



One Little Part

The other day a good friend of mine was having some troubles with his vehicle. After some investigation, he found it was one small electronic component that was causing the problem. Now, he could have lived with the inconvenience of connecting and dis-connecting the battery every time he used his vehicle, but he chose to order the part and fix the problem. It is amazing how just one little part affected the whole operation of his vehicle.

As I continue to read through the book of Judges, I realized just how many parts made up its whole. The “judges” chosen by God were all picked for a specific reason. While some only receive a quick mention in a verse or two, others have a couple of chapters dedicated to telling their story. Gideon was one part (one judge) out of many who God chose to lead his people back to him.

As we are introduced to Gideon (chapters 6-8), we learn a few things about him that help us understand who was as a person, a person most of us can relate to. While I cannot imagine what a face-to-face encounter with an angel of the Lord might be like, I can connect with his response to his greeting. Here is how it played out: “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?”

For the past seven years the people of Israel had fallen into a pattern of sin and had been living under the oppression of the Midian nation. Life was hard, they lived in the mountains to hide as best they could from the power of the Midianites.

Gideon lived through seven years of oppression along with the other people and, as most normal person would, he had doubts about where God was. Can you relate to the place Gideon was in his heart and mind? Do you sometimes have doubts that God is near to you?

Today we have the privilege of seeing the larger picture of God’s incredible provision of grace, mercy, and love as we read through the book of Judges. Each time the people fall into the pattern of “doing evil in the eyes of the Lord”, God is always near and provides a way back to him. God used Gideon (one small part) in incredible ways (more details in chapters 6-8) and led the people through 40 years of peace.

Like Gideon, our faith in God can ride through valleys and hills. We all want to live on the “mountain tops” in our faith and life but inevitably there are times when we fall into the valley. The same God that heard the cries of the Israelites so many times is the same God today that hears our cries and gives us strength and power to climb out of the valley back to the top of the mountain.

God provided the judges in Gideon’s day to help bring them back to himself but today we have an even more powerful way back to him and that is through his son Jesus Christ. He died for our sins and is the one who presents us as pure and holy before our father in heaven.

Gideon played his part in helping the people find their way back to God; we too are called to be a witness (one little part) in leading others to Christ. Where are you today? Are you walking through a valley or are you standing on the top of a mountain? No matter where you are, you are not alone, God is with you. Pray about how can you be a “part” used by him?