

What will it take for God to get your attention?

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God uses many methods in which to get the attention of those he desires to speak to. All through the Scriptures, there are various ways in which He gets his points across and people are sent on missions that they never dreamed would be possible.

Look at Judges 6:11, we find Gideon out threshing wheat by the winepress determined to hide the wheat from the Midianites that were lording over God's people. He was just trying to survive and provide for his family when an angel of the Lord came and sat under an oak tree nearby.

Suddenly the angel of the Lord said, "The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." Gideon responded with these words, "If the LORD is with us why has all of this befallen us? And where are the miracles which our fathers told us about concerning the escape from the Egyptians? Now the LORD has forsaken us and has allowed the Midianites to overcome us."

The LORD looked upon him and told him to go in his might and he would save Israel from the hands of the Midianites for He was sending Gideon. Gideon responded by saying "Oh my Lord, how am I going to save Israel? My family is poor in Manasseh and I am the least in my father's house." The Lord promised to be with him and he would smite the Midianites as one man. Gideon asked the Lord for a sign that he was actually talking with the LORD. As you read this story, you will find that Gideon asked the angel to wait for him while he killed a goat and placed the flesh in a basket, prepared some cakes from flour, made some broth and put it in a pot and set it before the angel who was under the oak tree. The angel told Gideon to take the meat and unleavened cakes and lay them out on a rock and pour out the broth. When Gideon obeyed, the angel took the staff that was in his hand, touched the meat and cakes and there rose fire out of the rock that consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes and the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight. Gideon was afraid when he realized that he was in the presence of God and had seen an angel of the LORD face to face. The LORD told him not to be afraid for he wouldn't die. Gideon built an altar to the LORD and called it Jehovah-shalom (Sovereign Lord).

Gideon obeyed God's voice and took ten men servants with him and they tore down the altars of Baal, and built an altar to the LORD. He had been given specific instructions from the LORD on how to accomplish the task. He offered a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the images that he cut down. Gideon feared the people so he waited until night fell to do as God commanded him. When the men of the city discovered that their altar of Baal was cast down and the images were cut down that were by it and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built, they began to ask questions. "Who did this thing?" They learned that Gideon, the son of Joash had done away with the altar and idols

of Baal. They commanded Joash to deliver Gideon to them to kill for his deed. Joash spoke wise words. "If Baal is a god and he is powerful, let him defend himself."

The Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon and he blew a trumpet and sent word for people to gather with him against the Midianites.

Gideon asked God for more verification that he would be successful in fighting the Midianites. He put out a fleece of wool and asked that the fleece of wool be wet with dew and all the area of earth around it be dry. God allowed it to be so.

The next morning he wrung out a bowl full of water from the fleece and all the earth was dry around it. He asked the LORD to not be angry with him, but he needed a little bit more assurance that he would be given success in battle. He asked that the earth around the fleece be wet, but the fleece would be dry. God allowed it to be so.

Gideon was not seeking God's will for he knew what God had called him to do, but he was afraid and needed his own faith to be stronger. Also he was going to have to convince the people to follow his leadership and he would use this illustration to prove to them that God was with him. This amazing story is an example of what God will do through people who will follow his direction. If you want God to move on your behalf, you must obey the revealed will of God that he has already shown to you. Gideon gained courage as he faced his fears and followed step by step what God had told him to do. By the time that he faced his enemy with 300 soldiers, his heart had been prepared to believe that God was going to bring the victory and he was just the vessel that God used to bring it about.

Faith grows as it is tested and strengthened.

Gideon faced his fear and threshed the wheat with the intent of hiding it from his enemies. God honored his faith and even though Gideon was fearful, he was called a mighty warrior. When Gideon asked the angel how he could save Israel since he was from the weakest clan of Manasseh and he was the least in his father's house, God promised to be with him and he predicted that Gideon would strike down all the Midianites together.

Gideon wanted to give the LORD an offering and God honored him for that gesture.

Each task that the LORD gave to Gideon; he found a way to accomplish it in spite of fear. At last the people took provisions in their hands, their trumpets and 300 men were prepared to go to battle. The host of Midian was beneath Gideon's army in the valley. See Judges 7:8. That night the LORD told him to go down upon the host of Midianites for He had delivered them into Gideon's hands. But, if he was still afraid to do that, he was to take, Purah, his servant with him and they would hear words that would give them courage. Gideon took Purah and together they went down to the tents of the Midianites. There they saw Midianites, Amalekites and all the children of the east laying along the valley like grasshopper for multitude and their camels were without number as the sand by the seaside for multitude. As they moved around they heard a man tell a dream to his fellow soldier. He said, "I dreamed a dream and lo a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian and came unto a tent and smote it that it fell and overturned it, that the

tent lay flat.” His fellow soldier answered and said, “This is nothing else except that the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash, a man of Israel for God has delivered Midian into his hand and the entire host.

When Gideon heard the dream and the interpretation of it, he worshipped and returned into the host of Israel and said, “Arise for the LORD has delivered into your hand the host of Midian. He divided them into groups, gave each a lighted lamp and placed trumpets in their hands and they headed out. The men followed the commands that Gideon gave and as the signal was given, they shouted “The sword of the LORD and of Gideon.”

The enemy armies were startled; they fled and fought each other. God had shown his power to deliver and to bring victory to his people in unconventional ways. Gideon was chosen to be a judge over Israel following this wonderful turn of events.