



GOD'S USE OF THE *Broken*

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In the Old Testament, God often used individuals and things that were broken or imperfect to fulfill His purposes. This theme highlights God's ability to work through weakness, failure, and brokenness to achieve His divine plans. Here's a list of notable examples, along with fables and tales that illustrate these truths:

People God Used Who Were Broken or Flawed

1. Moses: Moses was a man with a speech impediment (Exodus 4:10) and had committed murder in his past (Exodus 2:12). Despite these flaws, God chose him to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. Tale: A fable tells of a river that was too shallow to carry heavy boats. Instead of being discarded, it became a path for the smallest of vessels, showing that even those who seem inadequate can fulfill great purposes.

2. David: David was anointed king but later committed adultery with Bathsheba and arranged the murder of her husband, Uriah (2 Samuel 11). Yet, he was known as "a man after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14) and became a great king and ancestor of Jesus. Fable: In a tale, a broken pot was discarded by its owner, but a kind gardener noticed it and filled it with flowers. The pot, once seen as useless, became a beautiful display, reminding us that God can transform our brokenness into something beautiful.

3. Gideon: Gideon doubted his abilities and came from the weakest clan in Manasseh (Judges 6:15). Despite his fears, God used him to deliver Israel from the Midianites. Tale: A small seedling, feeling weak and insignificant, grew into a mighty tree. Its roots, once fragile, held firm against the storms, illustrating that even the smallest can become strong through faith.

4. Samson: Samson had a tumultuous life filled with personal failures and moral weaknesses, including his relationships with Delilah (Judges 16). However, God used him to deliver Israel from the Philistines. Fable: A tale speaks of a broken sword that was reforged into a tool. Though it had once been a weapon, it became an instrument of peace, showing that our failures can lead to new purposes.

5. Rahab: Rahab was a prostitute in Jericho (Joshua 2). Despite her past, she showed faith in God and helped the Israelite spies, ultimately becoming part of the lineage of Jesus (Matthew 1:5). Tale: A story tells of a cracked vase that was filled with soil and planted with seeds. Though it was flawed, it produced beautiful flowers, symbolizing how God can bring forth life from our brokenness.

6. Elijah: Elijah experienced profound despair and fear, even asking God to take his life after fleeing

from Jezebel (1 Kings 19:4). God used him to confront idolatry in Israel and perform miracles. Fable: A tale recounts how a withered tree, thought dead, sprouted new leaves after a storm. This illustrates that even in our darkest moments, God can bring renewal and strength.

7. Jonah: Jonah initially ran away from God's command to go to Nineveh (Jonah 1:3). After being swallowed by a great fish, he repented and was used by God to bring about the repentance of the Ninevites. Tale: A fish, once caught and thrown back, found its way to a hidden lagoon where it became a leader among its kind. This tale reminds us that even when we stray, God can redirect us for His purpose.

8. Job: Job experienced immense suffering and loss, questioning God's justice (Job 30). Despite his brokenness, he remained faithful, and God ultimately restored him. Fable: A tale of a cracked mirror that reflected the beauty of the world around it, showing that even in our brokenness, we can still reflect God's glory and grace.

9. Zacchaeus: Although not an Old Testament figure, his story reflects the theme of brokenness. As a tax collector, he was despised and considered a sinner, yet Jesus transformed his life (Luke 19). Tale: A story of a crooked tree that grew in the forest, yet provided

shelter for weary travelers. It teaches that our imperfections can serve a purpose in God's plan.

Things God Used That Were Broken

1. The Stone Tablets: Moses broke the original tablets containing the Ten Commandments in anger after witnessing the idolatry of the Israelites (Exodus 32:19). God instructed him to create new tablets, and He renewed His covenant with Israel (Exodus 34:1-4). Tale: A fable tells of a sculptor who took broken pieces of stone and created a magnificent statue. This illustrates how God can take our brokenness and make something beautiful.

2. The Altar: In various instances, altars were built with uncut stones, symbolizing God's desire for a humble and broken heart (Exodus 20:25). Fable: A tale of a humble altar that stood in a forgotten place but was visited by many seeking solace, showing that the simplest of things can bring people to God.

3. The Ram's Horn (Shofar): Used in various rituals, the shofar is often made from a broken ram's horn, symbolizing humility and repentance. Tale: A story tells of a broken horn that, when blown, produced a sound that called people together for a great celebration, reminding us that even brokenness can bring unity.

4. The Bread and Fish: In the context of the Old Testament, the offering of the loaves and fishes (though more prominent in the New Testament) reflects how God can multiply what seems insufficient or broken to feed many (John 6:1-14). Fable: A tale of a baker who used leftover dough to create new loaves, teaching that what seems wasted can still nourish others.

5. The Broken Pottery: God used the imagery of broken pottery to symbolize His judgment and the fragility of human life (Jeremiah 19:1-10). Tale: A fable tells of a broken pot that was mended with gold, becoming more valuable than before. This illustrates that God can restore and beautify our brokenness.

6. The Broken Jawbone of a Donkey: Samson used the jawbone of a donkey to defeat a thousand Philistines (Judges 15:15). This seemingly insignificant and broken object became a powerful weapon in the hands of God's chosen judge, demonstrating that God can use even the most unlikely tools to achieve victory.

7. The Jars of Clay: In the story of Gideon, God instructed Gideon to use jars of clay to conceal torches (Judges 7). When the jars were broken, the light shone forth, symbolizing how God's light and glory can shine through our brokenness.

8. The Walls of Jericho: The walls of Jericho were brought down in a miraculous act by God after the Israelites marched around them (Joshua 6). The broken walls symbolized God's victory over the enemies of His people and His power to deliver.

Conclusion

These examples and tales illustrate that God often chooses to work through those who are broken, flawed, or imperfect. This serves as a powerful reminder that God's grace and power can manifest through our weaknesses and failures, ultimately bringing about His purposes in the world. Just as the fables show, brokenness can lead to beauty, strength, and new beginnings in the hands of the Creator. Through these broken things and people, God reveals His power, grace, and ability to bring about restoration and redemption, achieving His divine plans.