

## Judges Chapter 6 Part 5

On Sunday, Chris quoted a passage from Romans that is pertinent to our study in Judges.

**Romans 14:17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.**

The sons of Israel were more concerned about their daily food than they were about the creator who supplies our daily bread. A life without God is empty no matter how much money or how many toys one has. We see this today with so many celebrities. They have “everything,” but true joy. I couldn’t resist throwing in a similar kind of quote from a movie.

Movie Quote (Paycheck): “If you only look where you can't go, you might just miss the riches below.”

We are here studying the Bible because it orients us spiritually. During the day we live and work in a human viewpoint world. I like Wednesday Bible class. It is like a salve for my soul.

Often, I approach the Bible forensically. By that, I mean I carefully examine the individual parts of the sentences using dictionaries, lexicons, grammars and other books to identify what is said and implied. That is not a bad thing. It is good to examine all the little parts and come to some conclusions. But, as I emphasized last week, this conversation between the Angel of the Lord, the second person of the Trinity, and Gideon is intense. It is a human conversation. When the Angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, He greets him.

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**Judges 6:12 And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, “The Lord is with you, valiant warrior.”**

**Angel of the Lord.** But what the Angel of the Lord says is more than just words to be examined with plastic gloves. The conversation was a living conversation. It struck me that there is a greeting in modern Arabic, “allah ma'ak.” God is/be with you. It is equivalent to the Hebrew of Judges 6:12, “The Lord is with you.” It is a greeting. A similar greeting is used in the New Testament.

**Luke 1:26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee named Nazareth,**

**27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary.**

**28 And coming in, he said to her, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.”**

**The Lord is with you.** This is a greeting, used slightly differently than in Judges but is the equivalent in Greek to the Hebrew of Judges 6:12. Here, Mary will be pregnant with the Lord Jesus. His name will be Emmanuel (God with us) [I’m not going to quote the various Emmanuel passages.]

There is a Latin equivalent. From Wikipedia: “Dominus vobiscum (Latin: "The Lord be with you") is an ancient salutation and blessing traditionally used by the clergy in the Catholic Mass and other liturgies, as well as liturgies of other Western Christian denominations, such as Lutheranism, Anglicanism and Methodism.”

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So, here is the double entendre. God Himself is greeting Gideon saying God (in other words, I am) is with you. Gideon sees a nice guy, maybe dressed in white. He might have replied in his mind, “The Lord be with you too.”

**Judges 6:13 (NASB) Then Gideon said to him, “O my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did the Lord not bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the Lord has abandoned us and handed us over to Midian.”**

**Judges 6:13 (YLT) And Gideon saith unto him, ‘O, my lord -- and Jehovah is with us! -- and why hath all this found us? and where [are] all His wonders which our fathers recounted to us, saying, Hath not Jehovah brought us up out of Egypt? and now Jehovah hath left us, and doth give us into the hand of Midian.’**

We covered this sufficiently last week. The point being that Gideon is unaware that he is talking to the Angel of the Lord. He addresses Him as “adonai,” Sir or Lord and which is also used to address deity. Clearly, He has not grasped the holiness (for lack of a better word) of the situation.

**Judges 6:14 And the Lord looked at him and said, “Go in this strength of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?”**

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Just as in the John chapter 4 dialogue between Jesus and the woman at the well, the Angel of the Lord pokes Gideon a little further. Paraphrasing, “You will save Israel. I sent you.”

From Gideon’s perspective, who is this guy who is saying he has authority to send Gideon into battle and guarantee a win?

**Judges 6:15 But he said to Him, “O Lord, how am I to save Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father’s house.”**

Pardon me for taking so long on this dialogue between Gideon and the Angel of the Lord. It is so fascinating. It is almost hypnotic. And when you throw in John chapter 4 with the woman at the well, I feel like king Midas counting my pieces of gold. But this is gold I can share with you.

There is a hotel in Las Vegas called the “Mirage.” There is an aquarium at the check in/out counter that is huge, perhaps 20,000 gallons in size. It is amazing with all the vegetation and varieties of fish. I can stand there for hours looking at it. It has a similar hypnotic effect on me. My wife has to drag me away from it. If she hadn’t, I might still be there today.

**Save.** Remember, this is from the root that can mean “save” and “deliver,” like what a “deliverer” would do.

**Least/youngest.** Gideon is looking at his life and the command from this stranger from a human perspective. Here is the need for application of that quote from Romans.

**Judges 6:16 (NASB) Yet the Lord said to him, “I will certainly be with you, and you will defeat Midian as one man.”**

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When I read the English, it said “certainly be” I assumed this would be an infinitive absolute. The NASB often translates the infinitive absolute as “certainly.”

For instance in Genesis chapter 2:

**Genesis 2:16 The Lord God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may freely eat;**

**Genesis 2:17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat from it you will certainly die (i.e. dying you shall die)”**

The “certainly” is a way the NASB translates the intensity of the infinitive absolute. So when I looked at the Hebrew of Judges 6:16, I saw the word that translates as “because.” I know there is wiggle room in translation. This “because” is coupled with the imperfect form of “to be” leading the translator to translate as “I will certainly be with you.” It gives the impressions that I am not yet with you, but just wait, I’ll catch up to you. Now the imperfect can be translated as future, so it is an allowable translation which most translations go with.

But the context says that God as the Angel of the Lord is already with Gideon. He will continue to be with him. The combination of the “because” and the imperfect being translated as I certainly be with you, didn’t sit well with me. It just didn’t have the humph I was looking for. However, if that is the correct translation, so be it. Then I looked at the Young’s Literal Translation. A little different emphasis. It is more of what I expected to see from the Hebrew text.

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**Judges 6:16 (YLT) And Jehovah saith unto him, `Because I am with thee -- thou hast smitten the Midianites as one man.'**

Here the “because” is translated “because.” The imperfect is translated as a present tense (on-going, incomplete action). There is no pronoun for the verb, it is just first person singular of “am,” or “I am.” This makes sense because the Angel of the Lord already said He was “with you.” This just confirms that He is still with you and will continue to be with you (Gideon).

I am? Shades of the Gospel of John. In particular, remember John chapter 4:

**John 4:26 Jesus \*said to her (the woman at the well), “I am *He*, the One speaking to you.”**

Remember, the words in italics like “*He*” in this passage are not in the actual text but added for clarity. I AM is speaking with you.

The parallel is uncanny. In Judges, the second person of the Trinity appearing as a man talks to Gideon, who seeks to know who he is talking to. In the Gospel of John, the second person of the Trinity as flesh and blood man talks to the woman at the well, who seeks to know who she is talking to. The answer in both cases is “I AM,” but said slightly differently to fit the context.

Notice in the Young’s Literal Translation that the success against the Midianites is stated as if it already happened. One way to translate the perfect tense – completed action. This is enough to get Gideon’s attention. Who is this “masked man?”

**As one man.** Throughout the book of Judges, the influence a single man who is walking by faith and empowered by the Holy Spirit is

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emphasized. God can work through such a person. God does the real work, but he uses people to do this.

**Judges 6:17 So Gideon said to Him, “If now I have found favor in Your sight, then perform for me a sign that it is You speaking with me.**

**Judges 6:17 (YLT) And he saith unto Him, `If, I pray Thee, I have found grace in Thine eyes, then Thou hast done for me a sign that Thou art speaking with me.**

I included the YLT again as a reference. I wanted Gideon to just flatly ask who is speaking with me. But the translations are uniform in saying Gideon has identified who is speaking to him as “you.” But, he demands confirmation through a sign because obviously, he is not completely sure.

**Favor/grace:** This phrase and the word for favor/grace is historically charged. “Found” is from the same root as in verse 13 where all the “this” (i.e cursing) found us.

Noah:

**Genesis 6:7 Then the Lord said, “I will wipe out mankind whom I have created from the face of the land; mankind, and animals as well, and crawling things, and the birds of the sky. For I am sorry that I have made them.”**

**Genesis 6:8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.**

Abraham:

**Genesis 18:1** Now the Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day.

**Genesis 18:2** When he raised his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed down to the ground,

**Genesis 18:3** and said, “My Lord, if now I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by.

**Genesis 18:4** Please let a little water be brought and wash your feet, and make yourselves comfortable under the tree;

**Genesis 18:5** and I will bring a piece of bread, so that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on, since you have visited your servant.” And they said, “So do as you have said.”

**Genesis 18:6** So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, “Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it, and make bread cakes.”



**Genesis 18:7 Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf and gave it to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it.**

**Genesis 18:8 He took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set it before them; and he was standing by them under the tree as they ate.**

I included an extended quote to include the meal Abraham prepared for his visitors. This is a usual response, similar to what Gideon does.

**Perform/hast done.** The word is to make or build. That is interesting phraseology, “Make a sign.” It is one way to translate the words. It leads to performing a miracle. But then what is the word for sign?

**Sign.** Sign is OK. But, in this context, Gideon is looking for authentication or identification which are also valid translations of this word. And, in the New Testament, Jesus as well as the apostles after Jesus left have “miracles” as their credentials.

**Judges 6:18 Please do not depart from here until I come back to You, and bring out my offering and lay it before You.” And He said, “I will remain until you return.”**

Again, this is similar to what Abraham did for his three visitors.

**Offering.** “Minha.” This is one of those words with a theological/sacrificial meaning as well as a mundane word for offering or present.

**Remain.** Word means sit, dwell, remain.

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Let me take some time here and revisit the parallels between Judges 6 and John 4. The passages invite comparison because the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of the Trinity is talking to an individual person.

***Jesus Christ in Action***

1. An individual human

A. Gideon: Man (Judges 6:11, “son”)

B. Woman: Woman at the Well (John 4:7, “woman”)

2. “Least”

A. Gideon: He is youngest in the least family (youngest in the most emaciated family/herd Judges 6:15)

B. Woman: Least in city (morally, John 4:18)

3. Talking to 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of Trinity

A. Gideon: Angel of the Lord appearing as a man (Judges 6:12)

B. Woman: Jesus Christ as real flesh and blood man (John 4:7-9)

4. Provocative Greetings

A. Gideon: God is with you, Valiant Warrior (Judges 6:12)

B. Woman: Give Me to drink (John 4:7)

5. Challenge/Promise

A. Gideon: Go, Save Israel (Judges 6:14)

B. Woman: Ask for Living Water (John 4:10)

6. Who Am I Talking to

A. Gideon: Identify yourself (Judges 6:17)

B. Woman: Prophet/Messiah (John 4:19,26)

7. “I Am”

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A. Gideon: “I am” with you; sign/authentication you talking with me  
(Judges 6:16)

B. Woman: “I am” the one talking to you (John 4:26)

8. Double Entendre

A. Gideon: God is with you (Judges 6:12)

B. Woman: Living Water (John 4:10-14)

9. Addresses 2<sup>nd</sup> Person of Trinity as “Lord”

A. Gideon: Adonai (Judges 6:13,15)

B. Woman: Kyrie (John 4:11)

10. Sign/Recognition

A. Gideon: (Judges 6:17 / Judges 6:21)

B. Woman: (John 4:26, 29)

11. Motivating People

A. Gideon: Gathered Troops (Judges 6:35)

B. Woman: Gathered City people (John 4:30)

12. Success

A. Gideon: (Judges chapter 7)

B. Woman: (John 4:39-42)

13. Change of Worship

A. Gideon: (Judges 6:28-32)

B. Woman: (John 4:39-42)

14. Amazement at Recognition

A. Gideon: (Judges 6:22-24)

B. Woman: (John 4:29)

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**Judges 6:19 Then Gideon went in and prepared a young goat and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour; he put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, and brought them out to him under the oak and presented them.**

Per Constable: “The menu that Gideon offered his visitor was what a person would normally set before a guest, whom one wished to honor in a special way, in that culture.” I mentioned this in the extended quote from Genesis which included Abraham’s visitors.

**Judges 6:20 And the angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And he did so.**

As I see it, Gideon has prepared a meal for his visitor. Now he wants to pour out the tasty broth and put the rest of the food on an unsanitary rock? Really!??

**Judges 6:21 Then the angel of the Lord put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire came up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the angel of the Lord vanished from his sight.**

One commentator (Chisholm) suggested there is uncertainty of exactly what Gideon was preparing, a tasty meal, a valuable gift, a sign of renewed devotion, a worthy sacrifice or some combination of these

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options. May I suggest that Gideon prepared a meal for the stranger. In that culture, that would be the normal procedure, as I have already said twice. Much to Gideon's surprise, it becomes something like a "burnt offering." Here are some points from Bible.org by Deffinbaugh. I have only quoted to main paragraph headings rather than quote several pages on the burnt offering.:

- (1) The burnt offering does not originate in Leviticus, but is found early in the Book of Genesis.
- (2) The burnt offering regulated in Leviticus chapter 1 was viewed primarily as a personal offering, done voluntarily by the individual Israelite.
- (3) The burnt offering is one of the most common offerings, which is offered on a great variety of occasions, often in conjunction with another sacrifice or offering.
- (4) The burnt offering was a whole "burnt offering," which was totally consumed on the altar.
- (5) The regulations for the burnt offering (as well as the other offerings) are very important, and violations are taken very seriously.
- (6) There are three types of animals to sacrifice in the burnt offering (bull, sheep/goat, bird).
- (7) The animal to be offered in the burnt offering was always to be of the highest quality.
- (8) There is an alternation between the activity of the priest and the offerer.
- (9) The purpose of the burnt offering was to make atonement for the sin of the offerer and thus to gain God's acceptance.

There is a play on words here suggesting the offering became a "burnt offering." Gideon's offering was meant as a meal for a human being.

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When the Angel of the Lord touched the meat and unleavened bread, the fire “came up.” The burnt offering is identified as “ascend” or “go up in smoke.” That is what happened to Gideon’s offering.