

# BROKEN 1 – Broken Vessels

## The Story of GIDEON

### 1. THE CALLING (Judges 6:11-16)

KEY POINT #1: Your BROKENNESS does not DISQUALIFY you

- \* NO-ONE was picking Gideon.
- \* GIDEON was certainly not picking Gideon.
- \* Your BROKENNESS doesn't LIMIT God in any way.

→ *What were the factors suggesting Gideon was not capable of fulfilling the role for which he was being chosen? What characteristics did he exhibit later in the story to suggest that God knew what He was doing after all?*

→ *Why do you think you are disqualified? Why are you wrong?!*

### 2. THE CULLING (Judges 7:1-7)

- \* 32,000 down to 10,000 down to 300.

KEY POINT #2: God's POWER, not your attempts to DISGUISE your BROKENNESS, is going to be what WINS the victory

- \* Many times, God will reduce what it appears you have, to take you almost to the BRINK of IMPOSSIBLE, so you're finally FORCED to TRUST Him

→ *Who did God weed out and why?*

→ *How do people attempt to 'disguise' their weaknesses and why, in the light of what we learn from this story, does that approach fail?*

→ *Why does God sometimes take us to the brink of impossible?*

### 3. THE CRACKING (Judges 7:15-21)

- \* 3 PHYSICAL actions revealing vital SPIRITUAL truth.
- \* The Big One: The clay jars they were carrying had to be BROKEN to UNCOVER what lay within (2 Cor 4:7).
- \* FLESH must be broken, denied, subjugated, so that SPIRIT can dominate, quicken, shine.

KEY POINT #3: BROKENNESS before BREAKTHROUGH

→ *What does the clay jar represent? What does the light within represent? How does the former block the latter? How do we solve that problem?*

→ *Why the blowing of a ram's horn? What did that action represent and how does it fit with the other required actions?*

→ *"Unless the jar is broken, no one will see the light. Until that jar is broken, there can be no victory. One way or another, that jar will have to break.*

*How much more could God do in our lives if that clay jar could be broken?"*

*Discuss!*

## CORE TEXT: Psalm 51:16-17 (Isa 57:15, 66:2)

→ *What was going on in David's life at this point? Why is this Psalm so important to him?*

The MSG: Religious SACRIFICE isn't going to move God.

He takes NO PLEASURE in yet another burnt offering.

→ *Why are the sacrifices & offerings worthless without a broken spirit & contrite heart?*

There are two things God really wants from us:

1. A BROKEN Spirit = A heart that recognises its DEEP NEED for God.

Characterised by

- HUMILITY
- HONESTY
- SURRENDER

→ *Describe how each of these characterise a 'broken spirit.'*

2. A CONTRITE Heart = A heart that acknowledges its SINFULNESS, is deeply REMORSEFUL & desperate to CHANGE.

Characterised by

- GENUINE SORROW
- REPENTANCE
- A SOFTENED HEART

→ *Describe how each of these characterise a 'contrite heart.'*

## The Crunch Question: WHO is breaking WHOM?

Are you going to WILLINGLY BREAK yourself or is GOD going to have to break YOU?

- \* If you're RESISTING, God will need to do some BREAKING.
- \* If you refuse to SUBMIT, God will ALLOW the circumstances of life to BREAK you.

→ *How & why does God allow circumstances to 'break' us?*

*If we willingly break ourselves, can we spare ourselves that pain?*

*How do we 'break ourselves?'*

Here are few clues there are things that need to be broken

- a) By default, you try to solve your own problems in your own strength.
- b) Fear makes you hide from God so He can't 'break in.'
- c) You are self-protecting, erecting walls and/or wearing masks to avoid what God is trying to do in your life, albeit possibly inadvertently.
- d) You're repeatedly lying to yourself (pretending to yourself & others that you're more impressive, on-top-of-it, able than you really are).
- e) You exert more energy pursuing things of worldly value, than the holy & godly.
- f) You are driving personal agendas, rather than submitting to the purposes of God.
- g) You are knowingly disobeying certain imperatives in His Word.
- h) Your pride is quenching what the Holy Spirit wants to do in you – That can be done in any number of ways.
- i) Hardness of heart keeps you from responding to His call.

\* Zech 4:6 → It's only ever going to be HIS power, purposes & glory; so in order to get where we need to get in Kingdom terms, there's going to have to be a WHOLE LOT OF BROKENNESS.

\* Maybe you'll NEVER be WHOLE until you're TRULY broken!

→ *Give some biblical examples of people who were broken heroes.*

→ *"Maybe we need to look at brokenness differently. Maybe you'll never be whole until you're truly broken. Maybe your brokenness is the key to the purposes of God in your life." Discuss!*