Gideon Meets His Maker

Judges 6:1-16

Introduction:

Elijah on Mt. Carmel mocked the prophets of Baal.

I Kings 18.27

“And so it was, at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, “Cry ﻿﻿aloud, for he *is* a god; either he is meditating, or he is busy, or he is on a journey, *or* perhaps he is sleeping and must be awakened.”

Israel had a God Who “never slumbers nor sleeps,” Yet, because of their rebellious attitude, there were times when it must have seemed to them that He was asleep or had totally abandoned them.

Do you ever feel like that?

I. A Nation in Rebellion – 6:1-7

Nehemiah 9:26 (600 years later) wrote:

“Nevertheless they ﻿﻿were disobedient and rebelled against You, Cast Your law behind their backs and killed Your ﻿﻿prophets, who ﻿﻿testified against them to turn them to Yourself; and they worked great provocations.

A. The Choice to Rebel – 6:1-2

1. Infidelity

They were unfaithful to God. They ignored His laws and His precepts. God’s first law to Israel was “You shall have no other gods before Me.”

But they bowed down to the gods of the nations in the land. This is idolatry.

2. Idolatry

Israel continually worshipped other gods. Why?

Probably, they wanted a god they could see.

Don’t you wish sometimes that you could see God?

But we walk by faith, not by sight - II Corinthians 5:7

If we saw God, that would be sight, not faith.

Hebrews 11:6

“Without faith it is impossible to please God.”

In the Old Testament they walked by sight. They did not have the full revelation that we have.

3. Intermarriage

They were not to marry with the other nations:

* That would corrupt the purity of the Jewish line.
* They would also be drawn into the worship of their gods and partaking of their sacrifices. ( like Solomon was)

Galatians 6:7

“Whatever a man sows, he will also reap.”

Rebellion is Costly!

B. The Cost of Rebellion

They (and we) may ask, “Why are we in this mess?”

The answer may be found in self-examination.

They had gone far away from God. He must judge.

Jeremiah 2:19

“Your own wickedness will ﻿﻿correct you, and your backslidings will rebuke you. Know therefore and see that *it is* an evil and bitter *thing* that you have forsaken the Lord your God,”

1. They Were Oppressed – 6:1

“So the Lord delivered them into the hand of ﻿﻿Midian for seven years.”

God oppressed them through the Middianites.

*Who were they?* God uses even the unbelievers to do His will. (See Isaiah 45:1)

2. They Were Overtaken – 6:2

The Midianites prevailed.

It was not continuous as before. They made sweeping trips through the land. Then they left them alone.

3. They Were Overwrought

Because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made for themselves the dens, ﻿﻿the caves, and the strongholds which *are* in the mountains.

They had given up. They offered no resistance.

4. They Were Overcome – 6:3-5

Canaanites had iron chariots.

A new weapon of warfare – the Camel.

When the Jews planted food, at harvest time the Midianites came [as numerous as locusts] and took it all away for themselves.

5. They were Overwhelmed – 6:6a

“They were greatly impoverished”

They had to keep planting, hoping to be able to keep some the next time.

C. The Cry for Release – 6:6b -10

They cried out to the Lord. So He delivered them, right?

No, He sent a prophet. Why? 6:7-10

* The reason for the prophet

1. They had regrets.

2. God wanted repentance.

* The message of the prophet

1. It is from God – thus says the Lord.

2. What the Lord had done for them.

Judges 6:8-10

“Thus says the Lord God of Israel: ‘I brought you up from Egypt and brought you out of the ﻿﻿house of ﻿﻿bondage; ﻿and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of all who oppressed you, and ﻿﻿drove them out before you and gave you their land. ﻿Also I said to you, “I *am* the Lord your God; ﻿﻿do not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell.”

3. What they had done to the Lord.

“But you have not obeyed My ﻿﻿voice.”

II. A Leader in Retreat (Unlikely leader)

A. The Appearance of God – 6:12-13

The “Angel of the Jehovah” - Not just an angel. A Theophany / Christophany - A pre-incarnate appearance of Christ.

The Angel:

Speaks as God

Identifies Himself with God

Exercises the prerogatives of God

We can’t get away from God.

He said to Gideon,

“The Lord *is* ﻿﻿with you, you mighty man of valor!”

How can God say that?

He sees us as we can be, not as we are:

Peter, you are a rock

Paul you are going to be the greatest Missionary/preacher in the entire history of the church.

Now we learn something about God: The Omni-attributes. (See Psalm 139:4?)

1. God is Omniscient - (Psalm 139:1-6)

He knows what others cannot know.

He knew where Gideon was hiding.

Jonah - in the bottom of the ship,

Abraham - in the tent,

Moses - in the desert,

Amos - among the Sycamores,

Elisha - behind the oxen,

Peter- at the seashore,

Paul - on the road to Damascus

and you – sitting in church,

listening to the Word of God.

2. God is Omnipresent – (Psalm 139:7-12)

He goes where others cannot go.

Othniel – old man

Ehud – handicapped man - left handed

Shamgar – farmer

Deborah – woman

He went to Gideon.

And He will find you; how you respond is up to you.

3. God Omnipotent- (Psalm 139:13-18)

He gives what others cannot give.

He supplied Gideon with everything he needed.

As we will see, he didn’t need much.

4. God Observant

He sees what others cannot see.

Hagar said, “God, you see me” (Genesis 16:13)

He sees your path all the way to the end. There is nothing unforeseeable in your life. Just follow Him all the way home.

B. The Arguments of Gideon – 6:13-15

1. “Oh”, this is Unexpected.

It was the farthest thing from Gideon’s mind that he would lead Israel’s fight against this formidable foe.

The greatest leaders are the ones who are forced into it by Godly pressure.

One who is anxious to lead has already disqualified himself.

2. “If”, I am Uncertain.

Why was he uncertain? Hadn’t he grown up in a fine Jewish home?

According to vv 25-26 His father had an altar to Baal in his home.

3. “Why?” This is Unexplained

Why has all of this happened to us?

Deuteronomy30:15-19

“See, ﻿﻿I have set before you today life and good, death and evil, ﻿in that I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, that you may live and multiply; and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess. ﻿But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them, ﻿﻿﻿I announce to you today that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong *your* days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess. I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, *that* ﻿﻿I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;

We do the same thing. Why me? Why now?

4. “Where” This is Unfair

Where are the miracles of old.

5. “But”, this is Unchangeable

Unbelief has set in. We’ve been like this a long while. This nation will not change. All is lost!

6. “How” This is Unbelievable

How can I?

It’s not about you. It’s about Me.

7. “Indeed” I am Unqualified

My clan is the weakest.

C. The Assurance of Victory – 6:14-16

1. God Promised a Certain Victory

Surely I will be with you.

2. God Promised a Complete Victory

v. 14 “you will save Israel”

v. 16 “you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.” - “As if they were but one man”.

Conclusion:

135,000 Midianites and Gideon has only 300 men. Yet he is going to lead them to victory.