

GIDEON – THE JUDGE WHO NEEDED SIGNS – PART 3

--JUDGES 6:33-7:8--

INTRODUCTION:

This morning begins our third week in Judges 6 although we will make it into chapter 7 today. We have a few more weeks on Gideon as his history goes through Judges 8. This morning we will see as God continues to shape Gideon into the leader and judge he needs to be to deliver God's people from Midian. Gideon's faith has grown but we will see that he will still need assurance and he will seek this assurance by testing God and in turn God will test Gideon.

- I. GIDEON CLOTHED IN THE SPIRIT (Judges 6:33-35)
 - a. Verse 33 tells us why Gideon was threshing wheat in his father's _____ instead of on the threshing floor.
 - b. The Midianites, the Amalekites and the sons of the east have returned for another year of _____.
 - c. It is time for Gideon to act, and it is at this critical moment that God intervenes to _____ Gideon to do what God has raised him up and commissioned him to do, to deliver Israel out of the hands of Midian.
 - d. We are not told if Gideon was conscious of this clothing with the _____ but when it happened, he immediately acted with decisiveness and boldness.
- II. GIDEON TESTS THE LORD (Judges 6:36-40)
 - a. Gideon _____ the LORD by asking for another sign, a reassurance from God that He is with him.
 - b. Gideon wants something more, he wants God to give him a sign, or something to _____ what God has said so he can believe it enough to do what he has to do.
- III. THE LORD TESTS GIDEON (Judges 7:1-8)
 - a. Gideon received the reassurance that he asked for, it may not have taken the fear away completely, but it gave him the _____ to move forward to do what God had called him to do.

- b. As we come to verse one of chapter 7 Gideon looks _____ again.
- c. This is not the only surprise in this narrative, it is full of them. Gideon had tested God, now God is going to _____ Gideon to see if Gideon will still follow Him.
- d. The LORD is not done yet, He continues to _____ Gideon.
- e. Gideon has had his confidence shaken again, as he looks at only _____ men.

CONCLUSION:

As I close this morning, I want to call your attention to two things we looked at in this message. First, I want to look at a little more closely at this idea of putting out the fleece. This phrase in the church has come to mean asking God to guide us in a decision by fulfilling some condition we have laid down. Putting out the fleece to determine God's will is not biblical. Gideon knew what God wanted him to do. Gideon put out the fleece because he did not trust God to do what He said He would do. Twice Gideon reminded God of what God had said and twice he asked for God to do a miracle to reaffirm what He had said. The fact that God stooped to Gideon's weaknesses only proves that He is a gracious God who understands how we are made. Who are we to tell God what conditions He must meet, especially when He has already spoken to us in His Word? Putting out the fleece is not only evidence of our unbelief, but it is also evidence of our pride. God has to do what I tell Him before I will do what He tells me to do.

Second, God will test your faith. He will allow circumstances into your life that will test you and you will have your own battle with faith and fear. These tests are not to destroy your faith but to strengthen it so that your trust in God and His Word grows. Read the Bible and you will see this happening in the lives of those who follow God and often after great testing God will bring about something that will reassure us of His love, mercy, and grace. We will see that next week in the life of Gideon, God does not just reduce his army to 300 and leave him there, but God reassures Gideon that he can trust in God's promises. And so can you!