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The Torah and Trust

Main Verses:

- [Exodus 14](#)
- [Exodus 15:24](#)
- [Exodus 16](#)
- [Exodus 7:24](#)
- [Deuteronomy](#)
- [Joshua](#)
- [Judges 6:1](#)
- [Judges 6:7](#)
- [Judges 6:11](#)
- [Judges 6:13](#)
- [Judges 6:14](#)
- [Judges 6:18](#)
- [Judges 6:25](#)
- [Judges 6:33](#)
- [Judges 6:36](#)
- [Judges 6:39](#)
- [Judges 7:1](#)
- [Judges 7:4](#)
- [Romans 8:28](#)
- [Genesis 1-11](#)
- [Genesis 12](#)
- [Exodus 24](#)
- [Judges 19-21](#)

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Do you ever find yourself searching for something bigger than you? For a community to be a

part of? A place founded on truth and love. A place to worship the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Son of God. Welcome to Founded in Truth, where we're more than just a fellowship. We're a family. So welcome home. Shabbat Shalom everybody. Five people are excited that it's the day of rest and Shabbat. Shabbat Shalom everybody! Shabbat Shalom!

Okay, so we've made it to December 2019. A couple of us are like, you know, like, yeah, it's almost over, right? And for some of us, you know, pretty happy about this. For others, we're still stuck thinking, like, how was last month, February, and January's next month? Where did the year go? It has been an amazing year as a community here at Founded in Truth. We've been able to do so many things, and as a community, it's one more year of maturity. It's one more year of evolving, of growing, and that's so exciting as well as intimidating, going in and walking through the doors that God seems to be opening for us in 2020. We have a lot of children here at Founded in Truth, and... I'm not sure if y'all understand how great that is. I've been a part of fellowships before where the children have been viewed as more of a kind of problem. Like we need a children's class to kind of give them something to do instead of viewing them as a blessing, instead of accepting our vocation as a community, even a mission to focus and pour into them. Why is this? Well, because for theirs is the kingdom. For theirs is the kingdom. And we've been positioned, I would dare say chosen, to be the community that surrounds these children, to instill in them and strengthen them for the next generation so that they can be the lightbearers, they can be the salt, they can be the ambassadors of the kingdom of God on earth. So my wife and I, if you don't know, we're parents to, and I may be biased, but we're parents to an amazing young boy who blows my mind. He has an explosive personality, and at four years old, he is able to adequately communicate using only explosive facial expressions. Some of you guys have children, I mean, you know what I'm talking about. Like, it's, I thank you, God. Like, And we've also had several, eight, nine other children come through our home via foster care over the past year. Some only stayed a very short amount of time. Some stayed longer, of course. And the one thing I am reminded of is children sometimes, just sometimes, tend to believe that the world revolves around them, right? And it's true. You know, it's true. And... And it should be because, you know, the ones closest to them, really everything they need. We went to, I took Ben to a winter festival in downtown Rock Hill last week. And they had carnival rides. They had people dressed up juggling on these like motorized skateboards. And Ben was, whoa, you know. And food, face painting. It was the place to be, especially when my wife was out of town and it was just me and the kids. It was a good decision. And so he rode the rides, he got to watch the people juggle and ride the little skateboards, did some kid projects, painted some stuff. And then he saw with his little, just little vision, saw amongst all the chaos, shut down roads, all of like the food stands. And between two bigger food stands, he sees this other one. And I didn't think he could read. I don't know how, but it said cotton candy on it. And here we are, middle of the street, it's blocked off, but still. Daddy? Yes, Benjamin. Can I have some cotton candy, please? Very good manners. Peckable request. Me, looking at it, man, that's going to be at least five bucks. And that's a huge, I mean, they can't have like a kid-size cotton candy. This bag is as big as he is. And it's the only purchasing option. And I don't want him to eat all of that. Plus, I just don't want to spend five bucks on cotton candy. So I'm just, not today, Benjamin. And I gently said no, denying his request. And so my son proceeded to look at me and say, okay, daddy, no problem. How many of you believe that? No, he threw a fit. He sits down in the middle of the street. Tears, crocodile tears start rolling and the pitch of his voice escalates quite dramatically. And I was able to lead him over. They had some bounce houses. So I was able to lead him to some bounce houses and distracted him. And he was no longer

focused on the big, big, this big cotton candy. He was bouncing in the bounce houses. Had a blast. So when you go in, you have a little bracelet you buy. So it's good for the whole week or whatever. So we went back another day. And he's having fun. It's bounce houses, yada, yada, yada. But once again on this day, what do you think his request was once again? Daddy? Daddy? May I have some cotton candy, please? I really, really, really, really, really, really, big expressions, really want some. Fine. Fine. I will give in. We get in this huge, bright, neon, food-colored, air-spun sugar bag of whatever it is. And he's so excited, finally he gets the one thing he wanted this whole time. And so he opens it and he reaches down and he grabs this small piece, peeling it off. He has all these little legs attached to it. He's peeling it off and he puts it in his mouth. And he looks at me. He opens his mouth, looking like a fish that's about to have a hook removed. Daddy, I don't like it. Take it out. I don't like it. In one sense, I don't have to worry about him, worry about getting him cotton candy anymore. But what's interesting is the time before, he could not process why he couldn't have cotton candy. Couldn't process it. It broke his world. And that, like, it was right there, and he couldn't acquire it. He didn't understand it. And children tend to think that the world revolves around them sometimes. And as I said, to an extent, it does. I mean, as parents or close family, closest to them, we should care about creating that padding at a young age. But one day, we're also responsible for transitioning them or help transitioning them out of that mindset that it's not all about them. One day, it's our job to prepare them for the reality. The reality that, you know, like, It's not all about you. There's six billion other people walking around the world that have needs and wants and dreams and pursuits, right? And what's interesting is this concept, this concept of thinking the world revolves around you also tends to apply an impact. It generally applies to you too as a follower of Yeshua. No, Matt, don't go there. How many of you and us as followers of the Messiah, Yeshua, the King, the Christ, the Messiah, ...have realized that it all doesn't revolve around you as a follower of the king. See, generally people come to faith in times of need and crisis. I mean, that's just a gimme. We cry out in desperation. We hope and have faith that through a relationship with Yeshua... ...we tap into something so much bigger than our reality. And that's God's deliverance that now consumes us. But as we mature, as we follow Yeshua, as we grow older... Sometimes we never transition out of that. Sometimes we don't. Never growing out of a baby mentality into an adult relationship with God, where God never becomes more than just someone who's there to meet our needs. Where we go from a believer who has just been delivered to now, a mature believer that now trusts God on the journey that he's leading us on. And that's the journey hopefully most of us have taken from birth. And that's also the journey that the biblical story presents in the lives of the biblical characters. And so today we're going to take a look at Israel. And we're going to take a look, jump over into the book of Judges afterwards to take a look at another biblical character, Gideon. And when we start, when we see the story of Israel... We find them in Egypt, right, the beginning of Exodus. And they've become slaves. There's no way out. They're crying out to God, desperate. They have a need, and so they're crying. And God hears their cries, right, and God chooses Moses and empowers him to lead the people. And then God sends down the plagues onto Egypt, displaying his mighty works to Israel, whom he's preparing to lead out, redeem, to save. Finally, the last flag comes, and this time God commands this strange ritual involving a meal. A lamb must die, you must eat it together, and through its blood, his salvation from slavery will be birthed into your life. That's the Exodus story, right? Israel leaves Egypt, and they now find themselves where? In the wilderness. Now, the narrative, the story sets the wilderness up as a scholar and author, Dr. Carmen Imes. She sets it up and refers to it as like a liminal space, a space between one thing and another, a transition period. The

wilderness here was the threshold that was going to lead them into the promised land, the land that was promised to be an inheritance for Abraham and his seed. And the thing about liminal spaces is that they aren't really enjoyable. Whenever we go through spaces in our lives that are almost just there to cue us up and prepare us for the next. It's not enjoyable. For example, the waiting period after you've made the decision to adopt a child versus the gotcha day in court. It's not a great time. It's not a place that you want to stay in or want to get there. How about being engaged? Being engaged, especially depending on how long you've been engaged, it's not like a place that you want to stay. You We need to move on, transition out. College, semester after semester, studying, waiting for the opportunity to transition out into a lifelong career, into the area of your life as a child. When I grow up, I want to be that thing. And there's a huge ceremony that marks a ritual that marks this transition. It's graduation day. You walk across the threshold of the stage, announcing the end of this temporary liminal stage of your life. This is the space in the biblical story, the biblical narrative, that draws us attention to the wilderness journey that Israel takes. And it's not just a geographical place that Israel just passes on through. No, it's a place where Israel becomes. The wilderness was meant to be a place where Israel learns and evolves into what they should become. That is where they receive the commandments, they are challenged, they are meant to learn to trust God. That's the place where they learn the protocols of holiness, how to interact with God, how to trust God. And what we learned very quickly is that God is not in a hurry to lead them from this temporary staging area into the promised land. It's not something that he's in a hurry, fantastic hurry to do. I mean, he could have raptured them from Egypt into Israel. It didn't happen. No, you got to go on this journey first. They're not ready yet. there needs to be a time for them to grow and to learn to become the people that I need them to be before they go in to the place where I want them to be. Sometimes God won't move you forward out of an uncomfortable in-between space in your life because you're not ready. That's a biblical principle. He has something else to teach you, to teach us. He wants you to grow before moving forward. Man, that's a frustrating place to be in. When Israel leaves Egypt, Everything they knew about themselves was stripped away. Their entire identity of how they see themselves is reduced. How they make a living, how they are to operate, how they are to rely. Who are they supposed to rely on now? How are they supposed to survive? It's all stripped away. This leaves them in an uncertain place, literally in the middle of nowhere, vulnerable. They don't know how to live in the wilderness. They don't know how to live outside of Egypt. They don't. And so the story leads us into a world where God is a parent answering questions along the path, offering a new way to live, slowly training them to trust him, to rely on him, training them to understand that he is now their provider, their protector, their leader, not Egypt. See, sometimes God has to take us to uncomfortable places to reveal the pureness of who he is to us. Sometimes he has to replace the numbing distractions of Egypt with with an isolation of the wilderness so that it can only be you and him. This is not torture, it's trust when this happens and when this takes place. Sometimes you have to lose your old identity in order to become who God is calling you to be. God seeks to mold Israel into who they are meant to become apart from Egypt. And what's the first thing that Israel does when they encounter the reality that they are not in Egypt anymore? Exodus 14. It's a cushy kind of life. We know what to expect. We have a schedule. Yeah, it kind of stinks a little bit, but... Now, I know there are several different views that we can learn from their complaints. Oh, man, there's a prism that you can turn. A few weeks ago, we explored them in the light of ingratitude. Remember? This week, I want to explore them in the light of distrust. Distrust. What's compelling isn't the complaints or the distrust of the Israelites. What is most

compelling here is not Israel, but it's how God responds. Here Israel is standing between the Red Sea and Pharaoh on his way to get them. They haven't even made it. They're going to get them. And Moses cries out, and God tells Moses to tell the people, look forward. Stop looking behind you. Look forward where he's leading you and hold your staff up. The sea splits. He doesn't smack the Israelites. We would smack the Israelites. He doesn't smack the Israelites. He gives them what they need in the moment. You need a magic trick? All right, you need a little... Here you go. Here's your rescue. And it's going to be dramatic. The next time they complain, because they do, it seems to be a constant, is at Morah. And what happens at Morah? So in the next chapter, Exodus 15, verse 24. And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a log. It's a stick on the ground. And he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. So they come up to this place. They're thirsty. There's water there, but it's bitter. It's bitter water. You can't drink it. It's water they cannot drink. God shows Moses a stick. Throw it in the water. It's drinkable water. Israel complains. God doesn't discipline them. He gives them what they need. He wants them to learn what? Trust. And then they journey to the wilderness of Zin, Exodus 16. The whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the people of Israel said to them, what would we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat by our meat pots? I mean, we had great roast beef. And the Lord said to Moses, Behold, I'm going to rain bread from heaven for you. That's dramatic. Okay? Yes. So the people complain about food. They're hungry. God does not discipline them. He gives them what they need. Oh, that's what that prayer means. Yeah, yeah, that's what that prayer means. Why? Because he wants them to learn to trust him daily. That's what that prayer means. Give us faith. Allow us to trust on you daily, refreshed and loyal to you, dependent on you, Father. That's daily bread. On the sixth day, you gather twice as much. I'm going to give you twice as much. There won't be any bread in the seventh. Trust me. Provide. Trust me to provide double in the sixth day. So what's neat about these two situations, these two instances, is the biblical authors, they preach. They paint the story a certain way. That's what authors do. And they stack the stories on top of each other to send a bigger message. So what's interesting here is that in Egypt, what was the first plague? You can tell me. It's okay. Don't be afraid. The first plague in Egypt, right? It was turning water into blood. And what they used to do it is a stick, right? So they use a stick. They put it in the water and turn to blood. Great. It's Exodus 24. 724, sorry. And when they arrive at Moriah... What happened? Stuck some wood in the water and it made it drinkable. It's interesting. In Exodus 7.24, when water turned to blood, Scripture says that it's water they cannot drink. And when they arrive at the waters of Moriah, that same phrase, this is the water that they cannot drink. God shows Moses how to turn the bitter water into sweet water by the same means of stick. One was a plague into Egypt and the other was a blessing from God. Will you trust me? Will you trust me? When they arrive in the wilderness of Zen, the people are starving. God responds in mercy. He's going to rain down what? Bread, that's right. In Egypt, he didn't rain down bread. He rained down hail. One was a plague, one was a blessing. Trust me. In Egypt, locusts came up and covered the ground. A few verses later at the wilderness of Zen, what comes up and covers the ground? It's the quail. You've seen the curses of Now let me show you the blessing. Trust me. This is an invitation that God is giving his people. The story is intentionally told this way to share the mercy of God as he waits for his children to trust him. God has things to teach that can only be learned in a state of vulnerability and dislocation. On the way to Sinai, it's here that the freed Israelites learn about who they need to depend on. And we know how the journey through the wilderness ends. Israel has a lot of trouble

grasping the true mission that they've been given. The mission to be the ambassadors of God's kingdom to all of the nations. Going up into the land, Moses even predicts that they're going to trip, they're going to fall. They're ultimately going to find themselves far from God in exile due to their distrust in God. And the very next book after Deuteronomy is Joshua. And Joshua, we see Israel enter the land with good spirits, but they continue the same pattern. They draw close to God only when they need him, but forgetting him just as quickly. Never growing, never maturing, always having this baby mentality. Then we enter the book of Judges. This is the book of the Bible that made the Bible not so family friendly. It's a true story. We enter the book of Judges where Israel has been inhabiting the land for generations, and they are continuing this downward spiral, getting worse and worse and worse and worse, with each leader that steps up in each generation, worse, worse, worse, until finally the leadership hits rock bottom with who? The last judge of Israel, Samson. Not the guy you want to emulate. The guy that wanted to show off how holy and set apart he was, but his heart was far from God. Then we move on to chapter 19 through 21 in the book of Judges, where shipping body parts via FedEx somehow becomes a part of the biblical narrative, and the tribes almost wipe out the tribe of Benjamin. It's a true story. I can tell who's read Judges. They're like, yes, I know. But what I want to draw your attention to is one of Israel's leaders during this time, and he's kind of stacked in the middle there. He's Gideon. And if you would turn with me, I'd We're going to explore the biblical story today, okay? We're going to read chapter 6 of Judges. So I'm not going to have them all in the slides. Turn with me, turn on your Bibles, turn with me in your Bibles, Judges chapter 6. Because I want to show you something. I don't want to just paraphrase it and chop it up like I did with Israel. So Judges chapter 6, verse 1. And there's classic biblical narrative, like storytelling that's stacked up here. It's awesome. Everybody there? We're good? Okay. Okay. Let's see here. I got one slide here. We can start here. The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. All right, this is continuous. This is from the wilderness moving forward. And the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian, into the hand of Midian seven years. And the hand of Midian overpowered Israel because of Midian, the people of Israel made for themselves the dens that are in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds. They hid out. For whenever the Israelites planted crops, the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the east would come up against them. They would encamp around them and devour the produce of the land as far down as Gaza. And they'd leave no sustenance in Israel and no sheep, ox or donkey. For they would come up with their livestock and their tents and they would come like locusts in number. Both they and their camels could not be counted. So they laid waste the land as they came in. Okay, verse 7. Okay, good. We got a prophet. We got a messenger coming. Okay. The God of Israel. Period. Like, that's it. That's what the prophet. So you have this grand story, and the author's building up this, like, big global level, all these nations moving around it, and we finally have a prophet that's coming up, and he's going to speak. I'm the God that brought you out of Israel and saved you and took care of you and tried to mature you and get you to trust me, but you didn't obey me. Like, what else? Like, are you going to say anything else? Nope, that's it. Bum. It feels a bit awkward. And what I love is the emotions that you feel when you read the story of the Bible, I believe, are intentional. It's like, well, what's going to happen next? I'm glad you asked. Verse 11, we're now going to be introduced to Gideon. So now the angel of the Lord came and sat under the terebinth tree at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash, the Abiezrite, So much here. So, So Professor Tim Mackey, he's an ancient language professor, he points out the classic Bible storytelling here. Just like in Genesis, the story starts out with this explosive movement of nations, big macro view, this dramatic view of conflict

and what Israel is going to, and going through, and the Midianites, and the prophet speaks these words, and what's going to happen next, and now the very next line, there's an angel chilling under a tree. Like it just kind of... We saw this in Genesis 1 through 11. We have this huge macro view of the creation account, worldwide flood, the nations expand to build this big tower of Babel, and then they're divided and violence is everywhere, chapter 12. And then there was this one guy named Abram. So we're introduced to this character named Gideon, and he has something to do with the much larger picture we just read. Just like the point of the flow in Genesis is Abraham is introduced to us As the conclusion, the whole first 11 chapters of Genesis are set up to introduce us to Abraham. So if you didn't notice, and we read over this, I don't know, suppose it stuck out. So he's beating wheat. He's threshing wheat. Gideon's threshing wheat. Where is he threshing wheat? In a wine press. Okay, so what's a wine press? Well, in ancient Israel, it was a hole in the ground that was lined that you'd put the grapes in. And you'd stomp the grapes. You'd press the grapes, and the juice would go down, and the pulp would stay. And it was enclosed. It was like this enclosed bunker in the ground, an open top. But Gideon here is not pressing wine, is he? He's not stomping on grapes. What's he doing? He's threshing wheat. Is this a good place to thresh wheat? No, because you have to break the chaff off the wheat, the shell off the wheat, and then you have to throw it up in the air, and you need some kind of airflow or wind generally to blow away the chaff so that the wheat falls down and you have it there. And he's in an enclosed space. It's supposed to make you uncomfortable. That would be so frustrating because it's not going to work. This is how Gideon's introduced. We're seeing Gideon in a very frustrating, anxious place in his life right here because he's scared of the Midianites. So here's what the angel said. He said, God's with you. Verse 13. So this is the place that kind of wanted us to bring us to. The story of Gideon. An angel of the Lord appears and he tells Gideon what? The Lord is with you. Right? Right? The Lord is with you. This was an angel of the Lord telling Gideon, the Lord's with you. And Gideon responds, no he isn't, right? No he isn't. The story is setting Gideon up as someone who is still expecting God to be in a certain role in his life. What's he say about God? This is the God that brought us out of Egypt. Now notice how the prophet introduces God when he speaks to the people. Yeah, he brought you out of Egypt, took you through the wilderness, made sure everything was taken care of, and then he brought you into the land, and then he kicked everyone out. He brought you a lot farther than just Egypt. Here, Gideon, this is the God that brought us out of Egypt. What happened when God brought them up out of Egypt? God was a helicopter parent in the wilderness, right? Bread, water, quail, shoes that will never wear out. That's cool. The story is presenting Gideon a part of the people long after the Exodus, as someone who has not grown past the Exodus. He's still in baby mode. Where's my milk? He hasn't learned to grow and eat meat yet, to go out and hunt. He hasn't accepted that maturity. He has not come to the realization that just because God allowed this situation to happen does not mean that God is not still with him. That's the story of Gideon. Just because you find yourself in a situation that feels uncomfortable or that just stinks altogether, a place where it might hurt, a place of anxiety, a place of fear, a place of doubt, a place that just makes you feel like you can't take it anymore, it does not mean that God has abandoned you and he is still not there. The story of Gideon is taking us on a journey where Gideon is being guided on a journey to maturity. To no longer treat God as if you're a baby, but to treat God differently. to respect God in a mature relationship as an adult. Gideon is trying to rub the genie in the bottle, but he's upset that God's not operating that way, like his father said he did when they left Egypt. It seems God's promise here is that he will always be with him, not just give him a cushy life, not to solve every single little problem that comes along so that Gideon

can exist without worry and without anxiety, or better yet, without responsibility. No, that's not God's plan here. Verse 14 says, The whole clan. And he said to him, Okay, Gideon. If I have found favor in your eyes, then show me a sign that it is you who speak to me. Angel of the Lord appears, has this conversation. I promise you this is fine. Okay, do a trick for me. Throw a little magic trick. Convince me. I need, I need, I need that bread coming down from heaven right now. I need a little bit of quail to pop up. Verse 18. Please do not depart from here until I come to you and bring out my present and set it before you. So you have the angel of the Lord just hanging out under a tree, right? Here comes Gideon. Everyone still with me? You still following the story? Gideon comes up with the meat and the bread and the pot full of just slushing broth. Yeah, right? So Gideon went and prepared all of this. The angel of God said to him, take the meat and unleavened cakes and put them on this rock. Now pour the broth over them. It's like some biscuits and gravy looking. And he did so. Then the angel of the Lord reached out with the tip of his staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and unleavened cakes. So in my mind, I view the angel of the Lord laying down, really just relaxed. He's kind of holding his stick, but in that rock right there. So he reaches out with the staff and he goes, Nonchalantly. That's just my vision. What happens as a result? And the fire sprang up from the rock, consumed the meat and the unleavened cakes, and the angel of the Lord vanished from his sight. Then Gideon perceived he was an angel of the Lord. Isn't it great when you read these stories your whole life, but you never see, they wrote this in a way that's supposed to get you to laugh. What is this guy's deal? Was Gideon convinced this was God, angel of the Lord? Okay, he was. Great. Was he convinced that he was now speaking to God? God says, do not fear, you're not going to die. Just put a pin in that. We're good, right? We're good? Here we go. Verse 25. I do have them up here. So Gideon took the ten men of his servants and did as the Lord had told him. but because he was too afraid of his family and the men in the town, he didn't want to do it in the daytime. He did it at night. So as the reader, we go, here we go again. Gideon is displaying a lack of trust. He still hasn't learned that yet. And if you notice, God is trying to grow Gideon, and God still meets with him. He's still trying to meet him where he's at. Come on. The next part of the story we'll skip. Everyone gets upset because he actually does what God commanded him, chops up all the idols, give them a different name. And yeah, so verse 33 is where we're going to pick up. Now all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the east came together and they crossed the Jordan and encamped in the valley of Jezreel. But the Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon, and he sounded the trumpet. And all of his people, all the Ebbeazites, were called out to follow him. And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, and they too were called out to follow him. And he sent messengers to Asher, Zebulon, Naphtali, and they all went up to meet him. Yes, like it's go time, right? It's go time. So God's spirit is surrounding him. Like imagine this armor. Like we have this spiritual Mandalorian now. And he's calling all of his people up and he's blowing the trumpet and everyone's about to go in. And it's about to look like Braveheart here in Judges. And then in verse 36, right? He's ready to go. Verse 36, then you can see the cape. Then Gideon said to God, all right, if you will save Israel by my hand, as you have said, So are you at the point in the story where you're like, wow. Like, what is this guy's deal? He has the Holy Spirit on him. Right? You know, it's just, but if you truly meant what you said, can you do another trick? Two signs so far. The little rock stovetop and now the fleece thing, the wet wool. If you meant what you said, can you do this trick for me? And we imagine God to be like us and just like next, you know? Like we really do. We'll find someone else. But no, if God cares, then he's going to intervene when he knows we need it And learn lessons and figure out things for growth in other circumstances, just like we do as parents. One thing with my

four-year-old is sometimes, Daddy, I really need help with this. Can you do this for me? Yeah, let me show you how to stack these Legos up and build this little thing. I'll meet you here. Daddy, can you? Daddy, Daddy, Daddy, what's up? What's up? I spilt some of my oatmeal on the floor. I look, and there is one flake on the floor. Yes, son, you did. We'll clean it up after. Okay. Sometimes we rush to our children's rescue when we feel like they need it, and other times they have to learn a lesson. Verse 39. Three times now. So God calls Gideon to be in a difficult situation here. He very much so does. And if you notice, the author sets a trap. Just like the author of Jonah. You guys remember the Jonah series that we went through? It was a trap, all right? The author sets a trap. And when you read the book of Jonah, like you take the bait of looking down on Jonah. Like what a moron. Can't you see what God said to do? And then like the mirror rises up slowly and looks back at you and said, well, have you delivered the message of God's grace and forgiveness to the people that you hate in your life? Oh, you haven't. So you're a hypocrite by judging Jonah. And it's meant to be that way, right? Right? I love that. I love that. So he's setting a trap here. And here we go. Come on, Gideon. Like, what are you doing? I mean, how much reassurance do you need? Man up. God is with you. Do what he said. Cue the mirror. But it's difficult to do this, to learn this, to remain in this liminal space. It's uncomfortable. It's uncomfortable. And here, in the story of Gideon, God graciously tends to Gideon where he's at, accommodating his needs, but not taking him out of the difficult place, because that's the place where growing and maturing happens. Now check this out. So we have chapter 7 here. I don't think I have a slide for it. Sorry. So chapter 7. Then Gideon, or Jerubbaal, which is what they called him after he cut up all the statues and everything, said, Verse 1. So you caught up with the story? Gideon's finally made it to the battlefield. He has all these reassurances. I'm ready to go. I did the fleece, the little fire, everything. It was great. This is good. Just lost like most of the army. Here's that parent tactic. See, yesterday God was great. God spoon-fed you. God helped you to build those Legos. God laid you in bed and rubbed your back to help you fall asleep because you don't like sleeping in your bed alone. But today, oh, you're getting on that school bus and you're going to school. No, no, no, no, no, it's uncomfortable. I don't want, nope. I'm with you. I'm with you. But I'm not going to make this easy. You need to grow. It's time to mature. 22,000 soldiers went home. You just lost over 60% of your army. And God does this on purpose. Maturity happens through realizing that there's a new reality, and most of the time it is through the uncomfortable experiences that we gain that understanding that we need to grow and mature. Verse 4 in chapter 7, And the Lord said to Gideon, This people are still too many. It's still too many. Take them down to the water, and I will test them for you there. And anyone whom I say to you, this one shall go, shall go with you. And whom I say to you, this one shall not go, shall not go. So he brought the people down to the water, and the Lord said to Gideon, Everyone who laps water with his tongue as a dog laps, you shall set by himself. Likewise with everyone who kneels down to drink. And the number of those who lapped putting their hands to their mouths was 300 men. Man. The temptation that we fall into is will we choose to go back and use this difficult situation as an excuse to say that God is not with me? Or will we know the faithfulness and the fatherness of our God? Will we know that no matter if we're on a hill or down in a valley, God is constant and God is there? Will we dare trust him? Would we dare say, God, I know you are here despite me wanting to think that you're not. Continue to be with me. Continue to mature in me. Continue to grow my trust in you. It's possible that God has not abandoned you where you're at. And it may surprise you that it's quite the opposite. He's closer than ever. If you're going through a liminal place in your life that's uncomfortable, and God seems far because the tricks aren't happening, maybe he's shaping you, molding you. Is

he not the potter? What happens next in the story of Gideon? We know. The 300 are divided into three companies of 100. And they're not commanded to take out their swords or throw their spears or shoot their arrows. No. They defeat the entire Midianite army together. blowing some horns, and they have some torches and empty clay pots. All this time, Gideon was so scared to even thresh wheat in public because of this inevitable conflict that would take place. And here, his army never even has to draw a sword. No, the enemy army goes into a panic and pulls their own swords out and slaughters themselves. Like, Gideon's just up there, just watching, ooh, ooh. Just watching that happen. It worshiped him. You guys can come up. Here we see Gideon arrive at the end of the battle in a way that he did not anticipate. But the journey, the journey, much like the Israelites, is God leading them forward. And sometimes intervening miraculously, sometimes God does that. The tricks here and there. But not all the time. It doesn't happen like that all the time. Because God wants Gideon to grow. God wants Israel to grow. God wants you to grow. And he will parent you. and sometimes it's uncomfortable. But this is what a mature relationship with God apparently looks like. Trusting God when he provides in bounty and trusting God when he allows difficult situations to overtake you. Romans 8, 28, Paul, and we know that those who love God, all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose. Guys, as followers of Yeshua, Paul earnestly wanted to remind us of this. You think God has abandoned you? No, he sent his son for you. Don't make that a vain thing. God is with you. God is a parent. God loves you, and God wants you to grow and mature. So like Gideon, like Israel, like the disciples, we move forward in this life, allowing the circumstances that surround us to grow us and to not use them as an excuse to throw up our arms and say, oh, I guess God has just abandoned me. So please stand. I don't know where you're at today, but I know that God is with you because this is what the scriptures tell us. And you may not want to be in a place that you find yourself in, maybe threshing wheat in a wine press, frustrated, anxious, can't progress. God has not abandoned you. God wants you to become the warrior just like Gideon. And that takes maturity because it takes training and it takes growing in trust with God. Do not be afraid to trust God. So guys, we're going to end in prayer, and we'll conclude services the same way that we came in, through worship. If you need prayer today, guys, we have a prayer team on either side of the room. You're welcome to use them. I invite you, take advantage of individuals that will stand beside you in entering into the presence of God. Alvina Malkinu, our father, our king, father, we thank you for this time together. Father, we thank you for sending your son, Yeshua, the lamb whose blood frees us from the shackles of Egypt. that we can be a new creation in you, that we can no longer be a slave but a son following you. Father, thank you for being a father and a parent. Mature us, grow us, train us, cultivate a heart that trusts you through it all. We thank you, Father, in the name of Yeshua, for the spirit of life that you've given to us, and we ask that you would equip us to be the image bearers, to be the ambassadors of your kingdom to the world that you've called us to be. And we know to be good soldiers of the Messiah, as Paul says, to be a soldier takes training, level after level. Cultivate a heart in us that never stops trusting but only grows. In Yeshua's name we pray. Amen. I'm Matthew Vanderels, pastor of Founded in Truth Fellowship, and we hope you enjoyed this message and that it was a blessing to you and your family. Founded in Truth exists to cultivate a fellowship of image bearers that live the redeemed life only Yeshua can give. If this ministry has been a blessing to you, we would love to hear from you. Send us an email through the contact form on our site and tell us how God has used this ministry to edify your faith and your relationship with Him. If you would like to donate to Founded in Truth Ministries and be a part of this ministry's continued impact, you

can do so through our website. Thank you for joining us, and we pray that you experience the peace and the joy of God's holy Sabbath. Shabbat Shalom.

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