

“What Things Seem”

By Mrs. Sojourner



Can you imagine being in Mary’s shoes when she found out that she was carrying the Christ child? How about Joseph’s when he learned of Mary’s position? Can you imagine the shame people subjected them to as a result of assumptions? If all of this was not bad enough, they had to travel and be away from home at the time of delivery, and have the baby—the promised King of the Jews—IN A STABLE?! Can you imagine what was going through their minds, or what the consequences would have been had they lived in fear instead of trusting God and his promises?

Pondering this familiar story recently, something The Sojourner has said many times occurred to me. He says that the day Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers did not seem like a banner day in his life, but God used that to bring about the deliverance of his people Israel.

I can imagine that there may have been times that it did not seem to Mary and Jo-

seph like they were in blessed positions and favored by God, but regardless of how things looked, they were blessed and favored by God.

Foot-
notes:

Mary and Joseph hung onto God’s promises and followed his instructions and ways irregardless of what other people said or did. They walked, and also “leapt” in faith and God kept his promises to them, and to all of mankind through Jesus’ death and resurrection.

Our Heavenly Father has things for each of us to do. Let us, like Mary and Joseph, walk in faith and obey what God is leading us to do irregardless of what the circumstances seem. Who knows how many people will be impacted for Christ by our willingness to step out in faith?

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Sojourning

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...with The Sojourner

“As Instructed” (Teaching Sketch)

Judges 6:25-32 (NIV)



God may speak in a succession of instances as one move, on His part. This is shown in Judges 6 very plainly. God encounters Gideon concerning the deliverance of Israel from the hands of their oppressors, several times.

The Angel

Gideon^[a] was approached by the Angel of the LORD as he was doing a very mundane thing, preparing wheat in a winepress. A move of God is not, necessarily, something to be conjured up in only times of great gatherings of believers. God, also, moves in his times and seasons. God’s plan is not necessarily our plan, just as God’s ways are not man’s ways.

When the LORD Speaks

When the Lord speaks to a person it is never a time for debate. Oh, yes, to be certain, the spirit needs to be discerned. This is especially true of a new believer or someone not familiar with the ways of God. It is, how-

ever, probable if God is communicating with someone unskilled or untaught in scripture, God will be very plainly evident. A good example of this is found in the Christmas story in Luke 2:8-14 when the angels appeared to the shepherds in the field. They, in Luke 2:15-20, then went immediately to verify and experience what they had been instructed to do.

Notes:

[a] Feller; ie. Warrior

Instructions Given

Here in Judges 6:25, we see the LORD instructing Gideon on what must be done first before Israel will be delivered from the oppression of the last seven years.

“Tear down your father’s altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it.” (NIV)

Here Gideon was told to tear down the pagan altar, adopted by his father’s generation and replace it properly with an altar to the one true God who had chosen

Please note: This is a teaching sketch only and not the complete teaching.

Scripture:

Judges 6:25-32 (NIV)

25 That same night the LORD said to him, "Take the second bull from your father's herd, the one seven years old. ^[a] Tear down your father's altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole ^[b] beside it. 26 Then build a proper kind of ^[c] altar to the LORD your God on the top of this height. Using the wood of the Asherah pole that you cut down, offer the second ^[d] bull as a burnt offering." 27 So Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the LORD told him. But because he was afraid of his family and the men of the town, he did it at night rather than in the daytime. 28 In the morning when the men of the town got up, there was Baal's altar, demolished, with the Asherah pole beside it cut down and the second bull sacrificed on

Notes:

[a] Or *Take a full-grown, mature bull from your father's herd*

[b] That is, a symbol of the goddess Asherah

[c] Or *build with layers of stone and*

[d] Or *full-grown*; also in verse 28

[e] *Jerub-Baal means let Baal contend*

the newly built altar! 29 They asked each other, "Who did this?" When they carefully investigated, they were told, "Gideon son of Joash did it." 30 The men of the town demanded of Joash, "Bring out your son. He must die, because he has broken down Baal's altar and cut down the Asherah pole beside it." 31 But Joash replied to the hostile crowd around him, "Are you going to plead Baal's cause? Are you trying to save him? Whoever fights for him shall be put to death by morning! If Baal really is a god, he can defend himself when someone breaks down his altar." 32 So that day they called Gideon "Jerub-Baal, ^[e]" saying, "Let Baal contend with him," because he broke down Baal's altar.

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Judges 6:25-32 (NIV)

Israel as his people. Now, Baal (pronounced: Bah-al; which means master) was a Phoenician pagan god.

As Instructed

Gideon, taking 10 of his servants, sets out to do as he has been instructed. Gideon did, however, choose to follow instructions under the cover of darkness as the deceived generation was sleeping comfortably. Gideon set about tearing down, to build up, and sacrificing something of value, held sacred.

Uproar In Town

The light of day brought a revelation, in town, of God's move through Gideon. Carrying out God's instructions does not always make a person accepted or popular among the deceived.

Father's Protection

Gideon's father saw the godly way and defended his son. "If Baal really is a god, he can defend himself..." Gideon was protected by both his Heavenly Father and his earthly Father. Following God's instructions brings salvation, deliverance and healing.



Advent

This is the first week in Advent.
This is the week we light the:

Prophesy Candle

Saying:

"I light the Prophesy Candle, which reminds us God spoke through prophets of old to tell mankind the Savior was coming to take away the sins of the world."

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 53

Song: "O' Come, O' Come Emmanuel"