

Recap of 5/14/17 (Judges 6:1-12):

1. For the fourth time in the Book of Judges Israel turns from the Lord to idolatry and immorality, embracing the false gods of the land. In judgment God gives them into the hands of the Midianites (joined by the Amalekites and other Eastern peoples), a nomadic tribe which regularly, at Harvest time, ravaged the land of Israel, destroying crops and animals and any Israelites who go in their way. Israel was helpless and hid in caves and mountain clefts. They cried out to the Lord for help.
2. Before sending them a deliverer, God send a prophet to confront them with their sin. God's past deliverances should have caused them to honor, follow, worship and be devoted to the Lord yet instead they abandoned the Lord. We do the same thing when we forget how the Lord has delivered us from past difficulties and sins and find ourselves embracing values and lifestyles that are counter to Him. We should not blame God when we face the consequences of our own sin. The bottom line is they "have not listened" to God, that is they have not obeyed. God had been faithful, they had not.
3. The deliverer that God raises up is Gideon of the tribe of Manasseh. We first encounter him surreptitiously threshing wheat in a winepress to escape the detection of the enemy. The angel of the Lord, a preincarnate appearance of Jesus Christ in visible and bodily form, appears to Gideon and calls him Mighty Warrior, an ironic description considering the circumstances. God sees us as we may become if we yield to His hand.
4. We can learn about God's call through Gideon's experience. God called him in the midst of everyday activities; in the midst of difficult circumstances and challenges; and when Gideon was least expecting it.
5. What others are saying:
 - “In contrast to the ideal Old Testament leader, many of the leaders of Judges are quite fallible. Their fallibility contrasts with God's faithfulness and grace. Gideon, in his fallibility, still needs reassurance, and God graciously grants [it].” (Andrew Bowling)
 - “Gideon shows that God calls leaders from unlikely situations. Gideon was a ... farmer's son who worked with his hands, and his father was an idol-worshipper (Judges 6:15,25). Still he was an effective leader in God's service.” (Herbert Lockyer)