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Is God Among Us?

Watch the video Ep. 7 The Holy Land: Gideon's Spring by John A. Beck prior to this study.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjLH6M8qq0U&list=PLPOUA7GLxXIGkhikntfiT4ida1IKbSNNB&index=8&t=0s>

Opening: Reading of Judges 6:1-6

1. "Is the Lord among us or not?" That's the question Israel asked Moses in the wilderness of Sin when they ran out of water (Ex. 17:1-7).
2. This after God had delivered them from Egypt with ten plagues, parted the waters of the Red Sea, led them with a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire and fed them with manna from heaven.
3. But Gideon's question is not much different. He said, "O my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? Where are all the miracles that our fathers told us about? The Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian" (Judges 6:13).
4. Maybe that's the way you feel as you struggle with sickness, isolation and financial problems.

Into the Text: Reading of Judges 6:17

1. The Lord showed Gideon a sign (6:21). Fire came from a rock and consumed the offering that Gideon had placed there. Gideon was instructed to tear down the altar of Baal and cut down the Asherah and to build an altar to the Lord God.
2. A showdown was coming. The Midianites and the Amalekites assembled themselves. They camped in the Valley of Jezreel. Gideon called his forces together. The Abiezrites followed him. People from the tribes of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun and Naphtali came together (6:33-35).
3. Gideon asked for another sign (6:36ff). If you will deliver me then make the fleece wet with dew and the ground dry. And then let the fleece be dry and the ground wet with dew.
4. Gideon's forces camped beside the spring of Harod. The Midianites were by the hill of Moreh. This is where God tested Gideon. He had mustered together 32,000 people. The Midianite force numbered 135,000. God reduced Gideon's forces by 22,000. 10,000 against 135,000! God reduced Gideon's forces further at the Spring of Harod. Those who put their hands in the water and put their hands to their mouths were 300. With these God would defeat the Midianites and establish His



A drink from
the Spring of
Harod (the
Spring of Gideon)

power over Baal. You remember about the pitchers, torches and trumpets (shofars), and how they shouted, "For the Lord and for Gideon."

The Midianites turned on one another. 120,000 were slain. About 15,000 were left and Gideon and his forces pursued them and routed the whole army.

Application:

1. If you have ever wondered, "Is God among us or not?" you are not unique. Israel asked this same question. Gideon asked the same question.
2. You might even say, "He was with Israel and He was with Gideon, but what about me? Is God with me?" Are you with Him? Are you looking for a sign?
3. People in the first century asked Jesus for a sign (Matt. 12:38-40). Jesus said that His resurrection would be a sign. Do you believe in the testimony of the eyewitnesses of the resurrection? See 1 Cor. 15:3-7. As incredible as it is, the resurrection is only one of the evidences of God being among us. Paul reasoned with the people of Lystra that God had given them rains and fruitful seasons (Acts 14:17). He reasoned with the Athenians that God gives to all people life and breath and all things, that in Him we live and move and exist (Acts 17:25, 28). Hebrews 1:3 says, "He upholds all things by the word of His power." Our very continuance is evidence of His presence.
4. Nothing establishes His concern for us more than the sacrifice of His son for our forgiveness. The question is, "Are we willing to accept the evidence?" God gave Gideon the evidence. He finally accepted it. Examine the evidence and then decide.

Is the Lord among us or not? Perhaps He is and we are not recognizing it. Perhaps we are not with Him. That was the problem in Gideon's day. "The sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord; and God gave them into the hands of Midian seven years" (Judges 6:1).

5. God promises, "I will never desert you nor will I ever forsake you" (Heb. 13:5). Paul reasoned, "If God did not spare His own son for us, how will He not with Him freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). Will you give yourself to the Lord? He has already given Himself to you!