

Rev. Janet R. Doyle

Elmer Presbyterian Church

22nd Sunday after Pentecost

Sunday, October 25, 2026

Scripture: Judges 6: 28-40; Judges 7: 1-24

Sermon: But God...Turned the Impossible to Possible

Last Sunday we talked about the call of Gideon to lead the Israelites. The Lord chose Gideon. Gideon says, “How could it be me because I am from the weakest clan in the tribe of Manasseh and I am least in my father’s house?” Remember God uses the ordinary and God chooses the humble in heart to work for Him.

The Israelites have turned away from God and began worshiping Baal and other gods. Gideon is called to bring the people back to God. In chapter 6 verses 28-30 it says: “In the morning when the people 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 the newly built altar! They asked each other, “Who did this?” When they carefully investigated, they were told, “Gideon son of Joash did it.” The people 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.”

An Asherah pole was a sacred wooden pole, carved post, or living tree that the ancient Canaanites used to honor Asherah, a major Canaanite mother goddess of fertility and the worship of other gods like Baal was now a part of their daily worship.

Gideon knew that life had to change, and the people needed to worship the one true God again that brought them out of slavery and saved them. Gideon had experienced being in the presence of God and his life was changed.

Gideon needed more proof that God was with him to fight the Midianites who kept abusing the Israelites over 7 years. He had doubts and his faith needed to be made stronger. In Chapter 6 verses 36-38 he wants more proof that God is for him. 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. 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, but this time make the fleece dry and let the ground be covered with dew.” That night God did so. Only the fleece was dry; all the ground was covered with dew.

Even after his encounter with Almighty God, even though he had been obedient to cleanse his home and knock down the Baal worship and even though God appointed him, Gideon still struggled with doubts. He was fearful. He knows that God has promised to save Israel through him, but he’s looking in the mirror and the reflection he sees doesn’t look encouraging. Gideon is asking God for signs and a confirmation that God is with him all the way.

I love how loving, tender, and patient God is with Gideon and with us. Gideon is making a deal with God. He wants a confirming sign, and the Bible says the next morning, God gave it to him: the fleece was wet, and the ground was dry. The next day Gideon reverses the test, asking that the fleece be dry, and the ground covered with dew. He then asked God not to be angry with him. God graciously confirmed this sign for Gideon. Our Lord was developing this man into a fully convinced servant, matching each doubt with kind reassurance.

God will show you the same patience as well, as you seek His face, calming your fears to grow you into a servant of God. He is ready to give you assurance when you doubt him and when you fear the future.

Gideon is convinced and fearless. Gideon is now ready to fight but God has other plans. God keeps Gideon on his toes. What is God asking of him next? Gideon prepared an army of 32,000 soldiers. In Judges 7, the Lord said to Gideon, “You have too many people for Me to handle the Midianites over to you, or else Israel might boast: ‘I did it myself.’” God wants Israel to know that He is the one doing it not the disobedient people of God.

God hates pride and boasting. When someone takes credit for God’s work in their lives God does not like it. We are to give God the glory and honor and not take it for ourselves.

God proceeds to give Gideon a couple of tests to whittle the number down. In the first test, God asked everyone with fear to return home. 22,000 men left the army, leaving 10,000. Still too many, said God. A second test was given. God tells Gideon to take his men down to the water and let them drink. Weed out any men who stick their face down into the water to drink; keep the

ones who ladle the water to their mouths with their hands. Gideon must have gulped hard when he counted how many were disqualified: 9700 were out, leaving only 300 men.

Can you imagine how Gideon felt? The Midianite army numbered 135,000 men. That's 450 Midianites to every one Israeli soldier. God wants Gideon's army to face this huge army with a mere 300 men. In the worldly sense it seems impossible to have victory. Gideon could have thought, "What can I do with what I have?" Many of you are thinking, "Lord, what can I do with what I have?" How can one life make a difference in the world? How can the weak become strong? How can 300 people defeat a massive army?

God created an impossible situation of human weakness to exalt His own strength. This is His specialty! Jesus said in Luke 18:27 "What is impossible with people is possible with God."

Now the Midianite camp lay below in the valley. During the night the Lord said to Gideon, "If you are afraid to fight with 300 men I will give you another sign." God asked Gideon to go down to the Midianite camp. Gideon was definitely fearful and doubted with so few men. God told him to take a servant with him. As Gideon arrived, a man was telling his friend his dream. "A loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the Midianite camp with such force that the tent overturned and collapsed. The friend responded, "This can be nothing other than the sword of Gideon, son of Joash, the Israelite. God has given the Midianites and the whole camp into his hands."

Gideon was finally encouraged. He turned from being fearful and doubting to fearless and confident in victory with God. He worshipped God and said to his men, "Get up! The Lord has given the Midianite camp into your hands." God was very patient with Gideon and his doubts and fear and God is patient with our steps of faith until we have the courage to face our situation with confidence in our God.

Gideon then divided his camp into three groups of 100 men and marched around the mountain. They carry with them trumpets, empty mud jars, and torches. The Midianites are down in the valley. The Israelites take position around them. They blow the trumpets and break the jar. The Midianites woke up and saw people with torches all around them, they were surrounded. They felt that the enemy had invaded them and with the sword turned on each other.

In one of the strangest battle strategies in history, the 300 went out with trumpets, torches, and jars to meet the great Midianite army. God sent

confusion into the ranks of the enemy so that they began attacking each other. When it was over, 120,000 Midianites had killed one another and the other 15,000 fled. It was over. God had answered Israel's prayers. He used a common humble man who believed in God calling him to be a leader.

God's ways are often surprising and challenging but always the best and the most successful.

Remember God calls the ordinary to do extraordinary things for him and He turns what seems impossible into possible.

God is looking to glorify Himself on earth through people who trust in Him and faithfully follow God's calling.

If you are available God is willing to do great things through you.

God saw what He was about to make of Gideon when he called him. He knew his heart and his potential. One of the biggest lies we tell ourselves is that God only uses special people. We are all special to God because we are all God's children (John 1:12), we are His friend (John 15:15), and His masterpiece (Eph. 2:10). We have been justified (Rom. 5:1), freed forever from condemnation from God (Rom. 8:1). We are adopted into His family (Eph. 1:5) and our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3:20). We belong to God (I Cor. 6:20), never to be separated from His love (Rom. 8:35)! And we have everything from Him we need for life and godliness! God knows our heart and knows that we can be His servants. God will use us to turn the impossible into possible and He will work to help you see your true potential at any age.

God matches each doubt with kind reassurance and love. God will show you the same patience as well when you seek His face, changing your fears into faith to help you grow into a servant of God.

Gideon found out that what seemed impossible to him became possible with God.

God uses tough times to get our attention. Is he getting your attention today?

God always sees more than we do. Do you see yourself as He does?

God confirms His priorities with His presence. Can you sense His presence with you now, urging you to trust Him and to give him your doubts and fears and anxieties?

Are there things in your life, in your home, that need to go so God can powerfully move in your life?

God is patient with our faith journey. He meets us right where we are with what we need to serve in His name.

Success is determined by God's power, not ours and not the worlds.

Will you trust God today with your life, with your family, your finances, your decisions, and your future?