

The Call of Gideon

Key Verse: *“The LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.”*
—Judges 6:16

Selected Scripture:
Judges 6:1-24

the people during the time of harvest to plunder the crops which they had grown. As desert dwellers, the Midianites were able to dominate Israel because they rode on camels which aroused terror in their hearts. Finally, after being humiliated in this manner for such a lengthy period, the inhabitants cried to Jehovah for relief.—Judg. 6:1-6

“And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the

OUR NARRATIVE COMMENCES with a declaration of Israel’s continued unfaithfulness to God and its captivity into the hands of the Midianites for seven years. As a result, the nation was oppressed during this interval as they hid themselves in dens and caves. The Midianites did not continuously occupy the land but came upon

hands of the Midianites.”—vss. 11-13

After Gideon expressed concern that he was too insignificant to deliver Israel from the Midianites, the words of our Key Verse provided him with assurance that Jehovah was with him, and he would be successful in accomplishing this assigned task.

Later that evening, Gideon carried out a daunting task with some of his servants. He pulled down the altar of Baal. The next day the people of the city made a determination that Gideon was the one who had cast down the altar, and in its place offered a bullock in sacrifice to Jehovah. Apparently, Gideon’s father Joash was a Baal worshipper at the time. The people went to Joash and demanded that Gideon, who by this time was in his home, be given to them to be put to death for what they considered to be an outrage against Baal. Joash, however, put their demand to rout by asserting that if Baal really was a true god, he should have been able to defend himself.—vss. 25-31

Ultimately, Israel, under the leadership of Gideon and three hundred of his men, were successful in defeating the Midianites. As with other Old Testament episodes concerning Israel, we may glean an application on a larger scale that is pertinent to our day. Perhaps the Midianites might represent the various foes and weaknesses of our flesh that we must overcome to qualify for membership as spiritual sons of God. “But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds.” (Col. 3:8,9) In such a scenario Gideon may well be a picture of Christ Jesus, whose followers, as his body members, persevere in ascertaining and doing God’s will. May it be so at the end of our course that we have proved to be more than conquerors, as symbolized by Gideon’s band of three hundred.—Judg. 7:16-25 ■