

Chapter 6

The people falling againe to finne, are oppressed by the Madianites. 12. An Angel appearing to Gedeon, fendeth him to deliuer Ifrael, 17. confirming his mifsion by miracle. 25. So he firft deftroyeth Baals altar, 34. then gathereth an armie againft Idolaters, 36. and is afured againe of Gods protection by two miracles in a fleece of woolle.

And the children of Ifrael did euil in the fight of our Lord: who deliuered them into the hand of Madian feuen yeares, ² & they were fore oppressed of them. And they made them felues dennes and caues in the mountaines, and very wel fenced places to refit. ³ And when Ifrael had fowen, Madian came vp and Amalec, and the reft of the Eaft nations: ⁴ and pitching their tentes by them wafted al thinges as they were in the blade vnto the entring of Gaza: and they left nothing at al in Ifrael that perteyned to mans life, not fheepe, not oxen, not affes. ⁵ For they and al their flockes came with their tabernacles, and like vnto locuftes filled al places, an innumerable multitude of men, and of camels, wafting whatfoeuer they touched. ⁶ And Ifrael was fore humbled in the fight of Madian. ⁷ And he cried to our Lord defiring helpe againft the Madianites. ⁸ Who fent vnto them ^a)a man that was a prophet, and he fpake: Thus fayeth our Lord the God of Ifrael: I made you to come vp out of Ægypt, and brought you out of the houfe of feruitude, ⁹ and deliuered you out of the handes of the Ægyptians, and of al the enemies, that afflicted you: and I caft them out at your entring, and deliuered you their Land. ¹⁰ And I faid: I the Lord your God, feare not the goddes of the Amorrheites, in whose land you dwel. And you would not heare my voice. ¹¹ And

^a S. Auguftin (*q. 31. in Iudic.*) fupposeth that this meffenger fent from God called *a man* & *a prophete* (for the forme, wherein he appeared) was the fame Angel which fate vnder the oke and fent Gedeon to deliuer Ifrael. *v. 11. 12. Ec.*

an Angel of our Lord came, and fate vnder an oke, that was in Ephra, and perteyned to Ioas the father of the familie of Ezri. And when Gedeon his fonne did thresh and purge wheate in a winepreffe, to flee Madian, ¹² the Angel of our Lord appeared to him, and said: Our Lord be with thee ô most valiant of men. ¹³ And Gedeon said to him: I befech thee my Lord, if our Lord be with vs, why haue these euils apprehended vs? where are his meruelous workes, which our fathers haue told vs, and said: Out of Ægypt did our Lord bring vs? but now our Lord hath forsaken vs, and deliuered vs into the hande of Madian. ¹⁴ And our Lord looked toward him, and said: Goe in this thy strength, and thou shalt deliuer Ifrael out of the hand of Madian: know that I haue sent thee. ¹⁵ Who answering said: I befech thee, my Lord, wherein shal I deliuer Ifrael? behold my familie is the meaneft in Manaffes, and I the least in my fathers house. ¹⁶ And our Lord said to him: I wil be with thee: and thou shalt strike Madian as it were one man. ¹⁷ And he said: If I haue found, quoth he, grace before thee, geue me a signe that it is thou which speakest to me. ¹⁸ Neither depart thou hence, til I returne to thee, bringing a sacrifice, and offering ^ato thee. Who answered: I wil tarie thy coming. ¹⁹ Gedeon therefore went in, and boyled a kidde, and of a bushe of flowre baked vnleuened loaves: and putting the flesh in a basket, and the broth of the flesh into a pottle, he caried al vnder the oke, and offered to him. ²⁰ To whom the Angel of our Lord said: Take the flesh and the vnleuened loaves, and put them vpon that rocke, and powre out the broth thereon. And when he had done, ²¹ the Angel of our Lord stretched forth the tippe of the rodde, which he held in his hand, and touched the flesh and the vnleuened loaves: and there arose a fyre from the rocke, and consumed the flesh,

^a He meant not to offer sacrifice to the Angel, but that either the Angel, or himselfe in presence of the Angel, should offer it to God and so in dede the Angel partly directed him what to do, partly executed the office himselfe, by touching the oblation with his rodde; and miraculoufly bringing fire to consume the sacrifice.

and the vnleuened loaues: And the Angel of our Lord vanifhed from his eies. ²² And Gedeon feeing that it was the Angel of our Lord, faid: Alas my Lord God: that I haue feene the Angel of our Lord face to face. ²³ And our Lord faid to him: Peace be with thee: feare not, thou fhalt not die. ²⁴ And Gedeon built there ^a)an altar to our Lord, and called it, our Lords peace, vntil this prefent day. And when he was yet in Ephra, which is of the familie of Ezri, ²⁵ that night our Lord faid to him: Take a bullocke of thy fathers, and an other bullocke of feuen yeares, and thou fhalt deftroy the altar of Baal, which is thy fathers: and cut downe the groue, that is about the altar: ²⁶ and thou fhalt build an altar to the Lord thy God in the toppe of this rocke, whereupon thou didft lay the facrifice before: and thou fhalt take the fecond bullocke, and fhalt offer an holocauft vpon a pile of wood, which thou fhalt cut downe out of the groue. ²⁷ Gedeon therfore taking to him ten men of his feruantes, did as our Lord had commanded him. But fearing his fathers houle, and the men of that citie, he would not doe it by day, but accomplifhed al thinges by night. ²⁸ And when the men of that towne were rifen in the morning, they faw the altar of Baal deftroyed, and the groue cut downe, and the other bullocke laid vpon the altar, which then was built. ²⁹ They faid one to an other: Who hath done this? And when they inquired for the author of the fact, it was faid: Gedeon the fonne of Ioas did al thefe thinges. ³⁰ And they faid to Ioas: Bring forth thy fonne hither, that he may die: becaufe he hath deftroyed the altar of Baal, and hath cut downe his groue. ³¹ To whom he answered: Why are you reuengers of Baal, that you fight for him? he that is his aduerfarie, let him die before to morrow light appeare: if he be God, reuenge he him felf, on him that hath rayfed his altar. ³² From that day Gedeon was called ^b)Ierobaal, becaufe Ioas had faid: Let Baal reuenge him felf on him, that hath rayfed his altar. ³³ Therfore al Madian, and Amalec, and the eaft

^a An altar for a monument, not for facrifice.

^b The ftrengh of Baal, or ftronger then Baal.

peoples were gathered together, and passing ouer Iordan, camped in the vaile Iezrael. ³⁴ But the spirit of our Lord reuefted Gedeon, who founding with a trumpet called together the houle of Abiezer, to folow him. ³⁵ And he sent meffengers into al Manaffes, which it felfe alfo did folow him: and other meffengers into Afer and Zabulon and Nepthali, which mette him. ³⁶ And Gedeon faid to God: If thou faue Ifrael by my hand, as thou haft fpoken, ³⁷ I wil putte this fleece of wool on the floore: if there fhall be ^adew in the fleece onlie, and on al the ground drieness, I shal know that by my hand, as thou haft spoken, thou wilt deliuer Ifrael. ³⁸ And it came so to passe. And ryfing in the night wringing the fleece, he filled a veffel with the dew. ³⁹ And he faid againe to God: Let not thy furie be angry againft me if I tempt once againe, seeking a figne in the fleece. I defire that the fleece onlie may be drie, and al the ground wette with dew. ⁴⁰ And God did that night as he had requested: and there was drieness in the fleece onlie, and dew on al the ground.

^a Dew firft in the fleece and after on the ground fignified grace and true religion firft in one people, after in al nations. *Sainct Amb. Ser. 13. de Natal. Dom. Venr. Beda qq. in Iudic. c. 4.* Alfo Christs Incarnation without detriment of his mothers virginie, of whose grace al are replenished. *S. Bernard ho. 2. in Miffus est.*