

Jehovahshalom

JUDGES 6:11-24

Text: Judges 6:24

Judges 6:24

²⁴Then Gideon built an altar there unto the LORD, and called it Jehovahshalom: unto this day it *is* yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

Introduction:

Gideon was called to be a judge during a time of intense trouble in Israel. The nation was suffering under the grip of Midianite oppression. They watched helplessly as their land was stripped, their homes and villages were destroyed, and their lives endangered.

Their condition is summed up in vs. 6.

Judges 6:6

⁶And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the LORD.

The people of Israel felt as though their nation was destroyed and their lives were over.

Israel's main problem was that they counted God out. They cried out to Him, but they probably did not believe that He was listening, or that He was able to do anything to help them. But, God always has a message.

Judges 6:7-10

⁷ And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD because of the Midianites, ⁸ That the LORD sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage; ⁹ And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land; ¹⁰ And I said unto you, I *am* the LORD your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice.

God sent them a prophet to remind them of the Lord's grace in their lives and to call them to a place of repentance.

Not only does God have a message, He always has a man as well. In the passage before us, we will meet the man God chose to save Israel.

While Gideon does not look like he has much to offer at the time he was called, in the end, he would be responsible for cutting down the enemies of God's people.

1. GIDEON'S CIRCUMSTANCES (VS. 11)

Judges 6:11

¹¹ 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.

A. It Was A Time of Poverty (vs. 4-6)

Judges 6:4-6

⁴ And they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. ⁵ For they came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; *for* both they and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it. ⁶ And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the LORD.

B. It Was A Time of Persecution

Gideon was hiding while he threshed because he knew the Midianites would take the small amount of grain he had if they knew about it. Gideon and his people were suffering under the lash of intense persecution.

C. It Was A Time of Powerlessness

This is seen in the fact that Gideon is hiding from the enemy. He is just as defeated and just as frightened as the rest of the nation. It was a difficult time for God's people.

2. GIDEON'S COMMISSION (VS.12)

Judges 6:12

¹² And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD *is* with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

While Gideon was hiding from the enemy, the Lord knew exactly where Gideon was. This verse says, "The angel of the Lord appeared unto him". This was no ordinary angel! In verse 13, the angel is called "Lord".

Judges 6:13

¹³ 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 hands of the Midianites.

A. God's Promise – The Lord is with thee

Here is a brief list of some of those Old Testament appearances of the Lord Jesus Christ:

- To Adam in Eden – Gen. 3:8
- To Abraham at his tent door – Gen. 18
- To Hagar in the wilderness – Gen. 16
- He appeared to Jacob at the River Jabbok – Gen. 32

- To Moses in the burning bush – Ex. 3
- To Balaam – Num. 22
- To Joshua at Jericho – Josh. 5:13-15
- To the parents of Samson – Judges 13

B. God's Perception

Then the Lord says something that is truly amazing. He looks at Gideon and calls him “a mighty man of valor”. Here is a man who is so afraid of the enemy that he is hiding behind a winepress threshing wheat. He is full of fear, but the Lord saw what Gideon would be when he got though with him.

What does God see? When Jesse looked at David, he saw his youngest son. He saw a mere boy who was not worthy to be called to a family meeting with Samuel. When God looked at David, He saw a king.

When Gideon's family looked at him, they saw a weakling. When the Lord looked at him, God saw a warrior.

3. GIDEON'S CONFUSION (VS. 13-16)

Judges 6:13-16

¹³ 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 hands of the Midianites. ¹⁴ And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?

¹⁵ And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family *is* poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house. ¹⁶ And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

A. He Questions God's Presence (vs. 13a)

Gideon wants to know where the proof of God's presence can be found. If God was really with His people, shouldn't they be experiencing victory instead of defeat?

B. He Questions God's Performance (vs. 13b)

Gideon wants to know where all the miracles have gone. It had been 250 years since God delivered Israel from Egypt through the devastating plagues. It had been 200 years since Jordan parted and Israel crossed over on dry ground into the Promised Land. Gideon wants to know where the God Who performed all those miracles has gone.

C. He Questioned God's Perception (vs. 14-15)

Gideon questions the Lord's omniscience. He tells the Lord that He can't be right. He tells the Lord that he can't be a deliverer because:

- His father's house is poor thus no one would follow him
- No one in his father's house respects him

4. GIDEON'S CONFIRMATION (VS. 16-24)

Judges 6:16-24

¹⁶ And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. ¹⁷ And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. ¹⁸ Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set *it* before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again. ¹⁹ And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought *it* out unto him under the oak, and presented *it*. ²⁰ And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay *them* upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. ²¹ Then the angel of the LORD put forth the end of the staff that *was* in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight. ²² And when Gideon perceived that he *was* an angel of the LORD, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord GOD! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face. ²³ And the LORD said unto him, Peace *be* unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die. ²⁴ Then Gideon built an altar there unto the

LORD, and called it Jehovahshalom: unto this day it *is* yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

A. He Is Confirmed By a Presentation (vs. 18-21)

When Gideon presents his offering, he is instructed to place it on a rock. He does so, and when he does, the Lord touches the offering with the end of His staff. When he does, fire rises out of the rock and consumes the sacrifice.

B. He Is Confirmed By a Promise (vs. 22-24)

Gideon now recognizes just Who he is dealing with. When he does, he is filled with fear and he cries out to the Lord. God responds by speaking peace to Gideon's heart. He promises Gideon that he will not die! Gideon then builds an altar and worships the Lord. He calls that altar "Jehovah-Shalom", or "The Lord Our Peace".

Gideon found peace in submission and worship. When he submitted to the Lord's will for his life and when he fell before the Lord in humble worship, Gideon found a place of comfort.

Close:

Just looking from the outside, it doesn't look like Gideon will amount to much in the Lord's work. He is fearful. He is timid. He is filled with self-doubt. He has more questions than he has answers. However, Gideon

is being brought to a place of service. The Lord is willing to take Gideon just like he is and shape him into what He wants him to be. As we will see over the next few weeks that is just what the Lord will do.