

Have you ever heard of Abinidab?

It sounds kind of like “I been a dabbin’ “(dab)

It turns out there are a couple of guys named Abinidab in the Bible. One of them was one of the older brothers of David who **wasn't** chosen to be the new king. We heard about him in the sermon a couple of weeks ago. He is part of trying to understand how the future we think we have planned is probably different from where God will lead us.

This week's Abinidab, another Abinidab, had a job for 20 years-- to guard the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark is a fancy box that contained the tablets of the Ten Commandments.

In this particular point of Israelite history the Israelite people had been carrying around the ark for generations, first in the wilderness, then as they went to the battle of Jericho. For the next 300 years it is brought into a battle a few times. Around the time of Saul and David, they brought the golden box into battle again and it is captured by the Philistine enemies. The Philistines carry it around for seven months as a war trophy and the Ark of the Covenant brings disaster wherever it goes. Philistine cities were stricken by mice and tumors. After seven dreadful months, the ark is returned to the Israelites--along with statues of mice and tumors. (Who says the Bible isn't hilarious?)

This box needs a safe place. Abinidab's house is the place. Together with his sons, Abinidab watched over the Ark of the Covenant for twenty years.

If Indiana Jones taught me anything, it's that there's always people looking for Ark of the Covenant. Raiders, if you will. Abinidab's job was to keep a low profile and protect the goods. And he did. He's remembered for doing this unique and particular task.

After 20 years, David wants to build a more suitable place to house this sacred artifact. Abinidab's term of service is over.



In 2 Samuel 6:3 we read, *and they carried the ark of God on a new cart and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill. And Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were driving the new cart*

Next up, Gaddi.

Have you heard of Gaddi (He's mentioned in Numbers 13:11)?

I don't recommend reading the book of Numbers or Joshua for fun. They are books of genocide. They are also books full of names we only read once in the Bible, but people who were important enough to be remembered forever. Often times the names are in lists of genealogies and inheritances. Not so with Gaddi.

Gaddi was a spy, specifically one of the men sent to check out the land of Canaan. Before the armies commanded by Joshua will attack and conquer, they need to know what they are up against. The spies go out and investigate for 40 days. When they return they bring produce as evidence of the bounty of land that they are about to conquer. And, oh yeah, there's giants.

40 days of wandering around, checking out the sights and sampling the food. This is how Gaddi served Moses, who served God. He wasn't alone in his task, he had a bunch of companions on this journey. But he did what he was asked to do. And he made it into the Bible.



At Yahweh's order, Moses sent them from the desert of Paran. All of them were leading men of Israel, and these were their names: Shammua, Shaphat, Caleb, Igal, Hoshea, Palti, Gaddiel, Gaddi, Ammiel, Sethur, Nahbi, and Geuel.

I think Gaddi is the second one in line. I'll bet his nickname was Gaddi the laddie.

Finally, I'm going to assume none of us have heard of Heman and his 288 relatives. Heman was one of King David's many court musicians. Some played the lyre, others sang, there were composers, a few played the harp and some of the musicians also prophesied. In 1 Chronicles 25, there is an expansive list of musicians.



What do Abinidab, Gaddi and Heman all have in common?

Watching a box for 20 years.

Investigating a foreign land for 40 days.

Making music to Praise God and please the King.

What do they have in common?

I found them in a Wikipedia article List of Minor Old Testament figures, A–K

There are hundreds of names on this list. They aren't heroes, topics of Vacation Bible School lessons or great and famous leaders to emulate.

Essentially they are minions.



No, not that kind of minion.



Our reading today, from the Gospel according to Mark, is a bit of a “week in the life of Jesus” summary.

Jesus rests, he prays, he naps, and then he and the disciples do a ton of ministry. He’s mobbed everywhere he goes. The verses in the middle of Mark 6 we skipped over? Jesus feeds crowds of thousands and calms a storm at sea. Ordinary stuff like teaching and healing, mixed with the extraordinary like miracles. Jesus’ pace is overwhelming.

No matter how hard I try, I cannot do ministry like Jesus, with his pace. The last two weeks, that’s how Crystal has been going and I’d guess she couldn’t do it for another day. Praise God for getting her through these intense two weeks.

Even Crystal is not called to be Jesus.

She’s a minion, a disciple, like each one of us here could be.

I want to circle back to Heman and the 288 relatives. The musicians. Here's what the Bible says about them in 1 Chronicles 26:6-8

Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman were under the order of the king. They and their kindred, who were trained in singing to the Lord, all of whom were skillful, numbered two hundred eighty-eight. And they cast lots for their duties, small and great, teacher and pupil alike.

Everybody had a duty

Small and great

Teacher and pupil alike

I have a strong suspicion that's where most of us are. We are disciples, or minions, trying hard to do the tasks to which we are called.

It can be disheartening if we try to keep up with Jesus, or even one another. We each have our gifts, our graces, our ministry and our purposes.

Stories like Abinidab, Gaddi and Heman help me remember every good leader-- David, Moses, Jesus, was able to do what they do because they have a horde of helpers-- us.

I want to ask you to spend a moment in silence, thinking about your task, your call this week-- not as a leader, but as a helper, a minion, a disciple. After a moment, we'll pray together.