

The Lowly Chosen Twentieth Week in Ordinary Time Tuesday, August 22, 2017 8:15 AM
Jgs 6:11-24a; Mt 19:23-30 The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary
(Throughout history when something really important happens, it's the weakest, the youngest, the least significant that does this.)

“It is I who send you.”

Well who is “I”? This is from the Book of Judges and the story of Gideon and the appearance of an angel. But what's very interesting about the story is, and it's very hard to follow because of the tendency to take the name of God, “Yahweh,” which does appear at the very end in the name of the place, Yahweh-shalom, but **the tendency is to take the name Yahweh and to replace the term “Lord.”** Lord in Hebrew is *Adoni*, but it's used for, well, a gentleman, a captain, a master, a messenger. Anyone of some importance is called “Lord.” So when this word is used to replace the name of God, in this case in particular, it causes quite a bit of ambiguity. What the story actually says is an angel appeared; **Gideon saw this angel that appeared as a man, whom he addressed with this title “Lord” or “Sir.”** But then it was not the angel who spoke. **It was Yahweh who spoke.** That's what the story says. So **Yahweh, God, speaks through the appearance of an angel, who looks like a man.** Toward the end of the story after the offering **the angel disappears, but Yahweh still speaks. So Yahweh can speak directly or indirectly.**

Now this story is important because it brings up **certain themes that are repeated throughout the history of Israel.** For one, Gideon is of the meanest of families; that means smallest, so therefore Gideon does not expect anything of himself. Now going back to the choice of Israel itself, it says in various places that God chose Israel because it was insignificant. In other words, **God chooses the insignificant and uses the insignificant to do his will,** which goes way beyond what they could understand or comprehend. David was the youngest of the brothers; he was chosen. And **throughout history when something really important happens, it's the**

weakest, the youngest, the least significant that does this. Partly this is why the gospel says, **“How hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven,”** because the rich are usually not insignificant. They are powerful people. They are successful people, often quite proud of themselves. That’s not the qualities God looks for in people.

Now **“with God all things are possible,”** but the point is what is most normative? What is most normative is that **God works through the poor and the lowly. The Blessed Mother** herself is an example of this; from the anawim, the landless peasant class, she is called on to be the Mother of God. So this theme goes throughout Scripture. It’s repeated over and over again. I think you could see this also in time past the time of Scripture in history. **Is it not those one would never expect that does something remarkable for God?** Again, proving as God told St. Paul, **“In weakness my strength is sufficient.”**