

Connecting to L.I.F.E Gideon

Joshua 23:15-16

¹⁵ But as surely as the LORD your God has given you the good things he promised, he will also bring disaster on you if you disobey him. He will completely destroy you from this good land he has given you. ¹⁶ If you break the covenant of the LORD your God by worshiping and serving other gods, his anger will burn against you, and you will quickly vanish from the good land he has given you.”

Joshua set the example as an obedient leader. As a result, Israel remained faithful to God throughout Joshua's lifetime.

Israel had to learn that no matter how powerful and wise the current leader was, their real leader was God.

Judges 2:8-10

⁸ Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110. ⁹ They buried him in the land he had been allocated, at Timnath-serah^[a] in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

¹⁰ After that generation died, another generation grew up who did not acknowledge the LORD or remember the mighty things he had done for Israel.

Judges 2:11-13

¹¹ The Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight and served the images of Baal. ¹² They abandoned the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They went after other gods, worshiping the gods of the people around them. And they angered the LORD. ¹³ They abandoned the LORD to serve Baal and the images of Ashtoreth.

Judges 2:14-15

¹⁴ This made the LORD burn with anger against Israel, so he handed them over to raiders who stole their possessions. He turned them over to their enemies all around, and they were no longer able to resist them. ¹⁵ Every time Israel went out to battle, the LORD fought against them, causing them to be defeated, just as he had warned. And the people were in great distress.

Each generation failed to teach the next generation to love and follow God.

Deut. 6:4-6

⁴ “Listen, O Israel! The LORD is our God,
the LORD alone.^[a] ⁵ And you must love the LORD your God
with all your heart, all your soul, and all your
strength. ⁶ And you must commit yourselves
wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you
today.

Deut. 6:7-9

⁷ Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. ⁸ Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. ⁹ Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Judges 6:1-3

The Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight. So the LORD handed them over to the Midianites for seven years. ² The Midianites were so cruel that the Israelites made hiding places for themselves in the mountains, caves, and strongholds. ³ Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, marauders from Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east would attack Israel,

Judges 6:4-6

⁴ camping in the land and destroying crops as far away as Gaza. They left the Israelites with nothing to eat, taking all the sheep, goats, cattle, and donkeys. ⁵ These enemy hordes, coming with their livestock and tents, were as thick as locusts; they arrived on droves of camels too numerous to count. And they stayed until the land was stripped bare. ⁶ So Israel was reduced to starvation by the Midianites. Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help.

Judges 6:11-13

¹¹ Then the angel of the LORD came and sat beneath the great tree at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash of the clan of Abiezer. Gideon son of Joash was threshing wheat at the bottom of a winepress to hide the grain from the Midianites. ¹² The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said, “Mighty hero, the LORD is with you!”

¹³ “Sir,” Gideon replied, “if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? And where are all the miracles our ancestors told us about? Didn’t they say, ‘The LORD brought us up out of Egypt’? But now the LORD has abandoned us and handed us over to the Midianites.”

Judges 6:14-16

14 Then the LORD turned to him and said, “Go with the strength you have, and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!”

15 “But Lord,” Gideon replied, “how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family!”

16 The LORD said to him, “I will be with you. And you will destroy the Midianites as if you were fighting against one man.”

Judges 6:17-18

¹⁷ Gideon replied, “If you are truly going to help me, show me a sign to prove that it is really the LORD speaking to me. ¹⁸ Don’t go away until I come back and bring my offering to you.”
He answered, “I will stay here until you return.”

Judges 6:19-20

¹⁹ Gideon hurried home. He cooked a young goat, and with a basket^[a] of flour he baked some bread without yeast. Then, carrying the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, he brought them out and presented them to the angel, who was under the great tree.

²⁰ The angel of God said to him, “Place the meat and the unleavened bread on this rock, and pour the broth over it.” And Gideon did as he was told.

Judges 6:21-22

²¹ Then the angel of the LORD touched the meat and bread with the tip of the staff in his hand, and fire flamed up from the rock and consumed all he had brought. And the angel of the LORD disappeared.

²² When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he cried out, “Oh, Sovereign LORD, I’m doomed! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!”

Judges 6:23-24

²³ “It is all right,” the LORD replied. “Do not be afraid. You will not die.” ²⁴ And Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and named it Yahweh-Shalom (which means “the LORD is peace”). The altar remains in Ophrah in the land of the clan of Abiezer to this day.

Judges 6:25-26

²⁵ That night the LORD said to Gideon, “Take the second bull from your father’s herd, the one that is seven years old. Pull down your father’s altar to Baal, and cut down the Asherah pole standing beside it. ²⁶ Then build an altar to the LORD your God here on this hilltop sanctuary, laying the stones carefully. Sacrifice the bull as a burnt offering on the altar, using as fuel the wood of the Asherah pole you cut down.”

Judges 6:27-28

²⁷ So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the LORD had commanded. But he did it at night because he was afraid of the other members of his father's household and the people of the town.

²⁸ Early the next morning, as the people of the town began to stir, someone discovered that the altar of Baal had been broken down and that the Asherah pole beside it had been cut down. In their place a new altar had been built, and on it were the remains of the bull that had been sacrificed.

Judges 6:29-30

²⁹ The people said to each other, “Who did this?” And after asking around and making a careful search, they learned that it was Gideon, the son of Joash.

³⁰ “Bring out your son,” the men of the town demanded of Joash. “He must die for destroying the altar of Baal and for cutting down the Asherah pole.”

Judges 6:31-32

³¹ But Joash shouted to the mob that confronted him, “Why are you defending Baal? Will you argue his case? Whoever pleads his case will be put to death by morning! If Baal truly is a god, let him defend himself and destroy the one who broke down his altar!” ³² From then on Gideon was called Jerub-baal, which means “Let Baal defend himself,” because he broke down Baal’s altar.

Judges 6:33-35

³³ Soon afterward the armies of Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east formed an alliance against Israel and crossed the Jordan, camping in the valley of Jezreel. ³⁴ Then the Spirit of the LORD clothed Gideon with power. He blew a ram's horn as a call to arms, and the men of the clan of Abiezer came to him. ³⁵ He also sent messengers throughout Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, summoning their warriors, and all of them responded.

Judges 6:36-38

³⁶ Then Gideon said to God, “If you are truly going to use me to rescue Israel as you promised, ³⁷ prove it to me in this way. I will put a wool fleece on the threshing floor tonight. If the fleece is wet with dew in the morning but the ground is dry, then I will know that you are going to help me rescue Israel as you promised.” ³⁸ And that is just what happened. When Gideon got up early the next morning, he squeezed the fleece and wrung out a whole bowlful of water.

Judges 6:39

³⁹ Then Gideon said to God, “Please don’t be angry with me, but let me make one more request. Let me use the fleece for one more test. This time let the fleece remain dry while the ground around it is wet with dew.”

Judges 7:1-3

So Jerub-baal (that is, Gideon) and his army got up early and went as far as the spring of Harod. The armies of Midian were camped north of them in the valley near the hill of Moreh. ² The LORD said to Gideon, “You have too many warriors with you. If I let all of you fight the Midianites, the Israelites will boast to me that they saved themselves by their own strength. ³ Therefore, tell the people, ‘Whoever is timid or afraid may leave this mountain^[a] and go home.’” So 22,000 of them went home, leaving only 10,000 who were willing to fight.

Judges 7:4-6

⁴ But the LORD told Gideon, “There are still too many! Bring them down to the spring, and I will test them to determine who will go with you and who will not.” ⁵ When Gideon took his warriors down to the water, the LORD told him, “Divide the men into two groups. In one group put all those who cup water in their hands and lap it up with their tongues like dogs. In the other group put all those who kneel down and drink with their mouths in the stream.” ⁶ Only 300 of the men drank from their hands. All the others got down on their knees and drank with their mouths in the stream.

Judges 7:7-8

⁷ The LORD told Gideon, “With these 300 men I will rescue you and give you victory over the Midianites. Send all the others home.” ⁸ So Gideon collected the provisions and rams’ horns of the other warriors and sent them home. But he kept the 300 men with him.

The Midianite camp was in the valley just below Gideon.

Judges 7:9-12

⁹ That night the LORD said, “Get up! Go down into the Midianite camp, for I have given you victory over them! ¹⁰ But if you are afraid to attack, go down to the camp with your servant Purah. ¹¹ Listen to what the Midianites are saying, and you will be greatly encouraged. Then you will be eager to attack.”

So Gideon took Purah and went down to the edge of the enemy camp. ¹² The armies of Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east had settled in the valley like a swarm of locusts. Their camels were like grains of sand on the seashore—too many to count!

Judges 7:13-14

¹³ Gideon crept up just as a man was telling his companion about a dream. The man said, “I had this dream, and in my dream a loaf of barley bread came tumbling down into the Midianite camp. It hit a tent, turned it over, and knocked it flat!”

¹⁴ His companion answered, “Your dream can mean only one thing—God has given Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite, victory over Midian and all its allies!”

Judges 7:15-18

¹⁵ When Gideon heard the dream and its interpretation, he bowed in worship before the LORD.^[a] Then he returned to the Israelite camp and shouted, “Get up! For the LORD has given you victory over the Midianite hordes!” ¹⁶ He divided the 300 men into three groups and gave each man a ram’s horn and a clay jar with a torch in it.

¹⁷ Then he said to them, “Keep your eyes on me. When I come to the edge of the camp, do just as I do. ¹⁸ As soon as I and those with me blow the rams’ horns, blow your horns, too, all around the entire camp, and shout, ‘For the LORD and for Gideon!’”

Judges 7:19-21

¹⁹ It was just after midnight,^[b] after the changing of the guard, when Gideon and the 100 men with him reached the edge of the Midianite camp. Suddenly, they blew the rams' horns and broke their clay jars. ²⁰ Then all three groups blew their horns and broke their jars. They held the blazing torches in their left hands and the horns in their right hands, and they all shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" ²¹ Each man stood at his position around the camp and watched as all the Midianites rushed around in a panic, shouting as they ran to escape.

Judges 7:22-23

²² When the 300 Israelites blew their rams' horns, the LORD caused the warriors in the camp to fight against each other with their swords. Those who were not killed fled to places as far away as Beth-shittah near Zererah and to the border of Abel-meholah near Tabbath. ²³ Then Gideon sent for the warriors of Naphtali, Asher, and Manasseh, who joined in chasing the army of Midian.

Judges 7:24-25

²⁴ Gideon also sent messengers throughout the hill country of Ephraim, saying, “Come down to attack the Midianites. Cut them off at the shallow crossings of the Jordan River at Beth-barah.”

So all the men of Ephraim did as they were told. ²⁵ They captured Oreb and Zeeb, the two Midianite commanders, killing Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb at the winepress of Zeeb. And they continued to chase the Midianites. Afterward the Israelites brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon, who was by the Jordan River.

God chooses to use common people to do extraordinary things.

Ensure that the next generation of children will follow in the teachings of God's word so it will continue to live in their hearts, continue from generation to generation, and not be forgotten.