Judges 6:1-18

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 , [a] " 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."

Notes: