

Great Moments in Faith: Gideon

Passage: Judges 6:11-16, 7:1-8, 16-23 Gideon Against the Midianites

Background: The Israelites have entered the promised land but they do not have a king and are being ruled over by another group of people, the Midianites, who would steal or destroy every piece of food the Israelites had. No one had the strength to rise up against them. We come in just as the people of Israel are begging God for help and God shows the plan of Israel's victory.

Don't Miss: There is a purposeful contrast between the gigantic Midianites armies and the few people God has chosen. Gideon is also portrayed as a coward, hiding in a winepress when God finds him. But he is a coward who becomes a symbol of great courage when God chooses him and gives him strength. Finally, there is no obvious miracle in the climactic battle. They pretended to be a larger force than they really were and startled a sleeping enemy camp that woke up thinking the Israelites were in camp already.

What would this have been like if you put yourself in the shoes of....

Gideon: You start terrified of your enemy until God chooses you and then see the people you were relying on to help slowly fade away until you have almost no one left.

The Israelite Soldiers Sent Away: You volunteered to fight and free your people, serve your God, but were rejected and turned away. God was working without you.

The Israelite Soldiers who stayed: God picked you to save your nation, and turned away everyone else, what an honor. But now you're facing an entire army with barely any people on your side.

The Israelites at Home: A young man you've never heard of tears down your gods and promises victory for a god you've forgotten. But he can't seem to even keep his army together and people keep leaving.

The Midianites: You have been terrorizing Israel for years and yet you hear of an army being formed and you worry. You're not sure why but the fear keeps building in you about what is going to happen.

Questions:

- Why do you think God chose such a few people to save Israel when there were thousands more that were willing?
- Do you think God still purposefully chooses small numbers of people in order to show that it is God at work and not people?
- Were the people chosen to be with Gideon any better than anyone else or just a number God wanted to reach?
- Have you ever seen God work in other people and not you? How did you feel? How did you act?
- Gideon didn't initially want to be a warrior and he certainly wanted more people. Have you ever been asked to do what you didn't want to do? How did you act?
- God definitely inspired fear in the Midianites and brought the victory, but was God ever visible or ever perform an obvious miracle to anyone other than Gideon?
- How many of the people in the final battle thought they were part of a miracle at the time? Were they part of one?
- How does this compare to what God does today? Where would you fit into this story today?

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The Sticking Points (Take-Away Talking Points):

- Just because God chooses to work through someone else sometime doesn't mean you are lacking. And just because God chooses to work through you at times doesn't mean you're any better than other people.
- Numbers do not matter when it comes to God. You are never too small or too weak for God to use, you will only show God more at work.
- God usually uses people to bring about God's miracles. God only influenced people to panic or stand courageous in the battle here. God wants to use you to make a miracle if you will bend yourself to God's prompting.
- God is at work, even here and now. There are still people to free and prayers to answer. Look around to find what God is doing because it won't always be obvious even if it is a powerful movement of God.