

GULF SHORES CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sermon by Ray Reynolds

YOU BE THE JUDGE: A SERIES ON THE BOOK OF JUDGES

Lesson Five = The Very Least of These

Judges 6-8

Introduction: We have noted several times in our last few lessons that God chooses very interesting leaders for the leadership of His people. Gideon is no exception. Gideon challenges God and challenges God's people. Is it acceptable to seek a "sign" to confirm the will of God? What does Gideon's experience teach us? Will Gideon turn triumph into tragedy by violating one of God's most basic principles? Or will he become the valiant hero that Israel has been waiting for since the days of Joshua? Let's study and see what happens

Discussion:

I. The Apostasy of the Israelites (6:1-10)

- A. Sin: Evil in the Sight of the Lord (v.1a)
- B. Slavery: Midian's Seven Year Reign of Terror (vs.1b-6a)
 - 1. The Results (vs.1b-2)
 - 2. The Raids (vs.3-4)
 - 3. The Ruins (vs.5-6a)
- C. Sorrow: The Sons of Israel Cried to the Lord (v.6b-10)
 - 1. The Persecution (vs.6b-7)
 - 2. The Prophet (v.8)
 - 3. The Past (v.9)
 - 4. The Punishment (v.10)

II. The Salvation of the Israelites (6:11-7:25)

- A. Gideon's Calling (vs.11-12)
- B. Gideon's Conversation (vs.13-16)
 - 1. Is God with us?
 - 2. Is God sure I can deliver Israel?
- C. Gideon's Consecration (vs.17-24)
 - 1. The preparation (vs.17-19)
 - 2. The presentation (vs.20-21)
 - 3. The realization (vs.22-24)
- D. Gideon's Confirmation (vs.6:25-40)
 - 1. Returning to the Lord (vs.25-32)
 - a. Destroying Baal's altar (vs.25-27)
 - b. Daring Baal's followers (vs.28-32)
 - 2. Recruiting an army (vs.33-35)
 - a. Midian's eighth incursion (v.33)
 - b. Gideon's Spirit-empowered invitation (vs.34-35)
 - 3. Requesting proof (vs.36-40)
 - a. The desire for a sign
 - b. The grace of a sign

- E. Gideon's Conquests (vs.7:1-25)
 - 1. Trimming the Army (vs.1-8)
 - a. The practice
 - b. The principle
 - 2. Encouraging the Leader (vs.9-15)
 - 3. Confounding the Enemy (vs.16-25)
 - a. The strategy (vs.16-18)
 - b. The victory (vs.19-25)
 - (1) The rout (vs.19-22)
 - (2) The pursuit (vs.23-25)

III. The Fall of the Israelites (8:1-35)

- A. Gideon's Complaints (vs.1-3)
- B. Gideon's Competition (vs.4-14)
- C. Gideon's Condemnation (vs.15-21)
- D. Gideon's Compromise (vs.22-27)
- E. Gideon's Concession (vs.28-35)

Conclusion: After so much hope was offered to the people of God, they ended up right where they started. The text concludes by revealing the dangerous consequences of a leader's influence. Silence is seen during the 40 years of rest (vs.28), but we know from reading on that those years gave way to conspiracy and persecution. We need to remember that when God is our peace (Romans 5:1), then God is our power (Romans 8:31). When the will of God is clear we should obey Him without hesitation to the end. God reminds us that He will not share his glory. He is one God! He doesn't need to share the spotlight with anyone! He alone deserves the praise and the glory. What happens next? We will see