

PERSONAL STUDY: DAY 1

The point: Our strength comes from God.

Read Judges 6:11-16.

Summarize verse 12 in your own words. What is significant about the angel's initial greeting?

Gideon protested because he felt as though the Lord had abandoned His people. How did the Lord respond in verse 14?

What two excuses did Gideon make? How do you think God could demonstrate His strength through Gideon's weaknesses?

This interaction began and ended with the same promise of God's presence. God called Gideon to move his focus from his own inabilities to God's sovereignty. Only when he trusted God could Gideon complete the task ahead of him.

Respond

What aspects of obedience to God's mission make you feel inadequate, or not up to the task?

When do you most often need to be reminded that God is with you? Thank God for His presence. Ask Him to help you see Him at work in your life this week.

On an index card, jot down a Bible verse that emphasizes God's presence. Place the card where you will see it often.

PERSONAL STUDY: DAY 2

The point: Our assurance comes from God.

Read Judges 6:36-40.

Describe the first sign and the second sign Gideon asked for from God.

| First Sign | Second Sign |
|------------|-------------|
| | |

Why do you think Gideon requested a second sign? What does this reveal about his faith?

What does God's willingness to perform two signs teach us about His character?

Instead of asking for a sign, how should believers respond to fears and doubts today?

Respond

The same God who called Gideon to deliver the Israelites calls us into action today. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you examine your heart. Do you sense God calling you to something specific? Confess anything that might hold you back and ask God to give you the strength to follow Him without question.

When God has called you to do something, have you ever been tempted to give excuses? In what ways did God show patience with you?

PERSONAL STUDY: DAY 3

The point: Our victory comes from God.

List some of the truths you've learned as you studied the Book of Judges this week.

Read Judges 7:16-22.

Gideon only had _____ men. He gave them a _____ and an empty pitcher with a _____ inside. What does this tell you about the military strength of Israel during this battle? Why is that important?

Highlight verse 17. What does this tell you about the type of leader Gideon was?

In verse 18, Gideon indicated that the battle was for God. How do you think this designation affected the outcome of the battle?

What do you think Gideon's men learned about God from this battle?

The greatest example of God's victory through our weakness was through Jesus on the cross. How does this passage help believers better understand God's power in our lives today?

Respond

Often we "put on a brave face" or we "fake it 'til we make it." How does faking our strength diminish the appearance of the strength of God? What do you think admitting our weaknesses does to our testimony?

PERSONAL STUDY: DAY 4

★ **The point: Samson's impulses led him to break his vows.**

▶ **Read Judges 14:1-9.**

According to verse 3, why do you think Samson's parents wanted him to find a wife from his own people? Explain.

Reread verse 4. Underline God's plan for Samson involving the Philistine woman.

▶ **Read Judges 16:4-20.**

According to verse 5, for what reason did the Philistines want Delilah to persuade Samson to tell her how he received his strength?

Briefly summarize the lies Samson told Delilah when she asked about the source of his strength.

v. 7

v. 11

v. 13b

What was the outcome in each of those situations? What was Delilah's response to Samson?

According to verses 19 and 20, what Nazirite vow did Samson break this time? Describe the major consequence listed in verse 20.

In both instances when Samson broke his vows, where was his focus?

▶ **Respond**

In what ways are you, like Samson, tempted to place your desires above your commitment to God?

PERSONAL STUDY: DAY 5

The point: Samson's defeat leads him to turn back to God.

Review yesterday's devotion before you begin reading today's Scripture. When Samson broke his vow to God, God left him (Judg. 16:20).

Read Judges 16:21-30.

According to verses 21 and 25, what did Samson have to endure at the hands of the Philistines?

Whom did the Philistines praise for their victory over Samson? Why do you think this is important in relation to the Lord strengthening Samson once more?

Summarize Samson's cry to God in verse 28.

What did Samson do after he turned back to the Lord (vv. 29-30)?

Despite his brokenness and failures, God still used Samson to begin delivering Israel from the Philistines. Samson is listed among the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11 because, in his dying act, he acknowledged his strength came from the Lord.

Respond

God loves us unconditionally and is able to use us in mighty ways despite our mistakes.

Do you sometimes struggle to believe God could use you to do His work?
Why or why not?

If so, confess your struggle to God. Ask Him to help you believe He can use you for His glory.