

BIBLE LESSON

Judges 6:7-10

LESSONYe have not
obeyed my voice**VERSE 10**

*And I said unto you, I am the
Lord your God; fear not the
gods of the Amorites, in whose
land ye dwell: but ye have not
obeyed My voice.*

When the oppression by the Midianites became too much to bear, the children of Israel cried unto the Lord for help. And the Lord sent a prophet to deliver a message to them. Such is the love of God, that He suffers long for the disobedience of His chosen people. And He is faithful to His promises to their forefathers: to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God would not forsake them, especially now in their hour of need.

The message of God's prophet is clear: God reminded them of their deliverance from the Egyptians, out of the house of bondage, and brought them to the Promised Land. He kept and delivered them from the hands of their enemies who oppressed them, time and time again. God even gave them the lands of their enemies. All these were blessings from a loving and almighty God.

Yet, the children of Israel had forsaken God at the drop of a pin. Once they had been delivered, they left God and did evil against Him. How did this happen? God's answer was simple: they had disobeyed all that He commanded them to do. Once duties were forgotten, it was a slippery downward slide to apostasy.

Let us take heed, and learn from the mistakes we read of today. Let us start by knowing and obeying God's voice. The Bible is God's message for us, breathed directly from His mouth. We should read and understand every single word that He has for us, and obey.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
2 SAMUEL 11
2 CORINTHIANS 6

THOUGHT

Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy
in Jesus, but to trust and obey. – John H. Sammis

BIBLE LESSON

Judges 6:11-12

LESSON

Mighty man of valour

VERSE 12

*And the angel of the Lord
appeared unto him,
and said unto him,
The Lord is with thee, thou
mighty man of valour.*

The Angel of the Lord came to the house of Joash. There we find his son, Gideon, threshing wheat by the wine press. It looked like Gideon was not much of a fighter, but one who secretly threshed wheat at a place where the enemies would not be able to discover him and perhaps steal the wheat from him. But the Angel declared, “The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.” Our God is an all-knowing God, He knows all past, present and future events, and God already saw what mighty deeds He would do through Gideon.

Indeed, God chooses men and women to do His will, throughout the Bible, and even today. When God wanted to find a king to replace Saul, He sent the prophet Samuel to anoint David, the youngest son of Jesse, even though David’s brothers seemed more suitable by worldly standard. Likewise, God chose Zacharias and Elisabeth his barren wife, to raise up John the Baptist, and told them that he (John) shall be great and shall turn many children of Israel to Him. The Angel of the Lord said to Mary, “thou has found favour with God” because God has chosen her to be the earthly mother of our Lord Jesus.

Christians, despise not prophesyings [1 Thessalonians 5:20], because whatsoever God declares in His Word, He will surely bring to pass. Our God is a true and faithful God. Pray and ask God to use us for His glory, just as He had used those who have come before us, and we, too, can be mighty men and women of valour for God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
2 SAMUEL 12
2 CORINTHIANS 7

THOUGHT

Rise up, O men of God! Have done with lesser things; give heart and soul and mind and strength to serve the King of kings. – William P. Merrill

BIBLE LESSON

Judges 6:13

LESSONWhere are
all the miracles?**VERSE 13**

*And Gideon said unto Him,
Oh my Lord, if the LORD
be with us, why then is all this
befallen us? and where be all
His miracles which our fathers
told us of...*

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
2 SAMUEL 13
2 CORINTHIANS 8

PRAYER

It appears by the word “Adonai” (translated “Lord” here) used by Gideon that he did not think this messenger was the Angel. The term used is commonly applied to all great men. Thus Gideon failed to perceive this individual as someone of any special or extraordinary quality, but just one who wished the Israelites well.

However, he took this occasion to argue that the present condition sufficiently prove that the whole nation had been forsaken by God. God had thrown them back into slavery, to be devoured by their enemy. There is no longer any evidence of God’s special presence with Israel. He believed that there was no more miraculous works left. Israel was abandoned to fend for herself against the mighty Midianites.

There was a similar question asked of God in the Psalm: “Lord, where are Thy former lovingkindnesses, which Thou swarest unto David in Thy truth?” [Psalm 89:49]. Here the Psalmist humbly reminded the Lord of His deeds of love and kindness. And so may we wrestle and urge Him based on His own character. Even when things look dark and dreary, we may bring forth our strong reasons, and debate the case with our loving God.

Like Gideon, we may fail to see that the very chastisement that God brought on His people, showed that His presence is with them and His interest on them. Often, it is out of our own distrust and weakness of our faith in Him. May the Lord begin to establish our trust in Him and His Word for He will never fail in all that He has promised us.

Lord, heal my blinded eyes that I may see Your acts of love and providence, even when troubles surround me. Amen!

BIBLE LESSON

Judges 6:14

LESSON
The Lord's look**VERSE 14**

*And the LORD
looked upon him, and said,
Go in this thy might, and
thou shalt save Israel from the
hand of the Midianites:
have not I sent thee?*

When God looks upon a man, He sees not as man sees which is always on the outward appearance, but God looks into the heart. And He knows exactly how dependable, loyal and sincere he or she is. There is no escape from His all-seeing eyes. Man does not even know the secrets and intricacies of his own heart let alone another's heart, but God sees the past, present and future as well!

Here we notice a look from the Lord on Gideon. Gideon is still skeptical and unbelieving. Doubtless it was a look of a gentle kind and with a pleasant countenance. God's look on him was unlike that of Moses who kept giving excuses after excuses, which made God so angry against him [Exodus 4:14]. As such, this should be perceived as a testimony of God's favour upon him, and of His readiness to use him to save Israel.

Moreover, God gave him a direct command to deliver His people out of the oppression of the Midianites. Gideon is to go in his name and strength but with the divine authority behind him to overcome the military might of their enemies. Surely this would unnerve his fears and put courage in his heart for the most perilous services ahead. It would fit him for any task no matter how difficult and impossible.

Have you heard what God can do when He is the One who sends you? "Have I not sent thee?" Is not this sufficient authority, that one can have a commission from God? Throughout the entire book of Judges, all of them acted by a Divine warrant, so must we.

PRAYER

O Lord, let me not fear but have the courage and strength to face my most dauntless enemy in Your Name! Amen!

**TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
2 SAMUEL 14
2 CORINTHIANS 9**

21 SEPTEMBER

BIBLE LESSON

Judges 6:14-16

LESSON

I am the least

VERSE 15

And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.

From the way Gideon addressed this Person, He did not seem to have fully recognised the Angel as yet till He disappeared from his sight. This is significant. What could be the reasons? From his words in this verse, it appeared that Gideon was really upset with the whole episode that had plagued his nation and his family.

Gideon intimated that the families of which he was made a part were very much diminished. He did not have the strength to go forth. He could not see himself as someone who could do great things for God. His thought of himself as insignificant as he was from the smallest clan in his tribe, and that he was the least in his own family. Gideon was correct in his perception: he could not save Israel at all. But a great God could use a small and weak Gideon to rescue Israel.

It is said that, "The least fit are usually the most forward, the most fit the most backward, to undertake great offices [Judges 9:8-15]. True humility is the usual companion of true greatness." This show of diffidence of humility is in those whom God will finally select for His service [Exodus 4:1-13; 1 Samuel 9:21; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 1:6-7].

God delights to advance the humble, and often chooses such to do great things. He chooses the weak things of the world to confound the wise, and things that are despised, and things that are not, to bring to naught the things that are; that no flesh may glory in His presence. [1 Corinthians 1:27-29].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
2 SAMUEL 15
2 CORINTHIANS 10

PRAYER

LORD, may You use this unworthy and insignificant vessel for Your glory now and always. Amen!

22 SEPTEMBER

BIBLE LESSON

Judges 6:17-21

LESSON

Show me a sign

VERSE 17

And he said unto Him, If now I have found grace in Thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me.

Gideon was still hesitant to obey God's commission to go and save Israel. This is because it is not a mean feat for anyone to accomplish. He saw his own inability that he had no qualifications whatsoever in himself, or in his family or tribe, for this high calling to save his people. Therefore he desired some assurance that the message he had just received was indeed from God, and not a mere dream or delusion. Thus he asked for a sign that this mysterious visitor's words could be trusted.

It is clearly not wrong for Gideon to ask for a confirming sign. It makes sense to ask God to confirm some areas of His direction that are not specifically detailed in His Word. And more importantly this is with regard to something that concerns life and death; leading Israel into battle against a seemingly invincible enemy. Unless he is certain about God's favour on him, it would be a fatal decision to make.

God then confirmed His Word and His choice of Gideon with a miraculous fire that consumed the offerings that Gideon brought. The sudden disappearance of this stranger also filled Gideon with awe. He finally perceived that the Lord was speaking to him by His Angel. Hence he is assured of the divine blessing for him in his undertakings which are ahead of him.

Whenever we are in doubt as to the next step to take, stop for a moment to pray and seek God's face and favour. Realising your dependence on His guidance for the uncertainty in front of you, you can be assured of His providence and presence.

PRAYER

LORD, give me such a childlike faith to rely only on You, for You know what is best for me. Amen!

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
2 SAMUEL 16
2 CORINTHIANS 11

BIBLE LESSON

JUDGES 6:22

LESSON

Alas!

VERSE 22

And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord GOD! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face.

The word “Alas” reflects Gideon’s dismay for he felt he would die. This is the immediate, natural expression of one who has had God revealed to him.

To the Israelites, God had been revealed to be supreme in holiness and authority. Reverence for Him resulted in fear that Gideon believed he could not receive such a visitation and hope to live.

Perhaps this very reverence for God’s awesome holiness and glory set apart Gideon from his fellow Israelites. Imagine if the entire nation had such a fear for God AND lived it out in their daily lives: the nation would not be in the sorry state as described here. Christians who claim to know of God and His holiness, but live otherwise, are practical atheists.

We recall the words of the prophet Isaiah having been revealed a vision of the LORD in His incomparable holiness, awesome majesty and unsurpassed glory. His natural reaction was to be overcome by his own sin and uncleanness before a thrice holy God.

“Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts” [Isaiah 6:5].

Yes, we may approach God’s throne only through the blood of the Lamb of God, and Christ’s righteousness is imputed upon us. Yet, while we are on this side of heaven, we continue to sin daily. We must ask the Holy Spirit to teach us to view the sin in our lives from the viewpoint of our Holy God.

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
2 SAMUEL 17
2 CORINTHIANS 12

THOUGHT

What does our attitude towards worship/prayer/the study of God’s word show about our view of God’s holiness and our sin?

24 SEPTEMBER

BIBLE LESSON

Judges 6:23

LESSON

Thou shalt not die

VERSE 23

And the LORD said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.

God is a merciful and gracious God. He speaks peace to Gideon. He allays Gideon's fear. God assures Gideon that he will not die. The Angel of the LORD (pre-incarnate Christ) not only spared Gideon's life thus, but brought a message of peace and encouragement, having already commended and commissioned Gideon, promising His presence and blessing [v. 12, 16]. This disproves evil men's claims that our God is cruel, heartless and impersonal.

Were God to judge mankind's sins immediately in the fullness of His righteous wrath, there would be no one alive. God is infinitely patient and kind. Mankind often calls for justice from God. At the same time, we should recall that He has not meted out the ultimate justice for our own sins. It was Christ who faced and appeased God's wrath on the cross of Calvary, in order that we should not die [1 John 4:10].

It was mankind's sin which brought spiritual and physical death into this world. It was God's intent for mankind to have life, and this life is to be found in Him alone and obedience to His word. The Fall of Man was no mere consumption of a fruit but a choice of a life without following God – that is death.

This message to Gideon is also true to us today. It reflects God's message of Life whom He is giving us in His Son, God Incarnate. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" [John 10:10b].

TO COMPLETE THE BIBLE
IN 2 YEARS, READ
2 SAMUEL 18
2 CORINTHIANS 13

THOUGHT

Jesus saith unto him, "I am the way, the truth and the life : no man cometh unto the Father but by me" [John 14:6]. He is the Way, that we can go. He is the Truth, that we may know. He is the Life , that we might live.