

Why does the Father value broken things?

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BIG SANDY, Texas—People sure do not look at broken things the way God does. We live in a throwaway society. If something is broken, people generally want to discard it.

We can be thankful that such is not the way God looks at things. We can appreciate that God values broken things.

Smaller army

Do you remember the story in the Bible about Gideon's army?

You probably remember the following details.

- God told Gideon that if the Israelites had a large army they would take credit for their victories (Judges 7:2).
- God gave instruction that resulted in the army reducing from 32,000 soldiers to 10,000 (verse 3).
- God told Gideon that the army was still too large (verse 4).
- God gave a plan that further reduced the army to 300 men (verses 5-8).
- Gideon overheard someone in the Midianite camp tell about a dream that described Gideon's coming victory over the Midianites (verses 9-15).

Most people remember those details. But many have not focused on what happened next.

Orchestrated attack

To make an attack, Gideon divided his men into three companies and gave each man a trumpet, an empty pitcher and a lamp (verse 16).

Gideon instructed each man to blow his trumpet when he heard Gideon's trumpet call and to shout about the sword of God and the sword of Gideon (verses 17-18).

But Gideon also told his men to do something else. Do you remember what it was?

The soldiers were to break the pitchers. However, each pitcher was no longer an empty pitcher. You see, the lamp had been placed inside the pitcher.

What did the enemies experience?

- They heard a trumpet sound, immediately followed by hundreds of trumpets.
- They heard hundreds of men shouting about the sword of God and the sword of Gideon.
- They saw the flash of hundreds of lights coming into view at nearly the same moment.

Consider the analogy

People generally notice the obvious analogy about light.

It should come as no surprise that God would use light to help support a victorious army.

But did you catch the not-so-obvious analogy?

Consider the following facts.

- Sometimes people are broken through sin.

The light in King David's life shone brightly in how he dealt with his sins like adultery and murder (Psalm 51).

The light in Saul of Tarsus' life shone brightly in how he dealt with his sin of persecuting Jesus Christ (Acts 22:1-16; 26:9-18).

The light shone brightly in both of them—after they were broken through sin.

- At other times people are broken by being followers of God.

When Job's trial began, he was described as a decent man who loved God and hated evil (Job 1:1, 8).

The apostle Paul was broken so he could find the grace of God (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

And, of course, our sinless Savior was broken for our sins.

Breaking the vessel

When you remember the story of Gideon defeating the Midianites, remember the value of the broken vessels.

In Gideon's battle the light did not shine until the pitchers were broken.

The same is oftentimes true with a believer. The light will not truly shine in a believer until he is broken.