

Speaker 1: Welcome to the Extra Mile podcast for bar exam takers. There are no traffic jams along the extra mile when you're studying for your bar exam, and now, your host, Jackson Mumey, owner of the Celebration Bar Review.

Jackson Mumey: Hey, everybody. Welcome to the Extra Mile podcast. This is Jackson. Glad to have you with us today, wherever you are and whatever you're doing, although I can take a pretty good guess. If you're taking the bar exam in two weeks, you are busy, busy, busy. If you're not taking the bar exam in two weeks, you might be thinking about what's that feel like to be just two weeks out from the bar exam.

In today's episode, I'm going to share with you the sound track to a video, probably one of my favorite videos from our vault that I call Gideon's story, and before you get freaked out and think, "Oh, my gosh, he's going to talk about church, and religion, and the Bible," yeah, the story comes from the Bible, but I assure you that this is not a overtly religious message. I think it's got an incredible amount of application to people under the stress of taking the bar exam, and trying to think they've got to do it all on their own. The story is timeless, and it's got universal truth, so I do hope you'll stick with me for that. I think you'll find it valuable and helpful.

Certainly if you're taking the bar exam in a couple weeks, and you're listening to this as we drop this episode, but if we're passed that exam date, and you're not two weeks to the exam, go ahead and listen anyway, because I think it's a universal truth. It will be helpful to you at any point in your studies, and certainly something to reference when you get into that narrow two week window to the bar exam.

For those of you that are taking the bar in July 2016 or maybe you're taking it now in 2017, we're really glad that you found our podcast, and love to have you subscribe, and we'd really appreciate your honest rating and review on iTunes. You can, also, find all our past episodes on our website at CelebrationBarReview.com. Just click on the link at the top for podcasts, and you will see all of those prior episodes, show notes, and you can subscribe from that site as well.

I, also, want to invite all of you to join me for our weekly live master class. It's titled How to Make the Next Bar Exam Your Last Bar Exam. We'll be going live with that on Thursday at three pm eastern. That's twelve o'clock noon Pacific time, and it's a ninety minute course in which we look at the four steps that passing bar takers have to go through in order to reach the success that they want on the exam.

We're up over fifteen hundred people that have been through this free course, and the reaction has been really nothing short of extraordinary. If you've not yet been through the course, I really invite you to come online. You can do that, but you need to register first, and you can register in one of two ways. You can go to CelebrationBarReview.com, and there's a button on the front page there that

says claim my seat for the webinar. Just click on that and you'll be registered, or if you prefer to text message your registration you can do that, too. Just text the phrase "next bar exam" to 33444. Again, that's 33444, text the phrase "next bar exam." We'll get you registered and set up, and then we'll see you Thursday at three pm Eastern. I hope you'll join us for that.

I know that if you are taking the bar exam in a couple weeks, your time is really precious to you, so I want to just jump right into this particular discussion. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did. Again, we're going to be looking at a guy from the Bible, and his name is Gideon.

Hello. Welcome to Celebration Bar Review. We are sixteen days away from the upcoming bar exam, so a little more than two weeks, and this is a weekend day as I am recording, so I know that many of you are studying hard, and may want to have a quick break just to watch this particular message, and reconnect a little bit.

You undoubtedly have a lot going on with this close to the exam ahead of you, and you may feel like it's all on your shoulders. Everything has to happen based on the work that you do, and how much you put into it, and how hard you study, and how much you learn, and how diligent you are. All of those things are true. They certainly will vary by individual, but this is a time when working hard certainly is part of the equation. It's, also, a time I think when doubt and certainly some fear and frustration seep in. In church this morning, I was thinking a little bit about that. I didn't understand the music that they were playing, so I just drifted off, which I tend to do whenever they start playing that kid rock and roll stuff.

But I was thinking back, and I'm not sure particularly what made me think about this story, but one of my favorite stories from the Bible is the story of Gideon. Before some of you get all freaked out and say, "Oh, no. He's going to preach, because it's a Sunday," nothing even remotely like that. But it's a life story, and like many great stories in the Bible, it's got application whether you're a believer or not.

The story of Gideon, very briefly, is that it comes from the Old Testament, the days really before Israel becomes a nation per se, and the Israelites are being beat up pretty badly by some basically invaders, big guys, scary guys. We'll just call them the scary, big guys. This is a time when God speaks directly to this people. I happen to think he still does that, but, at least in the Bible, we get the sense that God is actually talking to people. God is looking for a leader. He's looking for somebody to step up to the bar, if you will. Where does he go? Does he go to Harvard Law School, or Yale Law School, or Stanford? Does he look at the people who were in law review?

The answer is no. For some strange reason, he goes to what would I guess today be the equivalent of a correspondence law school, and, not only does he not go

to the top of the class at the correspondence law school, and I know I'm going to offend some people that go to correspondence law schools. I don't mean that. I just mean that in the hierarchy of our industry, if you haven't learned yet, not actually being on a physical campus is, for some reason, less important than being on one, and I certainly appreciate that as an online bar review course.

In any event, the analogy is that God goes to not the editor of the law review, but he goes to the guy who is at the bottom of the class, and this guy's name is Gideon. Gideon is really ... He's just scraping by. He is the lowest of the low in his family. He's out there tending the sheep. Not only that, basically Gideon is ... He's a blow off. He's a punk. Doesn't really care, and he's scared of everything. That might remind you of some of the people that you knew from law school, or maybe even in your legal practice these days.

God says to Gideon, as I suppose only God can, "Look, Gideon, I got a big job for you, and you're the man for the job." Gideon, and this why I know Gideon had to have been the precursor of a lawyer. Gideon says, "Yeah, well I need some signs. I need you to prove to me that you're really God, and that this is really what you want me to do," which I think is spoken exactly the way a lawyer would do it this way, and I certainly know that when I talk to my students, very often they say to me, "Oh, yeah. How do I know this will work?" Okay, fine, whatever. I'm not God, and I give up, but God being God says, "Give me your test."

Gideon gives him a couple of tests. You've probably heard of one of them. It's called putting out the fleece, which is really you put out this thing that's supposed to get wet at night, and everything around it gets wet, but the fleece stays dry. God does that, and Gideon, in pure law school style says, "Yeah. Well, I might have been mistaken about that fleece thing. Maybe we'll do it the other way around. Maybe this time you'll make it wet and everything else dry." God says, "Okay, fine, whatever you want. We'll do it. Set up the test." Gideon sets up the second test, and, sure enough, it comes out just the way it's supposed to, and Gideon now is trapped. He realizes that this is much like that moment when the professor has called on you in a Socratic dialogue and you aren't prepared, and you have to stand up and recite, and you don't have any idea what the case was.

Gideon says, "Okay. You got me. What do you want me to do?" God says, "Well, good. I'm glad you're with me. Here's what I want you to do. I want you to go raise an Army to go fight the big, bad, scary guys." Gideon's like, "Oh, man, this is really not my thing, God. I'm not really the army fighting kind of guy," and God says, "I'm God. You're not." "Okay, fine," Gideon says. "I'll go raise an army."

Gideon, in the way that all type A personalities do it, goes out, and he doesn't just get an army. He raises an army of thirty thousand men. Now, I got to tell you, back in those days, thirty thousand men is enough to fill up the big scenes with all those Mel Gibson movies. Thirty thousand men, I mean they way they

fought battles apparently back then is you take your thirty thousand men, and their twenty thousand men, and you go run at each other on this big wide open plain, and whoever is left standing wins, which makes a lot more sense to me than some of the things we do these days.

In any event, Gideon's got his army of thirty thousand men. In effect, he says, "I'm going to buy every bar review course I can get. I'm going to study everything. I'm going to make flashcards, and then I'll do the course a second time. I think even maybe I'll do it a third time, and I'll write answers to all of the questions." This is industrious. This is good.

Gideon comes back to God, and he says, "Look, aren't you impressed? Thirty thousand men. I'm doing pretty good." God says, "You know, I kind of think you're overdoing it, Gideon. I think what we got to do is cut this army down a little bit." Gideon's like, "Are you kidding me? I'm going to lose. If I do less, I'm going to lose. If I do less, I'm going to fail." God says, "You know, I really think that's too many, so why don't you just tell everybody that really doesn't want to be fighting this war, that they can go home." Gideon's, at this point, pretty well convinced that he's going to have to do the I'm not God and you are routine again, and so he says, "Okay, fine, I'll do it your way."

He goes out to the thirty thousand men, and however you speak to thirty thousand men in the days of pre-amplification, and he says, "Look, any of you that really don't want to fight this battle, that the big, scary guys are not your personal enemies, it's okay, you can go home." I have this picture of everybody standing there, and then, finally, one slacker says, "Hey, that's for me. I'm out of here," and the slacker starts to run, and as soon as the slacker, the first guy moves, everybody else moves. Well, amazingly enough, of the thirty thousand men, twenty thousand turn around and run. They leave.

That feels a lot like what starts to happen when you study for the exam. You've got all your tools assembled. You've got everything, and then you say, "Maybe this is not right," and now you get freaked out and you start to run, and the emotions are pretty scary. Now you're down, instead of having everything and all of the material, you realize that, given the time, you just can't do it all. Now instead of having three times through the course, you've only been able to do it one and a half times.

There's Gideon with his ten thousand men, and he turns to God and he says, "Okay, you satisfied now? Ten thousand men," and God, being God, says, "No. Ten thousand is still too many," and Gideon says, "This just can't be happening to me. What do you want now?" God says, "Well, why you take them down to the river, and see how they gather water for themselves when they march down to the river." Gideon says, "This is an interesting test God, but, okay, we'll walk down to the river."

He marches his men down to the river, and he says, "Okay, at the river, you can now stop and get water." God says, "Watch how they get the water." Some of the men reach down and start throwing the water on themselves. They're exhausted and hot. This is the desert, and they're careless and sloppy, and they go crazy, and they're starting to throw water around, and basically having a water fight. Then there are a few men that just kneel down on one knee, and they cup the water to their lips. They just do this, and they're always up and looking. They're alert. They're aware of what's going on around them.

There are bar takers who are totally immersed right now. They have poured water over themselves, over everyone around them. They are so deeply into the deal that they don't have any idea that today is Sunday, or what month of the year, or who they are, or anything else. Then there are a few people that are really focused. They're thinking about what's going on around them, and they see where they are in context of what's happening.

These warriors who were in context saw what was going on, and God says to Gideon, "Okay, the ones that kneel down on one knee and just cup the water, and kept their eyes open, you keep them. Send everybody else home." Gideon's like, "God, that's going to leave me with very few men," and he says, "Do it." Gideon says, "Okay, those of you that are doused in water, you go home."

Well, now the ten thousand men have come down to just three hundred. Gideon looks at God and he says, "God, come on. I got three hundred men, and the big, scary guys, they've got thousands, and I mean you got to be kidding me. We're not really going into battle. What are you doing?" Here's the punch line, God says, "Look, you're going to win this battle, but you're going to win the battle because I'm with you. Not because you have more men, not because you were bigger, not because you were faster or smarter. If you had gone into battle with ten thousand men and won, you would have said it's because of what you did. If you had gone into battle with thirty thousand men and you'd won, you would have said it's because of what you did, but if you go into battle with just three hundred men and you win that battle, you're going to know that it had nothing to do with you. It's about me."

That's interesting, isn't it, if you're a bar taker right now. If you've been thinking to yourself that this is all about you, it's all about what you do, it's all about what you can make happen, it's about how much you can learn, how much you can cram into your brain, it's all about you, I think you're missing the boat. I don't think it really matters, at this moment, if you believe in God or not. I think God believes in you, and I think that the reality here is that this is bigger than just you, and just bigger than what you can do on your own. That's why you got help. If you're in our course, I suspect that the hand of God may have had something to do with that.

But no matter where you are in what you're doing, I think you need to respect the fact that this might be something you can't do entirely on your own. In fact,

I would suggest to you that being a wise and caring member of our profession is probably something you can't do on your own.

There comes a point in this process, where I think you have to say, "I'm going to do everything I can do on my own, but I'm, also, going to give this up to something bigger than me," and if you call that something bigger God, I think that's great, but if you call it a bigger force of nature, that's okay, too. But recognize that maybe it's more than just what you can do on your own for the next sixteen or seventeen days.

The people over the years that I've seen that succeed in the bar, are the people at this stage that are able to get the bigger picture, that are able to step back and say, "I'm going to work hard. I'm going to be prepared. I'm going to be ready, but I recognize that this is not really entirely up to me. It's not up to the bar examiners. It's not up to my bar review course or my mentor. It's not up to my friends, or my boss, or my family. It's really about my doing the best I can do, and trusting that there's a plan for my life, and that the bar review and the bar exam is part of that plan," and then accepting I think with a calmness that that's something you probably can't affect a whole lot by working harder or doing more.

I'm not suggesting that you stop working, or that you stop studying right now, or that you do a whole lot less. I'm just asking that you do it with some perspective, that you recognize the possibility that there's a higher force working at all of this, and that if you trust some of this to that higher force, to the God of your understanding, that you're going to be a whole lot happier and a whole lot calmer, and a whole lot more at peace with yourself, not only for the next couple of weeks, but as you go through the test.

How did it work out for Gideon? He took his three hundred men, and he went down to the camp where the big, bad, scary guys were at night, as God had told him to do, and he told them to take these lights and to encase them inside of these ceramic pots so they couldn't be seen. His three hundred men circled around the camp of the bad guys, and they were quiet, and there was no light, and then on a command from Gideon, as God had told him to do, he broke open all of the lights at once, and they started making these wild shouting sounds and blowing horns.

The big, bad, scary guys in their camp were so frightened, they were so startled by what had happened, that they jumped up and they thought that their tent mates were their enemies, all of a sudden, and they started fighting each other. In fact, they killed each other off, and the three hundred men, not a single one was lost, and Gideon triumphed with three hundred men and not a single one of those warriors was injured or died in that battle. That's pretty remarkable, isn't it? Gideon went on to become what was called a judge, one of the first leaders of Israel.

You see, if you listen to someone who is wiser, if you take advice, and you do what you're told to do, and you do it in faith and trust, amazing things can happen. I'll leave it to you to decide how that should happen for you in the next couple of weeks, but I would invite you to think long and hard about the story of Gideon. There's a lot of Gideon in all of us, and, frankly, I've found that when people step aside, get out of the way and say, "Okay, God. This is your deal, not mine," and trust that process, they do a whole lot better on this exam. Funny how that works. Kind of a God thing or a Gideon thing.

That's our message for this week. Hopefully, it's something for you to think about. I'll be back midweek, in another few days to talk as we continue this countdown. Have a great study day and a great study week. Thanks.

I hope you found today's podcast valuable, and if you did, I'd like to invite you to subscribe to the Extra Mile podcast. You can do that in one of two ways. You can go to iTunes and subscribe there, or you can go to our website, CelebrationBarReview.com, click on the podcast link at the top of the page, where you'll find our show notes and all the past episodes, and you can subscribe from there.

If you'd like even more of the Extra Mile than we offer in these podcasts, I want to, also, invite you to join our private Facebook group called the Extra Mile. This is a community of current and past successful bar takers, who have come together for advice, support, information, and some terrific resources. We've put together the Extra Mile as a monthly paid subscription offering, and I want to just share with you some of what's involved and some of the benefits you're going to receive when you join the Extra Mile Facebook group.

First, and I think most significantly, you'll receive access to our popular economical Bar U course as part of the membership. Bar U provides digital lectures, and outlines, and selected questions for seven state bar exams, California and New York, Florida, Texas, Georgia, New Jersey, in addition to all of the uniform bar exam jurisdictions, and the multi-state bar exam. Membership in Bar U alone would normally cost you about a hundred dollars a month, but it's free with your paid subscription to the Facebook group, and I think you'd find this a great way to just have access to substantive current material, lectures, and outlines for all of the subjects that are on the bar exam.

In addition to that, members of our Facebook group receive access to our online writing workshop course that contains four lectures on essay writing, plus sample question and model answers. That course sells for \$99.95 all by itself, so definitely a value when you're part of the Facebook group, and all of our Facebook group members will receive free seats for three brand new master classes we're doing this year. These are being offered to the public, actually for sale for fifty dollars per class, but they're free to our Facebook group members. The topics of these new master classes, which are presented in conjunction with our partners at Learning Strategies, will be on abundance for life, and living the

law of attraction, and rapid reading made easy. They are three topics that I've extensively taught, as ways to enhance and improve your bar exam scores and your study, and I think you're going to find them really valuable. In addition to all of that, our Facebook members will get my proprietary exam predictions for each exam, and you'll receive our exclusive video countdown leading up to the upcoming bar exam.

On top of all of that, and maybe even most significantly, you'll get the support and the advice that comes from a community of people who really want to see you succeed on the bar. Our past bar students, who have been successful, have generously agreed to come on and offer their insights and advice, and I come into the site on a daily basis to offer additional resources and to do Q&A, so I really encourage you to check this out.

In the show notes, you'll find the link to sign up for this Facebook group. One other thing about it, there's a five day free trial, so you can actually sign up and not have anything charged until you've been able to experience it for yourself, but when you take all of the benefits together, it's several hundred dollars worth of resources available for only \$77 a month. There's no requirement to continue the subscription. It's every thirty days until you cancel. I really invite you to join us there on the Extra Mile.

That's it for today. Thanks for being with us, and we'll see you on the next episode.

Speaker 1:

Thanks for listening to the Extra Mile podcast for bar exam takers at www.CelebrationBarReview.com.