

Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites.

Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds.

Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country.

They camped on the land and ruined the crops all the way to Gaza and did not spare a living thing for Israel, neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys.

They came up with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts. It was impossible to count the men and their camels; they invaded the land to ravage it. Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the Lord for help.





The Midianites, the Amalekites and all the other eastern peoples had settled in the valley, thick as locusts. Their camels could no more be counted than the sand on the seashore.





But Gideon told them, "I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you. The LORD will rule over you."



The angel of the Lord came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite,

where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites.

When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior."

The Lord turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?"

"But Lord," Gideon asked, "how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."



I. The Hero II. The Hero's Hurdles 1) Labels 2) Lack of Personal Responsibility

"Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but if the Lord is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about when they said,

'Did not the Lord bring us up out of Egypt?' But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian."

- I. The Hero II. The Hero's Hurdles 1) Labels 2) Lack of Personal Responsibility
 - 3) Doubt

Gideon said to God, "If you will save Israel by my hand as you have promised, look, I will place a wool fleece on the threshing floor. If there is dew only on the fleece and all the ground is dry,

then I will know that you will save Israel by my hand, as you said." And that is what happened. Gideon rose early the next day; he squeezed the fleece and wrung out the dew—a bowlful of water.

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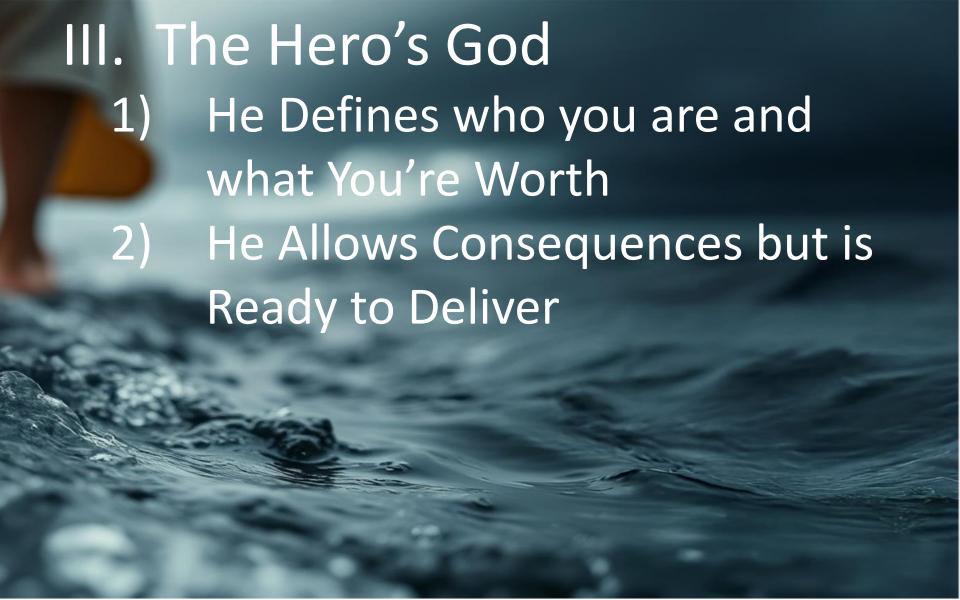
Then Gideon said to God, "Do not be angry with me. Let me make just one more request. Allow me one more test with the fleece.

This time make the fleece dry and the ground covered with dew." That night God did so. Only the fleece was dry; all the ground was covered with dew.

I. The Hero II. The Hero's Hurdles III. The Hero's God 1) He Defines who you are and what You're Worth

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers,

but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.



III. The Hero's God

- 1) He Defines who you are and what You're Worth
- 2) He Allows Consequences but is Ready to Deliver
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- 1) He Defines who you are and what You're Worth
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- 4) He Expects Obedience but is Patient and Full of Grace



