

Lesson 12 – Judges 6:1-24

NIV

1 Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, and for seven years he gave them into the hands of the Midianites. **2** Because the power of Midian was so oppressive, the Israelites prepared shelters for themselves in mountain clefts, caves and strongholds. **3** Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country. **4** They camped on the land and ruined the crops all the way to Gaza and did not spare a living thing for Israel, neither sheep nor cattle nor donkeys. **5** They came up with their livestock and their tents like swarms of locusts. It was impossible to count the men and their camels; they invaded the land to ravage it. **6** Midian so impoverished the Israelites that they cried out to the LORD for help. **7** When the Israelites cried to the LORD because of Midian, **8** he sent them a prophet, who said, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: I brought you up out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. **9** I snatched you from the power of Egypt and from the hand of all your oppressors. I drove them from before you and gave you their land. **10** I said to you, ‘I am the LORD your God; do not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live.’ But you have not listened to me.” **11** The angel of the LORD came and sat down under the oak in Ophrah that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite, where his son Gideon was threshing wheat in a winepress to keep it from the Midianites. **12** When the angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon, he said, “The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.” **13** “But sir,” Gideon replied, “if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our fathers told us about when they said, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up out of Egypt?’ But now the LORD has abandoned us and put us into the hand of Midian.” **14** The LORD turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?” **15** “But Lord,” Gideon asked, “how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family.” **16** The LORD answered, “I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites together.” **17** Gideon replied, “If now I have found favor in your eyes, give me a sign that it is really you talking to me. **18** Please do not go away until I come back and bring my offering and set it before you.” And the LORD said, “I will wait until you return.” **19** Gideon went in, prepared a young goat, and from an ephah of flour he made bread without yeast. Putting the meat in a basket and its broth in a pot, he brought them out and offered them to him under the oak. **20** The angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread, place them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And Gideon did so. **21** With the tip of the staff that was in his hand, the angel of the LORD touched the meat and the unleavened bread. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the LORD disappeared. **22** When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he exclaimed, “Ah, Sovereign LORD! I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!” **23** But the LORD said to him, “Peace! Do not be afraid. You are not going to die.” **24** So Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and called it The LORD Is Peace.

NLT

1 Again the Israelites did what was evil in the LORD’s sight. So the LORD handed them over to the Midianites for seven years. **2** The Midianites were so cruel that the Israelites fled to the mountains, where they made hiding places for themselves in caves and dens. **3** Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, marauders from Midian, Amalek, and the people of the east would attack Israel, **4** camping in the land and destroying crops as far away as Gaza. They left the Israelites with nothing to eat, taking all the sheep, oxen, and donkeys. **5** These enemy hordes, coming with their cattle and tents as thick as locusts, arrived on droves of camels too numerous to count. And they stayed until the land was stripped bare. **6** So Israel was reduced to starvation by the Midianites. Then the Israelites cried out to the LORD for help. **7** When they cried out to the LORD because of Midian, **8** the LORD sent a prophet to the Israelites. He said, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: I brought you up out of slavery in Egypt **9** and rescued you from the Egyptians and from all who oppressed you. I drove out your enemies and gave you their land. **10** I told you, ‘I am the LORD your God. You must not worship the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you now live.’ But you have not listened to me.” **11** Then the angel of the LORD came and sat beneath the oak tree at Ophrah, which belonged to Joash of the clan of Abiezer. Gideon son of Joash had been threshing wheat at the bottom of a winepress to hide the grain from the Midianites. **12** The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said, “Mighty hero, the LORD is with you!” **13** “Sir,” Gideon replied, “if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? And where are all the miracles our ancestors told us about? Didn’t they say, ‘The LORD brought us up out of Egypt’? But now the LORD has abandoned us and handed us over to the Midianites.” **14** Then the LORD turned to him and said, “Go with the strength you have and rescue Israel from the Midianites. I am sending you!” **15** “But Lord,” Gideon replied, “how can I rescue Israel? My clan is the weakest in the whole tribe of Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family!” **16** The LORD said to him, “I will be with you. And you will destroy the Midianites as if you were fighting against one man.” **17** Gideon replied, “If you are truly going to help me, show me a sign to prove that it is really the LORD speaking to me. **18** Don’t go away until I come back and bring my offering to you.” The LORD answered, “I will stay here until you return.” **19** Gideon hurried home. He cooked a young goat, and with half a bushel of flour he baked some bread without yeast. Then, carrying the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, he brought them out and presented them to the angel, who was under the oak tree. **20** The angel of God said to him, “Place the meat and the unleavened bread on this rock, and pour the broth over it.” And Gideon did as he was told. **21** Then the angel of the LORD touched the meat and bread with the staff in his hand, and fire flamed up from the rock and consumed all he had brought. And the angel of the LORD disappeared. **22** When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the LORD, he cried out, “Sovereign LORD, I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face!” **23** “It is all right,” the LORD replied. “Do not be afraid. You will not die.” **24** And Gideon built an altar to the LORD there and named it “The LORD Is Peace.”