

### ~OPHRAH 3 (186)

(Oph'rah) [2,3, possibly, Place of Dust]

- The home of Gideon and the place where Yehowah's angel commissioned him to save Israel out of Midian's palm.
- Later Yehowah's angel came and sat under the big tree that was in **Ophrah**, which belonged to Joash the Abi-ezrite, while Gideon his son was beating out wheat in the winepress so as to get it quickly out of the sight of Midian. (**Judges 6:11**)
- Then Yehowah's angel appeared to him and said to him, Yehowah is with you, you valiant, mighty one. (**Judges 6:12**)
- At this Gideon said to him; Excuse me, my lord, but if Yehowah is with us, then why has all this come upon us, and where are all his wonderful acts that our fathers related to us, saying; Was it not out of Egypt that Yehowah brought us up? And now Yehowah has deserted us, and he gives us into the palm of Midian. (**Judges 6:13**)
- Upon that Yehowah faced him and said; Go in this power of yours, and you will certainly save Israel out of Midian's palm. Do I not send you? (**Judges 6:14**)
- In turn he said to him; Excuse me, Yehowah. With what shall I save Israel? Look! My thousand is the least in Manasseh, and I am the smallest in my father's house. (**Judges 6:15**)
- But Yehowah said to him; Because I shall prove to be with you, and you will certainly strike down Midian as if one man. (**Judges 6:16**)
- At this he said to him; If, now, I have found favor in your eyes, you must also perform a sign for me that you are the one speaking with me. (**Judges 6:17**)
- Do not, please, move away from here until I come to you and I have brought out my gift and set it before you. Accordingly he said, I, for my part, shall keep sitting here until you return. (**Judges 6:18**)

- **And Gideon went in and proceeded to make ready a kid of the goats and an ephah of flour as unfermented cakes. The meat he put in the basket, and the broth he put in the cooking pot, after which he brought it out to him under the big tree and served it. (Judges 6:19)**
- **The angel of the true God now said to him; Take the meat and the unfermented cakes and set them on the big rock there, and pour out the broth. At that he did so. (Judges 6:20)**
- **Then Yehowah's angel thrust out the tip of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unfermented cakes, and fire began to ascend out of the rock and to consume the meat and the unfermented cakes. As for Yehowah's angel, he vanished from his sight. (Judges 6:21)**
- **Consequently Gideon realized that it was Yehowah's angel. At once Gideon said; Alas, Sovereign Lord Yehowah, for the reason that I have seen Yehowah's angel face to face! (Judges 6:22)**
- **But Yehowah said to him; Peace be yours. Do not fear. You will not die. (Judges 6:23)**
- **So Gideon built an altar there to Yehowah, and it continues to be called Yehowah-shalom down to this day. It is yet in **Ophrah** of the Abi-ezrites. (Judges 6:24)**
- **And it came about during that night that Yehowah went on to say to him; Take the young bull, the bull that belongs to your father, that is, the second young bull of seven years, and you must tear down the altar of Baal that is your father's, and the sacred pole that is by it you should cut down. (Judges 6:25)**
- **And you must build an altar to Yehowah your God at the head of this stronghold, with the row of stones, and you must take the second young bull and offer it up as a burnt offering on the pieces of wood of the sacred pole that you will cut down. (Judges 6:26)**
- **Accordingly Gideon took ten men of his servants and went doing just as Yehowah had spoken to him, but it came about that, as he feared the household of his father and the men of the city too much to do it by day, he went doing it by night. (Judges 6:27)**

- **When the men of the city got up early in the morning as usual, why, look! the altar of Baal had been pulled down and the sacred pole that was beside it had been cut down, and the second young bull had been offered up on the altar that had been built. (Judges 6:28)**
- **And they began to say one to another; Who has done this thing? And they went inquiring and seeking. Finally they said; Gideon the son of Joash is the one that has done this thing. (Judges 6:29)**
- **So the men of the city said to Joash; Bring your son out that he may die, because he has pulled down the altar of Baal, and because he has cut down the sacred pole that was by it. (Judges 6:30)**
- **At this Joash said to all those who stood against him; Will you be the ones to make a legal defense for Baal to see whether you yourselves may save him? Whoever makes a legal defense for him ought to be put to death even this morning. If he is God, let him make a legal defense for himself, because someone has pulled down his altar. (Judges 6:31)**
- **And he began to call him Jerubbaal on that day, saying; Let Baal make a legal defense in his own behalf, because someone has pulled down his altar. (Judges 6:32)**
- **After his victory over the enemy forces, Gideon made an ephod from the contributed spoils and exhibited it at Ophrah. Subsequently this ephod became an object of idolatrous veneration.**
- **And Gideon went on to say to them; Let me make a request of you; Give me, each one of you, the nose ring of his booty. For they had nose rings of gold, because they were Ishmaelites. (Judges 8:24)**
- **Then they said; We shall surely give them. With that they spread out a mantle and went throwing each one the nose ring of his booty into it. (Judges 8:25)**
- **And the weight of the nose rings of gold that he had requested amounted to one thousand seven hundred gold shekels, besides the moon-shaped ornaments and the eardrops and the garments of wool dyed reddish purple that were upon the kings of Midian**

- and besides the necklaces that were on the necks of the camels. **(Judges 8:26)**
- And Gideon proceeded to make it into an ephod and to exhibit it in his city **Ophrah**, and all Israel began to have immoral intercourse with it there, so that it served as a snare to Gideon and to his household. **(Judges 8:27)**
  - Later, after Gideon's death and burial at **Ophrah**, his ambitious son Abimelech killed his brothers seventy men, upon one stone, but Jotham the youngest was left over.
  - Eventually Gideon the son of Joash died at a good old age and was buried in the burial place of Joash his father in **Ophrah** of the Abi-ezrites. **(Judges 8:32)**
  - After that he went to the house of his father at **Ophrah** and killed his brothers, the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, upon one stone, but Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left over, because he had hid. **(Judges 9:5)**
  - Not counting Abimelech, Gideon had 70 sons.
  - And Gideon came to have seventy sons that issued out of his upper thigh, for he came to have many wives. **(Judges 8:30)**
  - As for the concubine of his that was in Shechem, she too bore him a son. So he named him Abimelech. **(Judges 8:31)**
  - Therefore, since Jotham escaped the slaughter, apparently Abimelech killed only 69 sons at **Ophrah**. Jotham's later words concerning the incident merely appear to point to Abimelech's intention to kill all 70 sons.
  - And you, for your part, have risen up against the household of my father today that you might kill his sons, seventy men, upon one stone, and that you might make Abimelech, the son of his slave girl, king over the landowners of Shechem just because he is your own brother. **(Judges 9:18)**
  - However, as a Jewish commentary fittingly observes: **It is still correct to speak in round numbers of seventy slain.** [Soncino Books of the Bible, edited by A. Cohen, London, 1950 (Joshua and Judges, p. 234)]

- This **Ophrah** apparently lay West of the Jordan. It is tentatively identified with **el-`Affuleh**, **`Afula**, about 45 kilometers (28 miles) North of Shechem.