

Today's Message: A Peace of That!

Series: Judges

Date: Sunday, June 16, 2024

The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites. Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds.

Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples **invaded** the country. 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. They **came up** with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts. It was impossible to count them or their camels; they **invaded** the land to **ravage** it. Midian so **impoverished** the Israelites that they cried out to the LORD for help. (Judges 6:1-6)

1. We have to acknowledge how _____ the situations of life can become.

When the Israelites cried out to the LORD because of Midian, 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. I **rescued** you from the hand of the Egyptians. And I **delivered** you from the hand of all your oppressors; I **drove** them out before you and **gave** you their land. 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." (Judges 6:7-10)

2. God's relationship with Israel is based on His performance and promises _____ His expectations for us.

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. When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, "The LORD is with you, mighty warrior."

"Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the LORD has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

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?"

"Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." The LORD answered, "**I will** be with you, and **you will** strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive." (Judges 6:11-16)

3. We must not _____ problems in our life for the absence of God in our life.

Gideon replied, "If now I have found favor in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me. ¹⁸ 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."

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. Then the angel of the LORD touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of the staff that was in his hand. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the LORD disappeared. When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he exclaimed, "Alas, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!"

But the LORD said to him, "Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die." 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. (Judges 6:17-24)

4. Peace with God is _____ even when the peace of God is unavailable!