

Clarification of “an” (Judg 6:11) vs “the” (Judg 6:12) angel of the LORD: In English grammar, the indefinite article “an” implies one of many. But in the Hebrew language the words from which both phrases are translated from are identical, with no article. For words in a “construct state,” there are 2 nouns, e.g. “angel”, “LORD.” And one is in the possessive state. Hence it is translated “*angel of the LORD*.” The KJV translators chose to use the article “an” angel of the LORD, from the perspective of Gideon who did not know yet that it was “the” angel of the LORD, Christ Himself as identified later.

The LORD knows that we can be easily weakened physically and spiritually. We need to partake of physical and spiritual food to be strengthened for service. When we stray from the LORD and disobey Him, we stray from the Source of our spiritual food, and will come under His chastisement. This was the state of the Israelites in the Book of Judges. They were famished physically and spiritually, being under God’s chastisement through the Midianites because of their disobedience. However, when they “*cried unto the LORD because of the Midianites*” (Judg 6:7), i.e. they repented of their evil ways, God sent Gideon the prophet (Judg 6:8) to show them the right way. Repentance is the start of any help from God. God will not help the unrepentant ones who continue in their sins, but He strengthens those who repent and turn to Him.

Gideon questioned why bad things happened to Israel if God was for them, and why God had forsaken them (Judg 6:13). God called Gideon a “*mighty man of valour*” (Judg 6:12), but Gideon was weak and demoralised as he failed to see why Israel was in such a state. It was only by God’s strength, and being present with Gideon, that Gideon could be mightily used of God. This is the same for us believers today. We are saved to serve, and sent in God’s strength.

In response to Gideon’s fear that he was poor and insignificant (Judg 6:15), God reassured Gideon of His presence, and said, “*Surely I will be with thee*” (Judg 6:16) The LORD is with us! All that we have been given are to be used to serve Him – He, as our Creator, our Designer, gave us those things. He placed us in our families, and gave us our gifts and experiences to serve Him. When Gideon asked for a sign (Judg 6:17), God showed Gideon His power by performing a miracle (Judg 6:18-21). Seeing the angel of the LORD, Gideon finally acknowledged God and submitted to His call (Judg 6:22-23), and he built an altar unto the LORD (Judg 6:24).

We need to come to the LORD in repentance, every day of our lives. Seeing His presence, we must act and work for Him. Let us learn to trust Him and lean on Him. Let us not question God when bad things happen in our lives, but instead let us check if we have sinned against God. And let us repent and then do what God has called us to do. It is not our will, but what God wants us to do for Him.

There are many things to do for the LORD! As youths, do not waste your time, but give yourself to the LORD. The same God who strengthened Gideon is the same God who is with us today, and He will strengthen us today.

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