

Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”
Isaiah 40:31*



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Where are the Miracles?

The miracles of past ages can inspire us, but they can also cripple us, if we convince ourselves that we cannot accomplish great things for God without one.

“And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him, and said to him, ‘The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!’ Gideon said to Him, ‘O my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, “Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?” But now the Lord has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.’ Then the Lord turned to him and said, ‘Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?’” (Judg. 6:12-14).

The story of Gideon’s victory over the Midianites is a good lesson in what a timid person can accomplish with a little faith in God. But there is a deeper lesson here that God’s people today would do well to ponder.

Notice Gideon’s complaint to the angel, “Where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about?” Gideon had heard all the old stories about the many miracles God had performed for Israel when he brought them out of Egypt—the ten plagues, the cross-

ing of the Red Sea, the water from the rock and manna from heaven, the booming voice from Mt. Sinai, and on and on. These stories reinforced their identity as the people of God, a unique and special nation among their pagan neighbors.

But all those miracles were in the past. Gideon’s generation did not see miracles in their own day. In fact, considering the oppression they were suffering at the hands of the Midianites, they had reason to wonder if God was still involved in their affairs at all. Was He no longer active in their history?

The angel did, in fact, give Gideon two private miracles to validate his message (the spontaneous combustion of a sacrifice, v. 21, and the sign of the fleece, v. 36-40). But everything else that happened in the story involved no miracles at all. Even the dramatic night attack with the three hundred men armed only with lanterns and trumpets was not a miracle, but a clever stratagem utilizing the element of surprise. Gideon defeated the Midianites and delivered Israel just as the angel said he would: “in this might of yours.”

In other words, Gideon and the Israelites did not need a miracle. Despite their disadvantages, they already had everything they needed to accomplish a great victory. They just needed to get over their pessimism and believe it was possible.

God’s people today are very much in the same position as Gideon’s generation. We fret over all the obstacles and evils that are before us, and have convinced ourselves that “only a miracle” can save us. Of course, the age of miracles has passed so nothing can be done; we’re doomed! Like Gideon, we wring our hands and cry to God, “where are all the miracles?”

The only miracle we need is the one that is already within our grasp: the conviction that God is with us, if we will set our hearts to serve Him faithfully and do what He tells us to do. Like Gideon, we already have it within ourselves to accomplish great things using the tools and talents He has given us. Instead of waiting for God to swoop down and give us a miracle, we just need to believe that success is possible and get busy.

– David King