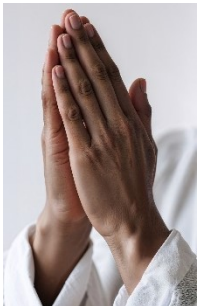


Hello. My name is Gideon. Not sure, but I think I was born around 1170 BC. I am married with a family. When the Lord brought us into the Promised Land He said that He would continue to be our God and look after us as long as we did not worship the gods of those people who already lived here. Well, at first everything was okay, but then, gradually over the years, the people started to neglect God and worship Baal, the god of fertility and agriculture. This of course, was the one thing that God had specifically said was not to take place. Prostitution and child sacrifice was often part of that worship and was definitely against the condition that God had laid down.



For the past seven years we have had real problems with the Midianites. They are nomads who roam about in the desert. When it is harvest time these Midianites join up with a number of other tribes and thousands of them come on their camels and take our crops and any of our animals that they can find. The land looks as if the locusts have been as everywhere is left bare. Our people have now mostly left their homes and live in caves in the mountains because they are afraid of being attacked by the Midianites. What a life.



The people had become so downhearted that they started to pray to God, so at last God stepped in and did something about the situation; it was not what we were expecting though. We were asking God to stop the Midianites but instead He sent a prophet to us. The Prophet's message from God was that He had brought us out of Egypt, looked after us and given us the Promised Land, but also, reminded us that we were told not to worship other gods. Obviously it is because we have abandoned God that he has left us to the mercy of the Midianites. What a let-down when we were expecting a much more positive answer to our prayers.

As I was threshing corn secretly in a wine press out of sight of a possible Midianite invasion, a figure suddenly appeared sitting under a nearby oak tree. I could see that it was no ordinary person and that it could be no other than the Angel of the Lord. He said to me, "The Lord is with you mighty warrior." My reply to Him was that if the Lord is with us how is that He is not stopping the Midianites. In any case, I told Him that I was a weaker/younger member of my family, with lower position and clout so did not see how I could possibly overcome the Midianites as He was suggesting. He then told me that He would be with me and I could see that He had the authority to use me despite my weakness and apprehension. I still wanted more proof of His identity and asked Him to wait there whilst I prepared a meal, which was our normal practice.



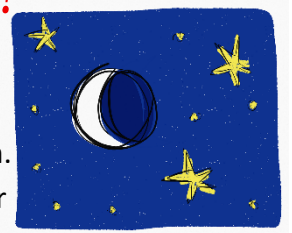
I prepared a meal of a young goat, some unleavened bread and some broth. When I brought the meal to Him I was told to place it on a rock. He reached out and touched the food with his staff and immediately fire came up from the rock and consumed the food – A certain sign of God’s acceptance. He then vanished, but I was now sure that it really was the Angel of the Lord with whom I had been speaking. What was I expected to do? How was I to fight the Midianites? I did not have to wait long to find out.

What was I expected to do?

Why did God not choose one of my older brothers?

How was I to fight the Midianites?

That night God spoke to me and told me what to do. Many of the families, including my Dad, had built substantial altars to Baal. There was also often a sacred tree or pole at the side of the altar for the worship of the goddess Asherah. God told me to pull down my Dad’s altar, cut down the Asherah and build an altar to Himself. Now I knew that the people would be really angry about that so I went during the night, taking some of the servants with me. We knocked down the altar, cut down the Asherah and built an altar to the Lord in its place. As instructed by God, we then offered a sacrifice of a bull, using the wood from the Asherah for the fire. In the morning the people saw the altar of Baal broken down and the bull being offered on the altar of the Lord. They were particularly incensed about the Asherah being used for the fire. They found out that I was responsible and wanted to kill me but my father protected me by suggesting to them that Baal was strong enough to protect himself. From that day I was known as ‘Jerubbaal’, which means, ‘Let Baal contend’.



We had been asking God to do something about the Midianites, but obviously the starting point was to get to the root of the problem by destroying the altars of Baal and putting God back in His rightful place. It is almost time for the Midianites to return. I still feel very inadequate for the task that the Lord has given me and not at all sure how to tackle things, but, we will see.....

You can read about this in Judges Chapter 6.

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A note about the ‘Angel of the Lord’.

The ‘Angel of the Lord’ is generally regarded to be Jesus coming down from Heaven for a specific occasion and then returning back to Heaven. Some think that it was an appearance of God the Father. (Known as a ‘Theophany’.)

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Don’t forget, they are not just Doodles, they are **AMAZING** doodles!