

Judges 6:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?

Analysis

The LORD's direct commission to Gideon reveals divine calling's paradoxical nature. The phrase 'the LORD looked upon him' (vayifan elav Yahweh, וַיִּפֶּן אֵלָיו יְהוָה) indicates God's personal attention and favor—the same verb *panah* (פָּנָה) describes God turning His face toward someone in blessing. The command 'Go in this thy might' (lekh bekohaka zeh, לֵךְ בְּכֹחַ זֶה) is profoundly ironic—what 'might' does fearful Gideon possess while hiding in a winepress? The answer lies in the preceding context: God's presence ('the LORD is with thee,' v. 12) and divine commissioning constitute Gideon's strength. The might God refers to isn't Gideon's natural abilities but the power God Himself supplies through His calling. This echoes Paul's later affirmation: 'I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me' (Philippians 4:13) and 'My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness' (2 Corinthians 12:9). The promise 'thou shalt save Israel' (vehoshata et-Yisrael, וְהוֹשַׁעְתָּ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל) uses the Hebrew verb *yasha* (יָשַׁע), meaning to deliver or save—the root of Joshua/Jesus' name. The rhetorical question 'have not I sent thee?' (halo shelachticha, הֲלוֹ שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ) brooks no argument. Divine sending guarantees divine empowerment and success. Those whom God calls, He equips; those He sends, He strengthens.

Historical Context

This commissioning occurred during Israel's seventh year of Midianite oppression, when nomadic raiders systematically destroyed Israel's crops and livestock,

reducing the population to poverty and hiding in caves (6:1-6). Gideon came from Manasseh's tribe, specifically the clan of Abiezer in Ophrah. His father Joash maintained a Baal altar with an Asherah pole (6:25), indicating syncretistic worship compromising covenant faithfulness—the root cause of Midianite oppression. The historical context shows Israel's dire situation: economically devastated, militarily powerless, and spiritually compromised. Into this darkness, God raised up an unlikely deliverer from an obscure family. The pattern of divine calling parallels other biblical commissions: Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:10-12), Isaiah in the temple (Isaiah 6:8-9), Jeremiah before birth (Jeremiah 1:5-10), Paul on Damascus road (Acts 9:15-16). Each involved:

1. God's initiative
2. human inadequacy and protest
3. divine reassurance of presence
4. empowerment for the task.

Gideon's subsequent actions—destroying Baal's altar (6:25-32), gathering an army (6:34-35), seeking confirmation through fleeces (6:36-40)—show the gradual strengthening of faith through obedience. His ultimate victory with 300 men against 135,000 Midianites (7:7-8:10) demonstrated that divine calling plus human obedience, however weak, accomplishes God's purposes when He fights for His people.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does God's command to 'go in this thy might' challenge you to step out in faith despite feeling inadequate for the task He's calling you to?
2. What does the rhetorical question 'have not I sent thee?' teach about the relationship between divine calling and the courage and resources needed to fulfill it?

3. In what specific areas of your life do you need to distinguish between human strength (which you lack) and divine strength (which God supplies to those He sends)?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּפֹּן	אֱלֹהֵי	יְהוָה	וַיֹּאמֶר	לְךָ	בְּכֹחְךָ	יְהוָה
looked	H413	And the LORD	upon him and said	Go	in this thy might	H2088
H6437		H3068	H559	H3212	H3581	
וְהוֹשַׁעְתָּ	אֶת	יִשְׂרָאֵל	מִכַּף	יְדֵי	הָאֱמֹנִי	הָאֵל
and thou shalt save	H853	Israel	from the hand	of the Midianites		H3808
H3467		H3478	H3709	H4080		
שְׁלַחְתִּיךָ:						
have not I sent						
H7971						

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 11:34 (Parallel theme): Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

1 Samuel 12:11 (References Lord): And the LORD sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side, and ye dwelled safe.

Judges 4:6 (References Lord): And she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun?

Hebrews 11:32 (Parallel theme): And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

