THE EXCUSES OF GIDEON

Judges 6:15 “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.”

Setting

Devastated by the Midianites and their allies for seven years. The army of the Midianites had 135,000 swordsmen (Judges 8:10).

Review – First Excuse

God has abandoned us. He doesn’t do miracles anymore like He did when Moses led our ancestors out of Egypt.

Modern equivalent: We are in the last days, and the Bible says that in the last days there will be great apostasy. Expecting churches to be revived and large numbers of souls to be saved would be expecting something contrary to God’s Word.

The Answer to the First Excuse

Answer: Acts 2:17&18 “ ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.’ “

Acts 2:19-21 “ ‘I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ “

Matthew 24:14 “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Second Excuse – I Am Insignificant

Judges 6:15 “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.”

Of the 48 times the Hebrew word translated “weakest” in verse 15 occurs in the Hebrew text, it is translated in the NASB by a form of the word “poor” 33 times, and 7 times by the word “helpless.”

Judges 8:2b “Aren’t the gleanings of Ephraim’s grape harvest better than the full grape harvest of Abiezer?”

Judges 6:27a So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the Lord told him.

Judges 8:18&19a Then he asked Zebah and Zalmunna, “What kind of men did you kill at Tabor?” “Men like you,” they answered, “each one with the bearing of a prince.” Gideon replied, “Those were my brothers, the sons of my own mother.”

The Answer to the Second Excuse

I Corinthians 1:26-29 Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things – and the things that are not – to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him.

I Corinthians 1:30&31 It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God – that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: “Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.

Judges 7:2 The LORD said to Gideon, “You have too many men. I cannot deliver Midian into their hands, or Israel would boast against me, ‘My own strength has saved me.’ “

Judges 6:14-16 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.”

Am I Really Hearing from God?

Judges 6:17-19 Gideon replied, “If now I have found favor in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me. 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.” Gideon went inside, 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.

Judges 6:20-22 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 is 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!”

Judges 6:23&24 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.

Does God Give Us Specific Guidance Today?

Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light for my path.

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

Romans 8:14 For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.

What Can I Do that Will Make a Real Difference?

Stating the Obvious: Record breaking wildfires and hurricanes and Covid-19. If they don’t convince you God isn’t happy with the United States, I don’t know what it would take.

What can I do to change the direction our country is going?

1. Pray: 2 Chronicles 7:13&14
2. Evangelize: 2 Corinthians 5:17-21
3. Make disciples: Matthew 28:18-20
4. Make your church a better place by using your spiritual gift(s). I Peter 4:10

Is God looking for volunteers? Isaiah 6:8

Will He give me what I need to do what He wants me to do? 2 Chronicles 16:9a “For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.”