

Turning back to God (Judges 6)

Part 1

Speaker	H. Nunn
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Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:00] Now will you turn with me, please, to the sixth chapter of Judges, the first verse. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years. And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel, and because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them dens, which are in the mountains, and caves, and strongholds.

And so it was, when Israel had sown, that the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the children of the east, even they came up against them, and they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till they'll come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass.

For they came up with their cattle, and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude, for both they and their camels were without number, and they entered into the land to destroy it.

[00:01:08] And Israel were greatly impoverished because of the Midianites, and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, and it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord because of the Midianites, that the Lord sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage, and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drove them out from before you, and gave you their land.

And I said unto you, I am the Lord your God, fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell, but ye have not obeyed my voice.

[00:02:02] And there came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak, which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abbai Ezraite, and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

And Gideon said unto him, O my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us, and where are all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt?

But now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

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?

And he said unto him, O my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? [00:03:05] Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.

And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then show me a sign that they'll talkest with me.

Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until they'll come again.

And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour.

The flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it.

[00:04:02] And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth.

And he did so.

Then the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight. And when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the Lord, Gideon said, Alas, O Lord God, for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face.

And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee, Fear not, thou shalt not die.

Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovah Shalem. Unto this day it is yet in offer of the Abba Ezraites.

[00:05:02] And it came to pass the same night that the Lord said unto him, Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it, and build an altar unto the Lord thy God upon the top of this rock in the ordered place. And take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove, which thou shalt cut down. Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the Lord had said unto him. And so it was, because he feared his father's household and the men of the city, that he could not do it by day, that he did it by night.

But he did it. May the Lord bless to us that reading of his word.

In the day in which we live, in Christian circles, [00:06:03] we hear so much about going forward, don't we? It is, and it appears to me so, that wherever we go, and whoever is speaking concerning the

things of the Lord, they say we want to get on, and we want to go forward.

And yet, as I turn to the scripture, and particularly the scripture I've turned you to tonight, I feel, and I find, that if there's any blessing for the people of God, it's in going backward and not going forward.

If you study that, you look through the Old Testament scripture, and you'll find where the people of God have gone astray from him, that it was that they had to return.

They had to retrace their footsteps, and they were to come back, and then we find that there was abundant blessing for them. We will not be able, will we, to go into the whole of the story concerning this man Gideon tonight, [00:07:01] that this was the beginning of blessing in the coming back, in the turning back to God.

And therefore, I would feel and suggest to you tonight, as I speak concerning this, that the way to go forward is firstly to go backward, and then we will go forward with the Lord.

Now, as we turn to Judges, there's one thing that's very apparent, and we read of it almost at the end of Judges, that in this time there was no king in the land, and everybody did that which was right in their own eyes. And those that would study the scripture would say, well, of course, there wouldn't be a king yet, would there, because that man Saul had not been chosen, had he? And yet, as I turn to the scripture, I would go deeper with regard to that thought. There was no king. There was no king, and as we look into Judges, the thought is concerning the people of Israel at that time. [00:08:01] There was none among them that could help them, that could direct them as there had been previously, because if I look into the book of Numbers and read concerning the children of Israel, there was one outside Israel that knew that they had a king. If I turn to the 24th chapter of Numbers, I find that Balaam said, and the voice of the king is among them.

And at that time we read concerning Midian that they didn't stand a chance when they were coming before the children of Israel. They hadn't an opportunity with regard to them because the shout of the king was among them.

Now let's think of the other part, because I feel that this can be true with regard to us as believers today, and everybody did that which was right in their own eyes.

And immediately we might on reading those words think, yes, and there could be nothing worse [00:09:03] to think of these people doing that which was right in their own eyes. But don't we do that very often today? Isn't it that the word of God that had so great a place with the people of God not so very long ago has not that place today, and in its place we do that which is right in our own eyes.

Not that we go and not that we stoop to things that are degrading and immoral, but what it is that comes into our mind is this, I think that we ought to do this.

I think that this thing ought to be done in that way. Don't you think it would be a wonderful thing if we were able to do this in this way instead of the way that it's been done before, and in that everybody does that which is right in their own eyes. Do they not?

Instead of turning to the scripture, you remember with regard to that wonderful man David, there was a time when he would carry the ark back, [00:10:02] and what a wonderful opportunity he had of

bringing the ark back, and he consulted with his captains.

He hadn't done that before. Before he had resorted to the word of God, and afterwards we see that he went back to that word, but at first he consulted with his captains and how well it would look if they brought the ark back in the new cart.

No, God had never said anything about the new cart. It was that which was right in their own eyes, and as I see David reading after that, he got down to reading the word of God, and he found that none, none but the Levites must carry the ark. Well, why didn't he turn to the word before? And why is it, brethren, that we so often do that which is right in our own eyes, and we don't resort to the word that's there for us? So that in turning to this sixth chapter of Judges tonight, I feel that here is a scripture that has up-to-date teaching for us [00:11:04] because in this day I feel that it can be true of us that we are turning aside to do that which is right in our own eyes. And as I look into this scripture and see the enemy that comes in because of the fact that they had no king, and as I think of them doing that which is right in their own eyes, God allows the enemy to come in.

Now what is the enemy that comes in? The very one that was held back by the king among them in the 24th of Numbers is here, Midian is here in all power.

Now how does Midian come in? If you listened as I was reading concerning Midian, you'd see that they came and they brought their tents, they brought their asses, they brought everything with them, and they'd come to stay.

And not only had they come to stay, it says concerning them that they'd come to destroy.

They'd come to destroy that wonderful heritage that God had given to his people. [00:12:03] They came and it appears that they flooded over the people of God there, and God allows them to.

Now as we look into Judges, there are various enemies that come against the people of God, and as we think of the enemies that now come, the Midianites, it speaks to me of earthly things.

And as I mention that word earthly things, the cares, the necessities, the riches and the pleasures, they've come with us, haven't they? In the past 50 years, I would say with regard to them, the cares, the necessities, the riches and the pleasures, they've come in, haven't they? And it appears to me that when we think of the cares, those things that occupy so much of our time, and we feel that we can't leave these things, all these things, that's the necessities, the things that must be, the education and all that that must be, and the pleasures, and the pleasures, [00:13:03] we cannot leave them out, and as well the riches.

As I think of all these things, it appears to me that they've come in, and they're swamping the people of God, and it appears they've come to destroy the testimony. How sad it is, but as I think of the children of Israel at this time, it was sad for them, and it was not until the end of seven years that they did the right thing. What did they do when they did the right thing? They should, at the beginning of this time when the enemy came, they should have resorted to prayer, they should have got down before the Lord, but at the end of those seven years, when it was that they were so impoverished, the people cried unto the Lord, they cried.

Not as so often, we pray, as we gather together in a light way, I feel that this time they got down, and

as they got down before the Lord, there was that in their heart [00:14:04] that they craved that the Lord would bring back to them the blessing that had been in their life, the blessing that they had known before, when that land was a land flowing with milk and honey to them. They cried for that, and they cried for it, I say. They didn't just mention a prayer, it was that they cried, and as they cried after those seven years, why hadn't they been down before the Lord before about it? And don't you think, brethren, that in this day of departure, it is a day that when we ought to be more before the Lord. We say, yes, well, we have our prayer meetings on Monday evening, yes, and sometimes we don't have the prayer meeting for the gospel now, do we? You know, I think it's sad. I don't know about the gatherings I'm connecting with now, but I think it's sad when I've been about the country and found that there are meetings that are convened for the gospel and there's no prayer for them. But that's beside the point with regard to that which we're reading tonight. [00:15:02] Don't you think that as we gather together for prayer, be it on the Monday evening or be it in our private prayer, it should be that we should prostrate ourselves with regard to the people of the Lord today? Don't we see the necessity to pray? They felt the necessity to pray, and brethren, if they felt the necessity being so impoverished, why should we not feel that necessity today?

What does God do? Does he answer straight away? We see in Hosea the word, isn't it, spoken by the people when they said, well, we'll come back, and in the third day he'll give us a blessing. Not in that way he won't. Oh no, if you look into Hosea, he's not going to bless in that way because he said your goodness is as the passing cloud, as the morning cloud. You come and you begin to speak but there's nothing in your heart. And therefore here, with regard to these people that he would desire to bless, we see that straightway he sends a man, a prophet, unto them [00:16:03] because he must speak to them concerning their departure from him. They could not receive a blessing from his hand apart from them having that heart searching with regard to how they had gone astray. And therefore he sends a man, a prophet, unto them to bring home to them their departure from him.

The prophet speaks to them and shows them that God had always been faithful. God had been faithful in the time that he'd shown them that miraculous recovery out of Egypt. He'd brought them through. He'd led them on in the wilderness. He'd brought them in. He'd given them the land. He had fulfilled his promise but they had not obeyed his voice. How long this word was allowed to sink in we do not know.

But at that time God would choose a man that would be for the bringing back of his people. And as I think of this man, where would he be found?

[00:17:01] I wouldn't say that there were many mighty or noble in Israel at that time because when people have departed from their Lord there's not many mighty or noble among them, is there? But among them we know that there were those particularly that had heard the word of the prophet. Here was a man that we have read of tonight, Gideon, who was one that felt his utter weakness as before his Lord but he's one that had heard the prophet. Not only was he one that had heard the prophet I feel that he was one that was deeply exercised with regard to the word that he'd heard. And as he was exercised with regard to that word we see that God was able to bless such an one. Where do we find him? We find him in Ophrah.

And if you understand the meaning of the word Ophrah I think that word means dust.

Now I don't like to go too far in speaking concerning things like this [00:18:01] but I will say with regard to the man that God would use God uses a man that's down in the dust but he doesn't use a dusty

man. I'm not trying to be trivial about these things. God will not use a dusty man.

God will not use a man that's not a busy man. This man was busy at this time, busy about his own business and as well he was one that was willing and ready to take the lowest place. And there we see him down in the dust and that's the place that the Lord would have his servant to be in all humility defined to be there.

In all humility would he have him before him in that way. Now I only read during the week, I forget in what connection that it was said concerning the servants of the Lord if you desire to see a servant that is doing service for the Lord don't look in a public place but look into a private place look into a hiding place.

[00:19:02] And as I read concerning this man Gideon here it says concerning him that he was thrashing wheat to hide it from the Midianites.

He had a hiding place.

What a wonderful thought to think that this man had a hiding place and as I look into the scripture he was not the only great man that had a hiding place.

As I look into the scripture and as I see one great man come from his hiding place I look upon that wonderful man Elijah that is spoken so much about in the New Testament and he comes out and it's not said where he comes from. We are told where he goes back to. He goes back to a hiding place by the brook Cherith but with regard to him he's a man that comes out of hiding. He's a man that comes out of hiding. As I look into the New Testament and see that man Peter going up on the rooftop to pray on the sixth hour he's a man that comes out of hiding to meet the problem [00:20:03] and meet those men that had come to be with him. He was a man that felt the necessity to prayer. He went on the sixth hour not at the ninth hour which is the ninth hour of prayer.

And as I look at the man here that is brought before us I see a wonderful man in the fact that he's here and has his hiding place and he seeks to hide his portion from the enemy.

Had he a portion?

Now as we think of the poor children of Israel at this time it says that they were impoverished and the children of the east the Amalekites and the Midianites came up and took all the crops from them but not from this man.

The man that God is going to use is not an impoverished man. He'll never use an impoverished man. Here he was using one and would use one who knew something of the finest of the wheat. He wasn't going to eat barley. We know that the barley was for the common people [00:21:01] and the slave for the animal. But he would have here the finest of the wheat. He was threshing out wheat to hide it from the people that were around about to hide it from his enemies. He had a portion.

And we must remember and we must also understand that in a day of departure, however grave the departure is and however great the enemy works in that day the one that is faithful to God always does have a portion.

Let us remember that because as we look into that book that follows this in the book of Ruth you see that those that depart from the land depart from their inheritance. There are those that are left and one that was left was a mighty man of wealth. Didn't he have a portion in his inheritance? He had it. Why? Because of the fact that in a day of departure it was not in his heart to depart. There he would remain faithful.

[00:22:02] And isn't that an interest and an encouragement in this day of departure to us to know that God will always give a portion to us.

We may be failing but if we are among those that are before him in faithfulness we shall have our portion.

What happens here?

It says concerning the angel of the Lord he visits this place and I would feel that as I see the angel of the Lord coming and sitting under the oak there in Ophrah I would feel that this is the place that he can rest in Israel at this time.

And would I say that this is the only place that he can rest? Because here just in this place there was one that feels there's one that feels with regard to his portion this is precious to me. I must have it and I will have it and I'll hide it, I'll keep it. And therefore it is that the angel of the Lord comes [00:23:02] and he sits under the oak in Ophrah and as I think of the angel of the Lord sitting under that oak and as I think of that oak that speaks to me as a countryman of that tree that endures I look upon this picture in this way.

There are the people of God in their departure from him but the mercy of the Lord endureth forever and therefore as I think of him coming as I think of the angel coming at this time he shows that that mercy is still enduring that grace and mercy is still toward the people. As I think of the angel I would realise that the scripture says that the angels excel in strength and there's going to be power at the disposal of this man and as the angel looks upon this man the Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

I want you to think of that firstly the first part of that word that he speaks [00:24:01] the Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour and as I think of the Lord being with a person he may have many, many failures but if the Lord is with him there is nothing that can stand against him. He can stand and all the might can be arrayed against him but the Lord's with him and nothing can harm him.

Do you remember the words concerning Joseph? The Lord was with him, the Lord was with him and I remember years and years ago reading concerning one of those rather quaint versions of the Bible either the Breaches Bible or the Treacle Bible and in that Bible there's a little side note that says the Lord was with Joseph and he was a lucky fellow we wouldn't say that today would we? but there it is, in that version it shows what they felt concerning this man the Lord was with Joseph, could he be kept down?

We read concerning him that he went down into the dungeon [00:25:04] he was taken out of the dungeon and he maintained that highest position because the Lord was with him As I think also of that man Elijah spoken of previously, I think of him and he says as the Lord liveth before whom I stand who were round about him at that time? All the great ones, all the mighty ones in Israel were

round him and they were against him at that time but they had no power at all against him because the Lord was with him and now the Lord speaks to this man here and says the Lord is with thee the almighty man of valour I like to think of the answer that this man gives because it shows me his character we see little of his character previous to this but now as I look into his character I see him saying these wonderful words Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us [00:26:01] Now why did he say that?

Why was it that he did not say well I know that the Lord is with me after all I understand that in this day of departure there are so many departed from thee but I do trust that my garments have been kept clean did he say that?

Here was a man that said in reply to the angel if the Lord be with us be with us I look at that and as I look at that remark by this man it shows me something of the character of this man and in the fact that it teaches me he's a man that has a care for the people of God they may be departed from their God at this time they may be doing things that are contrary to what he would desire he himself would desire but he has a care for those people of God that have gone astray if the Lord be with us with us Brethren, as we think of these words [00:27:01] spoken by this man so long ago do we speak like that concerning our own brethren? Is it us?

Or can it be me?

I? Can it be that we think of our position as before the Lord and look around to our brethren? I trust that it's not so I trust that with regard to each one of us that are here tonight that form part of this assembly and perhaps others that we have a care for the people of God because that's another tray of the one that the Lord would use he uses nobody that has not a care for the people of God as I think of New Testament teaching I read with regard to that wonderful man Paul he sends forth Timothy a man that he says he knew no other like-minded that would naturally care for their state he had a care for them and in this day when perhaps there are those that go astray and we fret [00:28:01] we do fret at times when we see the things that are done by believers and there are times when perhaps we get a little out of patience with them let's have a care for them let's be in the position of this man and say if the Lord be with us but then he says where are all his miracles that our fathers told us of? you know as our fathers have spoken to us they have spoken to us concerning that wonderful redemption that he accomplished bringing us out of Egypt what a wonderful work it is but now the Lord has forsaken us and don't you think that it is a good thing when we are able to look back and look on happier days I know that I'm getting older now and perhaps there are a number that are older as I am now and we look back perhaps on happier days in the assembly life than we have today it is well that we do look back [00:29:01] and cherish the days that have been before us and as we think of those days it shows that we have a care for what happens today but he says but now the Lord has forsaken us and the Lord looked upon him you know I think it's wonderful to think that the Lord looked upon him at that time because the Lord looked upon him at that time he looked upon one who was filled with humility and one who also at that moment had a care for the people of God he felt his weakness and yet the Lord looks upon him and says go in this thy might have not I sent thee who felt like going against the enemy at that time was it this man this man did not feel like going against the enemy at this time and yet the Lord had said to him go in this thy might what did the Lord mean by those words that he speaks [00:30:01] don't you think that as we read these words tonight we will realise concerning them that there were those things with regard to the character of this man that made him suitable to go forth in might and those things were that firstly he did have a care for the people of God and then the Lord was with him the word of the Lord was for him and the Lord had said to him go and if the Lord tells you to go however weak and however failing you feel yourselves

you can go because he sent you do not we read those words at the end of the 17th chapter of the gospel of John he sends them we see firstly in that scripture he says I'm no more in the world he's now departing and then he commissions his disciples and the last word that they hear concerning this commission is as thou hast sent me even so send I them and if we know that the Lord has sent us then it is [00:31:01] that we can go in this our might and yet this man in all his weakness says oh my Lord if this is so and if thou hast appeared to me pass not away until I bring my present and as I look upon this man in his weakness I would realise also that this was a man that had intelligence because of the very fact that he knew that which was suitable to his Lord and he was able to give it and I would as an aside say that with regard to him he was going to be one that would serve in a wonderful way and yet before that service he'd be in the position of giving he'd be in the position as one that would worship offer that that speaks of Christ and I would suggest tonight with regard to those of us that would do any service for the Lord don't you think that all our service should flow from our worship from the very fact that when we gather to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ [00:32:01] on Lord's Day morning we gather we remember him in death our hearts are prostrate before him because of the wonderful stoop he's taken because of our sin and when our hearts are touched with love that prompting is of love and then and not till then are we in a position to go out in service it's not ought I not to take a Sunday school class I'm able to yes but the heart must be touched first and every service that's done for the Lord is done because of the promptings of my love for him he'll give the word and he'll give those promptings if my heart is in the right way and therefore he brings his present he brings a kid of the goats and also he brings that meal offering does he not of an ether of fine flour he is a man that's not impoverished as I think of him offering these wonderful things how greater fullness he has received of the Lord [00:33:01] because of the fact in this great departure he has remembered to walk faithful to his God he gives the kid of the goats reminding me to a great extent concerning the person of our Lord Jesus Christ a kid of the goats the goat always speaks to me of the energy and the vigor that we see portrayed in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the whole of his pathway from the very beginning we hear wish ye not that I must be about my Father's business right till that last week before the cross when we see that week so full of those deeds and those words for the people that were around about him he was full of vigor and full of energy we see that he gives that ether a cake made with an ether a fine flour and that speaks to me of the purity and the perfection of the Lord Jesus Christ that fine that sieve flour [00:34:01] everything concerning that which this man Gideon would offer would be that which would pass through the sieve and would be in that way perfect and how it was in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ in his pathway here was it not that every step was tested and every step we find that wonderful perfection coming out and yet let us look at it in another way we see him presenting that kid that speaks of Christ we see him also presenting those cakes those unleavened cakes that meal offering that must be made at home and as I think of him presenting that which is prepared at home you know if we come together on Lord's Day morning and if we would open our lips in praise and worship to himself it must be on account of the very fact that during the week we have lived on and meditated much upon [00:35:01] the person and the work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and yet as I think of the offering that he offers here of those cakes of unleavened bread it speaks to me of separation does it not as I think of leaven leaven inflates and corrupts it speaks to me of sin and self and as I think of those things in ourselves as we would offer to the Lord it must be that we are separated from that which is in this world at this moment so he brings his offering and the angel tells him to place it upon this rock and that rock also speaks of Christ and as the angel touches it with his staff everything goes up because everything is accepted everything that is there speaks to me of the Lord Jesus Christ in one way or another and everything is taken up everything is accepted and then after this we look upon this man [00:36:01] and he says alas oh Lord as the angel departs alas oh Lord for I have seen an angel of the Lord I'll die I wonder why this was and I wonder why it is that it's brought in here there's one thought that has come to me during the

past few hours and as I see the Lord speaking to him he says peace be unto you thou shalt not die and as I think of the Lord Jesus Christ at the end of his pathway here speaking to his own in the 14th chapter of Luke what does he say?

Peace I leave with you my peace I give unto you and when I read the words that Paul says in the Philippians he says and the peace that passeth all understanding shall fill your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus and I feel that in this there's something that we can learn if the servant is going forth and if he is going to be that [00:37:02] which is suitable to his Lord as he goes forth there must be in him that peace and serenity that was found in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ in the face of the opposition that was his in his pathway my peace I give unto you and the peace that passeth all understanding shall fill your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus so that as we go forth as servants of the Lord it is not that we are easily irritated or easily worried about the things that are around about but our mind and heart is relaxed and therefore we are able by the Spirit because he gives the word to be able to present it in such a way that it's blessed so he said thou shalt not die thou shalt not die in other words we read with regard to Gideon that he built an altar there and that altar was called Jehovah Shalom [00:38:01] the Lord send peace now I think he's got to the end of himself now during these words that he had spoken it appears that he was so occupied with his weakness and I think to an extent we've got to be very careful about our weakness we've to realise that we are down in the dust we've to realise that we can do nothing at all but don't like let's be like Moses we were reading my wife and myself about Moses last night when he said I can't do this and I can't do that here it is just at this moment as this man gets to an end of self he builds the altar and calls it Jehovah Shalom the Lord send peace if there is peace to come to this people it must come from the Lord and if you go forth in the service of the Lord if there's going to be any blessing by that service it's not going to be through your weakness through your power [00:39:01] it's going to be alone through what the Lord will give and therefore we see that that night the Lord comes to him that night why does he come that night? as we look into the scripture so often we see that the Lord speaks at night he did speak at night to Solomon didn't he? he did speak at night to the apostle Paul on one occasion why does he speak on those occasions? and why is it that sometimes in the waking moments when we are in bed that the Lord is able to speak don't you think that then our mind is cleared of earthly and worldly things our mind is cleared of the business that we had during the day and now he has the opportunity to speak and he says to Gideon at this moment during the night now that's the work to do and you're to go home and do it he might have said concerning this work the one thing that I want to do [00:40:01] now you've told me to I want to go out and get rid of the Midianites in the land I want to rid the land of them no Gideon you're to go home that's the place you're to begin to work and as you go home you're to take your father's second bullock you're to cut down the groves you're to build an altar and you're to take that bullock and put it on that altar firstly break down tear down that altar that's in your father's house and cut down that asherah that grove and then it is that you'll be able to build now in closing as we read these words this man before he was to build up he was to cut down there were those things that had been allowed among the people of God that were to be taken away first Gideon's name means cut her down and if there was one thing that he was to do he was to see that Baal was to be out of the land, he was to see [00:41:01] that with regard to that which was happening it was to be cut down and don't you think that in this day in which we live there are so many things that we have to examine in our home and in our life and perhaps in our business as we think of these things and as afterwards we would think of the wonderful victories that God gave through this man Gideon we might say today oh if only we had a Gideon today we don't need Gideon today but we've got Gideon's God and we've got the power of the Spirit of God to work through us and it is for us in this last day in this very near day to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to realise that if we are prostrate in the dust before him and if we as those people of old would cry, really cry to him and come back to him then it is we'd hear

his word saying to us go in this thy might and what a wonderful blessing there would be just before the coming of the Lord