answer To Somebody's Prayer

So Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD. (6:6)

Someone has been crying out - and you could be God's answer to their cry!

From A Survivor To A Warrior

Gideon was secretly threshing wheat, to hide it from the Midianites. All he could think of was survival. But God had a greater purpose for Gideon. God wanted him to be a mighty warrior

And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!" (6:12)

God Sees Your True Potential

Gideon may not have thought highly of himself. He probably had no hope for his own future. God sends His angel and calls him a "mighty man of valor".

And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!" (6:12)

Basic Questions : Why, Where, How?

Gideon said to Him, "O 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,... (6:13)

So he said to Him, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." (6:15)

The questions you are asking - why? where? - indicate that something is stirring inside you. Something has to stir your heart. You've got to feel agitated about something.

God's response is always: I am sending you (6:14) I am with you (6:16)

How does Gideon journey into becoming a mighty warrior - a man of valor?

The Altar of Sacrifice



Gideon responds by offering something to God (6:18). It must not have been easy since most people were barely surviving in those times.

We cannot become mighty warriors for God - if we are unwilling to sacrifice.

We are called to offer up our bodies as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1).

Your sacrifice is your act of worship unto God.

It is at the altar of sacrifice that we receive a revelation of God.

e.g. Abraham offering Isaac, revelation Jehovah-Jireh

Gideon received a revelation of God as Jehovah-Shalom

The Place of Obedience

God instructs Gideon to tear down the altar of Baal and the wooden image (6:25,26)

Gideon obeys.

What is God calling you to obey Him in? No matter how difficult it seems, follow-through and obey the Lord.

All genuine sacrifice must be followed by obedience, because obedience is better than sacrifice. (1 Samuel 15:22,23)

Mighty warriors for the Lord learn to walk in complete obedience.

Obedience is the place of blessing.

Gideon's Fleece-walking by revelation not presumption

Gideon again asked God to confirm that he was doing the right thing in preparing for war.(Judges 6:36-40)

We observe that Gideon always wants to make sure that he is genuinely being led by God and is not walking in presumption (6:17 again in 6:36-40)

A lesson to learn. We must be led by the Spirit.

Mighty warriors for the Lord learn to walk led by the Spirit and not in presumption.

The Anointing of The Spirit **Judges 6:34,35**



But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; then he blew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites gathered behind him. And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, who also gathered behind him. He also sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.

It is the anointing of God upon our lives that empowers us to be mighty warriors.

Zechariah 4:6

Depending on the Lord Alone

God directs Gideon to trim down the army from 32,000 men to 300 men.

Mighty warriors learn to depend "not on the arm of flesh", but on the strength of the Lord.

Divine Reassurance - the dream

God provides divine reassurance (Judges 7:9-14)

Supernatural Victory - "the sword of the Lord, and of Gideon."

With just trumpets, broken pitchers and lamps 300 men see a great army of 135,000 Midianite soldiers self-destruct (Judges 7:15-22)

God desires to raise up a "Gideon generation" who will co-labor with Him to see supernatural victories here on earth for the Kingdom of God.

Refusing Entitlements

"I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you." (8:23)

Gideon is mentioned in the "Hall of Faith" in Hebrews 11

Israel lived in peace and worshiped God for the next 40 years until Gideon's death (Judges 8)

One Mistake: Idolizing past Victory

Judges 8:24-27

But the tendency to idolatry and to the worship of Baal had already become so strong in Israel, that even Gideon, that distinguished hero of God, who had been so marvellously called, and who refused the title



of king when offered to him from genuine fidelity to the Lord, yielded to the temptation to establish for himself an unlawful worship, in a high-priestly ephod which had been prepared for his use, and thus gave the people an occasion for idolatry.⁽¹⁾

We must learn never to "idolize" past victories. Always keep your eyes on the Lord who gave you that victory.

God is raising up a "Gideon generation" - men and women who will bring reformation and transformation. Will you be one of them?

References

(1) e-Sword Commentary. Keil & Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament. Johann (C.F.) Keil (1807-1888) & Franz Delitzsch (1813-1890)



USEFUL RESOURCES



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

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