

“Knowing The Will Of God For Your Life”

Judges 6:1-40

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Teaching Aim: To explore the radical transformation that took place in Gideon’s life from being a frightened young man to becoming “*a mighty man of valor.*” To realize faith in God, followed by obedience to His commands brings blessings beyond our greatest expectations. To understand we must destroy the idols in our lives before God will fully use us. To realize the heroes of the faith struggled with their faith much like we do today and at times asked for affirmation of God’s will.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)

Part I: Midianite oppression of the Israelites (Judg. 6:1-10)

1. According to **verses 1-2a**, what led God to deliver the children of Israel into the hand of Midian for seven years? Have you ever gone through difficult times after walking away from the Lord? What do you think Charles Spurgeon meant by his statement, “*The Lord does not permit His children to sin successfully?*”
2. How is chastising by God evidence of His Fatherly love for His children? (See **Heb. 12:3-11**) What is God’s goal in discipline according to **Heb. 12:11**?
3. What geographical region were the Midianites from (**vs. 2**)? (Hint: Search Online) What modern country resides in that land today? What happened to the Israelites as a result of Midianite persecution (**vv. 1-2**)? What can we learn about the desperation of the Israelites from this description? From **verses 3-5**, we learn that the Midianites had formed an alliance against the Israelites with other nations in the region. Who were these nations? How numerous were they and how thoroughly had they devastated the Israelites?
4. **Verse 5** is the first mention of camels being used for military warfare in the Bible. Why was the use of camels a game changer? What kind of military advantage did these animals give to the coalition?

5. Throughout the Book of Judges, we see the Israelites falling into the cycle: apostasy/servitude/supplication/salvation. What two parts of the cycle had already passed in this story as we come to **verse 6**? What part of the cycle do we find taking place in **verse 6**?

Part II: The call of Gideon and God's confirmation (Judg. 6:11-27)

1. What do we find Gideon doing in **verse 11**? Why? What heavenly visitor came to pay him a visit? Was it unusual for Gideon to be threshing wheat in a winepress? Why? Why do you think Gideon took this unusual step? Does such a step indicate that Gideon was frightened that his food would be stolen by the Midianites if discovered?
2. In light of Gideon's fear at the moment, what did the Angel of the LORD call him in **verse 12**? Do you think Gideon felt like, "*a mighty man of valor*?" The Angel of the LORD's address indicated what Gideon would become if he would simply trust God. Have you ever let your fears get the better of you? If so, how did they affect you?
3. What surprising command did the LORD give to Gideon in **verse 14**? Warren Wiersbe defines "*faith*" as: "*obeying God in spite of what we see, how we feel, or what the consequences might be.*" How does this definition relate to your life today?
4. In **verse 15**, Gideon began to make excuses at God's call for him to lead the nation into war as Israel's judge. What two other major Old Testament figures did the same when they were called into ministry? (See **Exod. 3:10-11**; **Jer. 1:4-6**)

5. How did the LORD answer Gideon's insecurities in **verse 16**? Has the LORD given a similar promise to each of us today? (See **Heb. 13:5-6**) Was the LORD's promise enough to satisfy Gideon or did Gideon request something more from God (**vv. 17-18**)? What? Are we often guilty of doing the same today?

6. Food was scarce at the time. What generous offering did Gideon make to the Lord in **verse 19**? What instructions did the Angel of the LORD give to Gideon in **verse 20**? What miraculous event took place in **verse 21**? What did this signify? How did Gideon react to what he had just witnessed (**vs. 22**)? Why do you think Gideon responded this way? (See **Exod. 33:19-20**)

7. How did the LORD respond to Gideon's fear (**vs. 23**)? Today many people long for peace, but what kind of peace do sinful men and women need the most? (See **Rom. 5:1**) What is the only way that we can find this peace today?

8. What was the first test that God gave to Gideon following his call (**vv. 25-26**)? Why was this especially difficult for Gideon? What can we learn about Gideon's family from **verses 25-26**? Why is it important for each of us to tear down the idols in our lives? Will God fully use us if we don't?

9. What do we find Gideon doing in **verse 27**? Why at night? Have you ever feared losing family or friends because of your love for Christ and the fact that you follow Him? How has fear hindered you in ministry? Gideon had earlier responded as if he were poor. What can we learn about Gideon's wealth from **verse 27**?

Part III: Gideon's initial test from God and the doubts that followed (Judg. 6:28-40)

1. How did the people of Gideon's home town react when they arrived at Joash's house in the morning to worship Baal and saw his altar torn down, destroyed, and replaced with an altar to worship Yahweh? How did Gideon's father Joash respond to the people's desire to execute Gideon (**vv. 28-31**)? What other Old Testament personality also mocked Baal? (See 1 **Kin. 18:27**) What, if any, significance is there to Gideon's name change to "*Jerubbaal*?" (Hint: See Bible footnotes)
2. What imminent threat inspired Gideon to take on his second major test from God (**vv. 33-34**)? Who ultimately inspired Gideon to rise into leadership on this occasion? Why was this test much more difficult than the first one from man's perspective? (See **Rom. 8:31b**)
3. What four Israelite tribes answered Gideon's call to battle (**vs. 35**)? How many fighters from these four tribes arrived to face the Midianite coalition of 135,000 soldiers? (See **Judg. 7:3-4**) Did this appear to be a fair fight from man's perspective?
4. How did Gideon respond to this test at first (**vv. 36-37**)? Should Christians be "*laying out the fleece*" to test God's will? Why or why not? (See **Pro. 3:5-6**) Have you ever put out the fleece to test God's will in your own life? If so, when? Why did you do it?
5. On the surface, Gideon seemed to have violated God's law by testing Him. (See **Deut. 6:16-17**) Earlier God had already given Gideon a sign at his request, now he asks for another one. (See **Judg. 6:17-18**) It is important to understand that Gideon already knew what God wanted him to do in this case (**vv. 14-16, 36**). Was Gideon asking God to let him know His will, or was he asking God for confirmation of the call he received?

6. Why do you think Gideon asked God for yet another sign in **verse 39**? Do you think it's possible Gideon may have thought the first fleece was answered by natural causes and just wanted to make sure? According to **verse 39**, do you think Gideon realized he was doing wrong and was treading on thin ice? How did God respond to this request? (See **Rom. 9:15**)

7. How can we know for sure when we are following God's will in our life?

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- Disobedience by God's children will lead to the chastisement of God, He loves us and disciplines us for our good.
- Like Gideon, God sees not so much who we are, but what we will become in Him.
- God has a mission for every true believer, the question is, will we follow God's call?
- Even the heroes of the faith doubted at times and struggled with fear.
- There is comfort in the truth: *"If God is for us, who can be against us?"* (**Rom. 8:31b**)
- Today many of us long for peace, but ultimate peace is found only in Jesus Christ.
- *"Putting out the fleece"* is not a good way to find out the will of God; trusting God and His Word while making wise decisions is.
- God has revealed His *"preceptive will"* to us in the Bible, but He has also given us the liberty in life to make our own decisions.