

Miracles?

“... if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of” (Judges 6:13)

God was preparing Gideon to deliver Israel from the seven-year oppression of Midian, but not until Israel repented of its rejection of Him. The Midianites, Amalekites and the children of the east caused such a famine that there was no sustenance in all of Israel, *“And they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass” (Judges 6:4)*. This oppression and other trials throughout the Judges approximately three-hundred year period were ordained by God to test Israel, *“That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not” (Judges 2:22)*. In other words, will they seek the Lord or completely turn their backs on Him? God works in the same manner today, *“And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me” (Psalm 50:15)*.

Israel became so distressed in their poverty that they “cried” to the Lord for help. They were more than short of food; they finally realized that they had become spiritually impoverished. As a nation they were awakened to their sinful condition and thus they cried for deliverance. Interestingly, God sent a prophet to preach to them, *“the LORD sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage... And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land... but ye have not obeyed my voice” (Judges 6:8-10)*. This prophet reminded them of what great bondage God had freed them from and of how they had since denied Him. So, too, with backsliders today, God reminds us of the great bondage of sin that we were released from when we could first believe that word of reconciliation, “...

Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee” (Matthew 9:2). Jesus gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven to all believers to proclaim these words of release to a penitent soul shackled in sin, *“I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven (Matthew 16:19)*. And now, He is calling all those in unbelief to return to Him, as He did with the Israelites.

Once Israel had returned to God, Gideon was then asked to defeat the Midianites. His response to the angel who made the request was one of astonishment. First he questioned where God was in all this national strife and why God did not create some miracle to free the people. After all, the elders often spoke of great miracles that occurred to free the people from the Egyptians; why are there no such miracles now? This same question, couched in different terms and circumstances, is often asked today. The answer that Gideon received might not seem like an answer at all, but it reveals the love God has for us, *“And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?” (Judges 6:14)*. Gideon was told two things: your faith is strong enough, “go in thy might”, and God is with you, “have not I sent thee”. When Gideon continued to protest, saying that he had no talent or resources, God again reminds him, *“... Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man” (Judges 6:16)*. God asks us, as He asked Gideon, to trust solely in Him, *“It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man” (Psalm 118:8)*.

So today when we wonder where God is and why we seem powerless to effect miracles, remember this; God is with all who will call and believe upon His name, *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:13)* and *“Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe” (Romans 3:22)*. Gideon defeated a 135,000 man army with a mere 300 men using only

trumpets, lamps and glass pitchers. Think of this, “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?” (Romans 8:31).

God’s peace,
Charles Korhonen

June 7	Ken Storm	Holy Comunion
June 14	Chad Kuivanen	
June 21	Sunday School Picnic at Twin Lakes State Park. All Welcome.	

TAPIOLA APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH
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June 28	Matthew Niemela	
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Online Broadcasts

From our webpage: <http://www.tapiolachurch.org/> you will see the mixlr live audio – we will be 'live on the air' during our church services. Previous sermons are archived.

Summer Worship Schedule

Sunday Service 10:00am.
Wednesday Bible Study 7pm