

THE BOOK OF JUDGES
"The Call of Gideon"

Judges 6:11-24

Introduction

1. Israel had sinned again (v. 1). They were forthrightly placed in the hands of the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the children of the east (v. 3).
2. With their predicament, Israel lost her crops through annual invasions from their oppressors (vv. 4, 5). An unnamed prophet arrived in response to their cries and told them why they had the oppression (vv. 6-10). There is no further word about Israel's spiritual condition, but God does provide a promise of deliverance from oppression.
3. The man God appointed for the task of deliverance is Gideon. His call by God to this ministry is given in a full way, not just in a statement of fact (cf. 3:9, 15). What the elements of this call are may be observed in the record:

1. THE LOCATION OF THE CALL v. 11.

Gideon is listed as being a son of Joash the Abiezrite in Ophrah. This was located in the Plain of Esdraelon. Apparently his family was poor since they beat out the grain (Ruth 2:17). It was while Gideon sat by a well-known oak tree that the Angel of the Lord appeared to him. There is no possibility of mistaking the man involved nor his place. It is good to recall when and under what circumstances the Lord speaks to us!

2. THE COMMISSION OF THE CALL vv. 12, 14, 16.

- a. Stated v. 12. The manner in which Gideon is addressed shows the intended substance of God's message to him. It was proper for the Angel to speak with Gideon and appear to him at this point in the revelation of God's Word to man. Today, however, since we have the completed canon of Scripture, this is not to be expected!

- b. Reaffirmed v. 14. In the initial contact, the Angel points out that the Lord is with Gideon. Now a step is advanced: I have sent thee! Not only so, but the assured promise is given that Gideon will save Israel from the Midianites! Glory to God!

- c. Confirmed v. 16. Here the Hebrew is enforced and the Lord assures Gideon of His presence and the certainty of the defeat of Midian as if they were but one man! Now it must be noted that the Angel of the Lord is in fact the Lord. It is a neat way to teach the plurality of the divine

essence without specifically stating it is a trinity!

3. THE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CALL vv. 13, 15, 17-21.

a. About deliverance v. 13. One could quite easily view this as a complaint from Gideon, but apparently the Lord did not so receive it! Gideon felt he stood quite alone for the Lord (vv. 25-30). He had genuinely hoped for something different. He really did not complain for he was a humble man before God (v. 15). However, he felt deserted by God!

b. About himself v. 15. Without any question, the address by Gideon is a statement that he truly accepted the angel as the Lord of heaven! To question, therefore, that the O.T. teaches a plurality in the divine unity is heresy! In any case, Gideon showed himself humble before God and did not confront God with some special pedigree for himself. Rather, he asked how could God use a simple man like him.

c. About authority vv. 17-21.

1) Requested. The use of the emphatic pronoun "thou" shows that Gideon wanted divine assurance for the task.

2) Prepared. Gideon brought his offering (minhah) to the Angel (note: also related to Elhoim!). He obeyed the instructions of the Angel and subsequently the offering was consumed (v. 21). This and the disappearance of the Angel demonstrated the acceptance of the offering. God had underscored his call with a divine intervention.

2. THE CONVICTION OF THE CALL vv. 22-24.

a. About the angel v. 22. The experience was a firming up of the call and commission for Gideon. He acknowledged that the Angel was a divine invasion before him. Others had the same to report (13:23; Gen. 16:13; 32:30; Ex. 20:19; 33:20; Isa. 6:5).

b. From the angel v. 23. The appearance of the angel and the succeeding events caused Gideon to fear. It was the Lord who spoke and assured him of peace and not fear (2 Tim. 1:7).

c. Toward the angel v. 24. Gideon's response is so wonderful. He built an altar to worship and called it after the words given to him (v. 23): "Jehovah-shalom":

Conclusion No one should really get involved in a work for God unless there is a definitive call from the Lord. Those who have such a call as did Gideon will find themselves worshipping at the Lord's feet! Blessed privilege!