

THE LANTERN

HIGHWAY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Welcome!

*For You are my lamp,
O Jehovah;*

*And Jehovah will
lighten my darkness.*

– 2 SAMUEL 22:29 –

The church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. —1 Tim. 3:15

FEBRUARY 4, 2018

TODAY

CHARACTER STUDY V

SOLOMON
THE WISEST FOOL THAT EVER LIVED

TONIGHT

JOURNEY THRU THE
BIBLE 24
JUDGES 6-21; RUTH 1-4

ASSEMBLY TIMES

SUNDAY

1st Assembly @ 9:30am

2nd Assembly @ 5pm

*Every 3rd Sun. @ 1pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study @ 7pm

SHEPHERDS

Ron Adams

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Wayne Miller

(217) 840-6889

PREACHER

Seth Myers

(270) 366-3276

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HOP, HOP, HOPPIN' ON GIDEON'S BOAT

SETH MYERS

There's just no question about it: when it comes to the "judges" of Israel, Samson gets all the attention. And don't get me wrong, such is understandable—I mean, if the events of your life are such as were *Samson's*, you're not going to get away with your "story" being untold for long. If the Holy Spirit hadn't recorded it, someone else *surely* would have!

However, the record of Gideon should not be, and, thankfully, has not been, ignored. Gideon was not quite so, shall we say, bold, as Samson was; but it is that fact that makes his "story" so encouraging to those who grace themselves by reading and studying it.

When we first meet Gideon (Judges 6), he is all alone in a winepress. *So what, right? What's so weird about an ancient man in a winepress?* Oh, nothing, to be sure—except that what we find Gideon doing in that winepress was "**beating out wheat**" (11)!



That statement naturally leads the reader to ask: *Why in the world is Gideon beating out wheat in the winepress?* Now, I am by no means an expert in the “wheat-beating” department, but it doesn’t take the brightest tool in the kitchen sink to figure out this much: the winepress is not where you go to beat out *wheat!*

In truth, the writer tells us why Gideon was acting so strangely. The physical, direct reason was that he was “hid[ing]...from the Midianites” (11b). But why was he doing that? Well, among other things, because he was **scared**—some might call his actions “*cowardly*.”

This was the night that Jehovah chose to send an angel to Gideon to call him to arms; and this “prologue” shines a light on the angel’s salutation to Gideon:

“Jehovah is with you, **O mighty man of valor!**” (6:12).

The last time I checked, someone who is secretly beating out wheat in a winepress is not generally considered a “*mighty man of valor*”! That’s a title fit for *Samson* or *David*, not *Gideon*—at least, *not yet*. But this is the very thing that makes Gideon so *lovable*—he is *lovable* because he is *relatable*; and he is *relatable* because he is **not very different from you and me**.

This fact shines all the brighter in the two questions Gideon asks the angel—ones which you and I may ask:

“*If Jehovah is with us, then why has all this happened to us?*” (13a).

What a common question! But the answer to this one is simple: “all this [that was] happen[ing] to [them]” was *exactly what Jehovah said would happen if they forsook Him* (cf. Lev. 26:14-26).

But it is the *second* question on which I really want us to meditate—because it is a *sentiment* that, I believe, most all Bible-believing persons share with Gideon:

“And **where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers told us about**, saying, ‘*Did not Jehovah bring us up from Egypt?*’...” (13b).

Wow. Is it not incredible that a man who lived 1,200 years before Christ would ask such a “21st-century” question? Here is Gideon, living in a day that seems (and is) so immeasurably removed from our day, where mighty deeds were manifested from heaven, where Jehovah was either speaking to men “face-to-

face” (Deut. 5:4), even “in thunder” (Exod. 19:19), or sending angels to men to reveal His will (cf. Gen. 18:2ff).

Not only did Gideon live in such a period, but he, himself, was one of such cases—a God-sent angel was standing right there and speaking with him! Yet, he expresses—to *that angel*—a feeling that we feel today, over 3,000 years later.

Here’s the thing: when we find ourselves heavy-heartedly, perhaps longingly, pondering on the marvels that we read about in Scripture, and how amazing it would have been to have lived to see them, we’re thinking about a day such as the *Gideon’s* day; and here is *Gideon*, who actually *lived* in *Gideon’s* day, *doing the exact same thing* with regard to *Moses’* day, etc.!

I believe some professed “believers” find the absence of miraculous divine activity to be a stumblingblock. Those people can be encouraged by Gideon, as he provides yet another piece of evidence that the world now is really not that much different than it was *then*. God did not “fly” around *constantly* performing awe-inspiring miracles to blow man’s mind; just like we might, Gideon felt such things were of the distant past.

But then there’s this, from the writer of Hebrews, just in case anyone looked back with disappointed, hanging heads at such amazing things like Mt. Sinai:

“For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. ...**But YOU have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. ... Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe...**” (Heb. 12:18,19,22-24,28).

To paraphrase: The “*good old days*” ain’t got *nothin’* on that of which we are blessed to be a part today: **the kingdom of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God!**

ATTENTION SCRIPTURE READERS:

For the sake of uniformity and simplicity, the Scripture readings will now be displayed from the **NKJV**. For the same reason, *please* also read from the NKJV, so you will be reading the exact words we are seeing on the screen. A "large print" NKJV Bible will be on the lectern, open at the appropriate text for the morning's reading, to be used, or ignored, as you wish. **THANK YOU!** —Seth
P.S. Violators will be prosecuted (nah, only kidding. ...or am I??).

ATTENTION PEOPLE WITH FEET, WHEELS, HOOVES, OR FINS:

PLEASE do not use the front outside ramp when snowy, icy, or wet, and be extra careful even when using the steps in similar conditions. Sincerest apologies for this unfortunate inconvenience, and a solution is forthcoming.

The 2018 "Challenge Youth Conference" (CYC) in Pigeon Forge, TN is Feb. 23-25. However, **OUR VAN WILL BE LEAVING (FROM HERE) ON THURSDAY FEB. 22, AS CLOSE AS HUMANLY POSSIBLE TO 3:00PM** (I.E., RIGHT AFTER SCHOOL)! Over 10,000 teens attend this event each year—which, alone, can be a source of tremendous encouragement for young or prospective Christians! Please keep our teens, and those of our neighboring congregations, in your prayers for all to be able to attend, for safe travels, and, most importantly, for spiritual growth!

POTTER CHILDREN'S HOME & FAMILY OUTREACH PROGRAM COMMODITIES LIST

All-Purpose Flour

Pink Salmon

Rice Krispies Cereal

Dryer Sheets

Free & Clear Liquid
Laundry Detergent

David Hamilton will be here the week of March 11 to pick up our stock.

Evangelism University (EU), held in Savannah, TN, has been rescheduled for April 27-29, 2018

**EXHIBIT EVANGELISM
BIBLE 'TRIVIA' NIGHT
SAT. APRIL 7, 2018 @
THE SUNNYSIDE ROAD
BUILDING IN DECATUR**
(more details [e.g., time] forthcoming)

PRIVILEGED TO SERVE

ROLE	FEB 4	FEB 11	FEB 18	FEB 25
ANNOUNCEMENTS	Kris Seitz	Carl Baker	Jim Schwerman	John Kurr
OPENING PRAYER	John Kurr	Howard Risley	JE Miller	Wayne Miller
SONG LEADER	Jim Schwerman	JE Miller	Carl Baker	Kris Seitz
TABLE OVERSEER	Carl Baker	Ron Adams	Wayne Miller	JE Miller
TABLE SERVERS	Kris Seitz Zechariah Schwerman Hayden Francisco	Carl Baker Mike Stroyeck Ellis Craig	Jim Schwerman Wesley Seitz Ethan Hill	John Kurr Austin Hill Hayden Francisco
READING & PRAYER	Brandon Craig	Kris Seitz	Austin Hill	Hayden Francisco
<i>Scripture Reading</i>	<i>1 Kings 4:29-34</i>	<i>Acts 9:26-29</i>	<i>TBD</i>	<i>TBD</i>
CLOSING PRAYER	Ron Adams	John Kurr	Brandon Craig	Howard Risley
GREETERS	Howard & Carol R.	Loren & Mary N.	Katana P. & Brenda S.	Angie R. & Stacie H.
COMMUNION PREP				

MEN: When serving in the worship assembly, please dress accordingly, and use the microphone if possible.

■ Birthday FEBRUARY 2018 Anniversary ■						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
			Bible Study @ 7pm			
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Assembly @ 9:30am Assembly @ 5:00pm			Bible Study @ 7pm			Ethan Hill
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Assembly @ 9:30am Assembly @ 5:00pm			Bible Study @ 7pm		Dena Norris	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Richard Miller Assembly @ 9:30am Assembly @ 1:00pm			Bible Study @ 7pm		Kyia Miller	
25	26	27	28	1	2	3
Assembly @ 9:30am Assembly @ 5:00pm			Bible Study @ 7pm			