

*Judges 6:1-40 v1 Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites. v2 Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds. v3 Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country. v4 They camped on the land and ruined the crops all the way to Gaza and did not spare a living thing for Israel, neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys. v5 They came up with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts. It was impossible to count the men and their camels; they invaded the land to ravage it. v6 Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the LORD for help. v7 When the Israelites cried to the LORD because of Midian, v8 he sent them a prophet, who said, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: I brought you up out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. v9 I snatched you from the power of Egypt and from the hand of all your oppressors. I drove them from before you and gave you their land. v10 I said to you, 'I am the LORD your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.' But you have not listened to me." v11 The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. v12 When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, "The LORD is with you, mighty warrior." v13 "But sir," Gideon replied, "if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian." v14 The LORD turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?" v15 "But Lord," Gideon asked, "how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." v16 The LORD answered, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together." v17 Gideon replied, "If now I have found favour in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me. v18 Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you." And the LORD said, "I will wait until you return." v19 Gideon went in, prepared a young goat, and from an ephah of flour he made bread without yeast. Putting the meat in a basket and its broth in a pot, he brought them out and offered them to him under the oak. v20 The angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread, place them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And Gideon did so. v21 With the tip of the staff that was in his hand, the angel of the LORD touched the meat and the unleavened bread. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the LORD disappeared. v22 When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he exclaimed, "Ah, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!" v23 But the LORD said to him, "Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die." v24 So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it The LORD is Peace. To this day it stands in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. v25 That same night the LORD said to him, "Take the second bull from your father's herd, the one seven years old. Tear down your father's altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it. v26 Then build a proper kind of altar to the LORD your God on the top of this height. Using the wood of the Asherah pole that you cut down, offer the second bull as a burnt offering." v27 So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the LORD told him. But because he was afraid of his family and the men of the town, he did it at night rather than in the daytime. v28 In the morning when the men of the town got up, there was Baal's altar, demolished, with the Asherah pole beside it cut down and the second bull sacrificed on the newly built altar! v29 They asked each other, "Who did this?" When*

they carefully investigated, they were told, "Gideon son of Joash did it." v30 The men of the town demanded of Joash, "Bring out your son. He must die, because he has broken down Baal's altar and cut down the Asherah pole beside it." v31 But Joash replied to the hostile crowd around him, "Are you going to plead Baal's cause? Are you trying to save him? Whoever fights for him shall be put to death by morning! If Baal really is a god, he can defend himself when someone breaks down his altar." v32 So that day they called Gideon "Jerub-Baal," saying, "Let Baal contend with him," because he broke down Baal's altar. v33 Now all the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples joined forces and crossed over the Jordan and camped in the Valley of Jezreel. v34 Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, summoning the Abiezrites to follow him. v35 He sent messengers throughout Manasseh, calling them to arms, and also into Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali, so that they too went up to meet them. v36 Gideon said to God, "If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised- v37 look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry, then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said." v38 And that is what happened. Gideon rose early the next day; he squeezed the fleece and wrung out the dew--a bowlful of water. v39 Then Gideon said to God, "Do not be angry with me. Let me make just one more request. Allow me one more test with the fleece. This time make the fleece dry and the ground covered with dew." v40 That night God did so. Only the fleece was dry; all the ground was covered with dew.

### **Introduction**

We are looking **THE KIND OF PERSON GOD USES TO SAVE A NATION BLINDED BY SIN**. Last week we looked at **THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A NATION BLINDED BY SIN**.

### **A NATION is blinded by sin**

1. WHEN THEY REPEATEDLY MAKE THE SAME MISTAKES.
2. WHEN THEY REPEATEDLY LOOK FOR SOLUTIONS IN THE WRONG PLACE.
3. WHEN THEY REPEATEDLY SURRENDER THE BLESSINGS OF GOD.
4. WHEN THEY REPEATEDLY REJECT THE REVEALED WILL OF GOD.
5. WHEN THEY REPEATEDLY DEFEND SINFUL BEHAVIOUR.

Today I want to look at:

## **THE KIND OF PERSON GOD USES TO SAVE A NATION BLINDED BY SIN.**

Notice, SECONDLY: **THE KIND OF PERSON GOD USES TO SAVE  
A NATION.**

## **1. GOD uses people who are UNHAPPY WITH THE STATUS-QUO.**

*v11 The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites.*

Gideon found himself doing something that was not normal. HE WAS THRESHING WHEAT IN A WINEPRESS.

So many people are doing things they don't really like, or are doing things to impress other people, that they feel trapped doing something they don't really want to do.

Like buying a "BRAND" name item just to impress other people. When our children were younger and wanted the "BRAND" name clothing, we gave them the money we allocated for clothing and let them choose what they wanted and let them keep what they did not spend.

Christians seem to be the same these days. They run after one "BRAND" after the next, never satisfied with GOD ALONE.

GOD IS LOOKING FOR PEOPLE WHO WILL FIND THEIR SATISFACTION IN HIM ALONE.

## **2. GOD uses people who WANT REAL ENCOUNTERS WITH HIM.**

*v13 "But sir," Gideon replied, "if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian."*

Have you ever wondered why God doesn't work now in the same way as the past?

Wouldn't it be great for tithing if we had a couple of Ananias and Sapphira situations in church to help people to keep their promises to the church.

The bible is full of people who were waiting on the Lord to DO SOMETHING

**Jer 4:21** *How long must I see the battle standard and hear the sound of the trumpet?*

**Jer 12:4** *How long will the land lie parched and the grass in every field be withered? Because those who live in it are wicked,*

**Jer 23:26** *How long will this continue in the hearts of these lying prophets, who prophesy the delusions of their own minds?*

**Jer 31:22** *How long will you wander, O unfaithful daughter?*

**Daniel 8:13** *Then I heard a holy one speaking, and another holy one said to him, "How long will it take for the vision to be fulfilled--the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, the rebellion that causes desolation, and the surrender of the sanctuary and of the host that will be trampled underfoot?"*

**Habakkuk 1:2** *How long, O LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save?*

**Zechariah 1:12** *Then the angel of the LORD said, "LORD Almighty, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and from the towns of Judah, which you have been angry with these seventy years?"*

**WILL WE BE PEOPLE WHO WANT REAL ENCOUNTERS WITH GOD**

### **3. GOD uses people who ARE NOT TRUSTING IN THEIR OWN STRENGTH.**

*v14 The LORD turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?" v15 "But Lord," Gideon asked, "how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." v16 The LORD answered, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together."*

The bible is full of reminders to not trust in our own strength to do Gods work!!!

**Isaiah 40:28-31** *Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. v29 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. v30 Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; v31 but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

**James 4:10** *Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

**2 Corinthians 12:9-10** *But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. v10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

WHEN WILL WE LEARN THIS LESSON?

### **4. GOD uses people who HAVE NO DOUBTS ABOUT GOD.**

*v17 Gideon replied, "If now I have found favour in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me. v18 Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you." And the LORD said, "I will wait until you return." v19 Gideon went in, prepared a young goat, and from an ephah of flour he made bread without yeast. Putting the meat in a basket and its broth in a pot, he brought them out and offered them to him under the oak. v20 The angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened bread, place them on this rock, and pour out the broth." And Gideon did so. v21 With the tip of the staff that was in his hand, the angel of the LORD touched the meat and the unleavened bread. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the LORD disappeared." v22 When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD*

## ***When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD***

The phrase "Angel of the Lord" is just another name for JESUS.

Gideon MET JESUS and BOOM, "he was a different PERSON".

Story of my father in the theatre during the last week of his life.

## 5. GOD uses people who WORSHIP.

*v22 When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he exclaimed, "Ah, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!" v23 But the LORD said to him, "Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die." v24 So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it The LORD is Peace. To this day it stands in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.*

When we read this verse in English, we sound so sophisticated. I think it should be

## **AHHHH it's THE LORD GOD JEHOVAH**

If Gideon where Xhosa, I am sure he would say “**TYHINI**”. It's an exclamation that has many uses, and as such, has multiple meanings. It's pronounced something like (t-yeenie), for the non- African language speakers. It's an exclamation of surprise, awe, exasperation, disgust, delight. It's Whoa! Wow! No way!

THE FIRST THING GIDEON DOES IS TO BUILD AN ALTAR TO WORSHIP.

Why is this so important?

Worship is the ultimate expression of surrender. (Bend the Knee)

## 6. GOD uses people who ARE OBEDIENT.

*v25 That same night the LORD said to him, "Take the second bull from your father's herd, the one seven years old. Tear down your father's altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it. v26 Then build a proper kind of altar to the LORD your God on the top of this height. Using the wood of the Asherah pole that you cut down, offer the second bull as a burnt offering." v27 So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the LORD told him. But because he was afraid of his family and the men of the town, he did it at night rather than in the daytime.*

Verse 27 says *So Gideon took ten of his servants* **and did as the LORD told him**

Godly people are obedient people! We sing

*When we walk with the Lord in the light of His Word*

*What a glory He sheds on our way!*

*While we do His good will, He abides with us still*

*And with all who will trust and obey*

***Trust and obey, for there's no other way***

***To be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey***

## 7. GOD uses people who ACCEPT THEIR WILL BE OPPOSITION.

*v28 In the morning when the men of the town got up, there was Baal's altar, demolished, with the Asherah pole beside it cut down and the second bull sacrificed on the newly built altar! v29 They asked each other, "Who did this?" When they carefully investigated, they were told, "Gideon son of Joash did it." v30 The men of the town demanded of Joash, "Bring out your son. He must die, because he has*

*broken down Baal's altar and cut down the Asherah pole beside it." v31 But Joash replied to the hostile crowd around him, "Are you going to plead Baal's cause? Are you trying to save him? Whoever fights for him shall be put to death by morning! If Baal really is a god, he can defend himself when someone breaks down his altar."*

There is only one enemy of God's people and that is Satan. And the Bible is a record of the many attempts Satan has tried to destroy the plans of God.

If Jesus faced opposition at every step, why do we think we will avoid opposition. The Key to succeeding with God does not lie in trying to avoid opposition or difficulty, the Key to succeeding with God is what we do after we have faced opposition or difficulty.

#### **8. GOD uses people who HAVE A NEW NAME.**

*v32 So that day they called Gideon "Jerub-Baal," saying, "Let Baal contend with him," because he broke down Baal's altar.*

We believers have a new NAME. It is CHRISTIAN. Because we carry that name humble acceptance, we can do all things through that Name.

### **CONCLUSION**

## **Who is the ultimate example for some God uses to save?**

### **JESUS**

- 1. Jesus was UNHAPPY WITH THE STATUS-QUO.**
- 2. Jesus HAD A REAL ENCOUNTERS WITH HIM.**
- 3. Jesus did not TRUSTING IN THEIR OWN STRENGTH.**
- 4. Jesus HAD NO DOUBTS ABOUT GOD.**
- 5. Jesus WORSHIPED.**
- 6. Jesus was OBEDIENT.**
- 7. Jesus faced OPPOSITION.**
- 8. Jesus has NAME ABOVE ALL OTHERS.**