

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 refift. ³ And when Ifrael had sowed, Madian came vp and Amalec, and the rest of the East 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 sheepe, 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 sent 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 houle of feruitude, ⁹ and deliuered you out of the handes of the Ægyptians, and of al the enemies, that afflicted you: and I cast them out at your entring, and deliuered you their Land. ¹⁰ And I said: I the Lord your God, feare not the goddes of the Amorrhaites, in whose land you dwel. And you would not heare my voice.

^a S. Auguſtin (*q. 31. in Iudic.*) fuppofeth that this meſſenger ſent from God called a *man* & a *prophete* (for the forme, wherein he appeared) was the ſame Angel which ſate vnder the oke and ſent Gedeon to deliuer Ifrael. *v. 11. 12. Ec.*

¹¹ And 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 meanest 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 bushel of flowre baked vnleuened loaves: and putting the flesh in a basket, and the broth of the flesh into a potte, 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 vanished from his eies. ²² And Gedeon seeing that it was the Angel of our Lord, said: Alas my Lord God: that I haue seene the Angel of our Lord face to face. ²³ And our Lord said to him: Peace be with thee: feare not, thou shalt not die. ²⁴ And Gedeon built there ^a)an altar to our Lord, and called it, our Lords peace, vntil this present day. And when he was yet in Ephra, which is of the familie of Ezri, ²⁵ that night our Lord said to him: Take a bullocke of thy fathers, and an other bullocke of feuen yeares, and thou shalt deftroy the altar of Baal, which is thy fathers: and cut downe the groue, that is about the altar: ²⁶ and thou shalt build an altar to the Lord thy God in the toppe of this rocke, whereupon thou didst lay the sacrifice before: and thou shalt take the second bullocke, and shalt offer an holocauste vpon a pile of wood, which thou shalt cut downe out of the groue. ²⁷ Gedeon therefore taking to him ten men of his seruantes, did as our Lord had commanded him. But fearing his fathers house, and the men of that citie, he would not doe it by day, but accomplished al thinges by night. ²⁸ And when the men of that towne were risen in the morning, they saw the altar of Baal deftroyed, and the groue cut downe, and the other bullocke laid vpon the altar, which then was built. ²⁹ They said one to an other: Who hath done this? And when they inquired for the author of the fact, it was said: Gedeon the sonne of Ioas did al these thinges. ³⁰ And they said to Ioas: Bring forth thy sonne hither, that he may die: because 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 self, on him that hath rayfed his altar. ³² From that day Gedeon was called ^b)Ierobaal, because Ioas had said: Let Baal reuenge him self on him, that hath rayfed his altar. ³³ Therefore al Madian, and Amalec, and the east

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

^b The strength of Baal, or stronger than 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 houfe of Abiezer, to folow him. ³⁵ And he fent 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 drienes, I shal know that by my hand, as thou haft fpoken, thou wilt deliuer Ifrael. ³⁸ And it came fo to paffe. 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, feeking 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 drienes 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 Chrifts Incarnation without detriment of his mothers virginie, of whose grace al are replenifhed. *S. Bernard ho. 2. in Miffus eft.*