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The Great Return: Is It Worth It?

To Make God's Children Willing To Listen To God's Word

Hebrews 12:11 - *No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.*

IS IT WORTH IT?

Judges 6:1-3, 6 - *The Israelites did evil in the Lord's sight. So the Lord handed them over to the Midianites for seven years. ² The Midianites were so cruel that the Israelites made hiding places for themselves in the mountains, caves, and strongholds. ^{3...6} So Israel was reduced to starvation by the Midianites...*

Judges 6:7-10 - *When they cried out to the Lord because of Midian, ⁸ the Lord sent a prophet to the Israelites. He said, "This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: I brought you up out of slavery in Egypt. ⁹ I rescued you from the Egyptians and from all who oppressed you. I drove out your enemies and gave you their land. ¹⁰ I told you, 'I am the Lord your God. You must not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you now live.' But you have not listened to me."*

The Motive For A Great Return Isn't That We Gain Something We Don't Have, But That We Access What We Already Have In Christ

1. Does God Really Care?

Judges 6:11-13 - *Then the angel of the Lord came and sat beneath the great tree at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash of the clan of Abiezer. Gideon son of Joash was threshing wheat at the bottom of a winepress to hide the grain from the Midianites. ¹² The angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, "Mighty hero, the Lord is with you!" ¹³ "Sir," Gideon replied, "if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? And where are all the miracles our ancestors told us about? Didn't they say, 'The Lord brought us up out of Egypt'? But now the Lord has abandoned us and handed us over to the Midianites."*

Ephesians 2:10 - *For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

Philippians 2:13 - *For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.*

2. Does God Know What He's Doing?

Judges 6:14-17 - *Then the Lord turned to him and said, "Go with the strength you have, and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!"* ¹⁵ *"But Lord," Gideon replied, "how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family!"* ¹⁶ *The Lord said to him, "I will be with you. And you will destroy the Midianites as if you were fighting against one man."* ¹⁷ *Gideon replied, "If you are truly going to help me, show me a sign to prove that it is really the Lord speaking to me.*

Faith Means Following God In The Face Of What We See, How We Feel, Or What The Cost Might Be

Romans 11:34 - *For who can know the Lord's thoughts? Who knows enough to give him advice?*

3. Will God Take Care Of Me?

Judges 6:25-27 - *That night the Lord said to Gideon, "Take the second bull from your father's herd, the one that is seven years old. Pull down your father's altar to Baal, and cut down the Asherah pole standing beside it."* ²⁶ *Then build an altar to the Lord your God here on this hilltop sanctuary, laying the stones carefully. Sacrifice the bull as a burnt offering on the altar, using as fuel the wood of the Asherah pole you cut down."* ²⁷ *So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the Lord had commanded. But he did it at night because he was afraid of the other members of his father's household and the people of the town.*

He Had To Learn To Take A Stand In His Own Village Before He Could Face The Enemy In The Trenches

A Great Return Is Strengthened By Private Victories

4. Does God Keep His Promises?

Judges 6:33-34 - *Soon afterward the armies of Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east formed an alliance against Israel and crossed the Jordan, camping in the valley of Jezreel.* ³⁴ *Then the Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon with power...*

Zechariah 4:6 - *...It is not by force nor by strength, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Heaven's Armies.*

1 John 5:4 - *For every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith.*