

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Author of Judges: The author of **The Book of Judges** is not mentioned here. According to ancient Jewish tradition the author was Samuel the Prophet, who lived at the times of Saul and David around the year 1100 BC.

1 Samuel 10:25

²⁵ Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, **and wrote it in a book**, and laid it up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

The Book of Judges was written after the deaths of **Moses** and **Joshua** and ends before Samuel, Saul & David.

Judges 1:1

1 Now after the death of **Joshua** it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?

The Book of Judges: This book takes its name from the men and woman raised up to deliver Israel in the declension and disunion which followed the death of Joshua. Through these Judges Jehovah continued His personal government of Israel.

The events recorded in **Judges** cover a period of around 305 years, 1425 B.C-1120 B.C (Ussher's Chronology). The Ussher Chronology is a 17th-century chronology of the history of the world formulated from a literal reading of the Old Testament by James Ussher, the Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland.

The Book of Judges: 21 Chapters, 618 Verses, 18,976 Words.

The Book of Judges: The 7th Book in the Bible.

Theme/Overview/Insight:

The reason why it's called **Judges**: The LORD sends Judges to Israel because they have no King. The last verse in Judges comments on this:

Judges 21:25

²⁵ In those days there was **no king in Israel**: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Because there was no King and "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" there was Anarchy and Israel lived in Anarchy and God would send a Judge to lead Israel.

The Book of Judges teaches one Great Truth:

The Principle of Human Collapse: That Man left to himself will bomb and fail... The true nature of man left to himself without God is not nobility but savagery.

The Book of Judges teaches two Great Biblical Truth:

1. Without God, man is hopeless.

Throughout The Book of Judges, man fails and God lifts him up,

Again, Man fails and God lifts him up, Again, Man fails and God lifts him up...

This Principle is throughout The Bible.

And we can apply this today in our lives, that we fail and God lifts us up, Amen!

2. The Longsuffering of God towards His people.

Psalm 86:15

¹⁵But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.

Again, Man fails and God lifts him up, Again, Man fails and God lifts him up, and has patience and is Longsuffering towards us...

This Principle is throughout The Bible.

And we can apply this today in our lives, that we fail and God lifts us up and is longsuffering towards us, Amen!

Practical Application: Disobedience always brings judgment. The Israelites present a perfect example of what we are not to do. Instead of learning from experience that God will always punish rebellion against Him, they continued to disobey and suffer God's displeasure and discipline. If we continue in disobedience, we invite God's discipline, not because He enjoys our suffering, but "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Hebrews 12:6).

Key Verses:

Judges 2:18-19

¹⁸And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

¹⁹And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

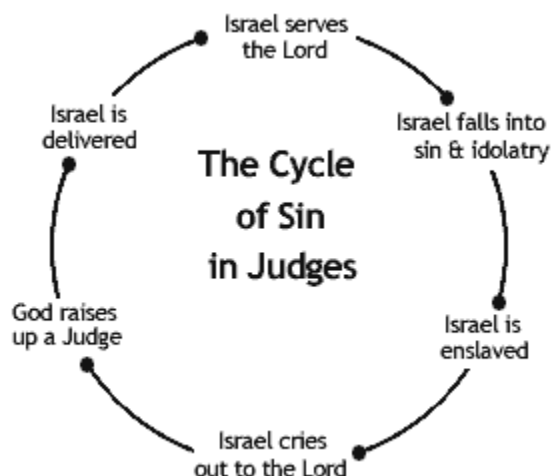
Judges 3:7

⁷And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves.

Judges 10:15

¹⁵And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.

Judges shows the failure of Israel to conquer their enemies, claim their inheritance, and the huge effect that this had on their life and relationship with God. Throughout this entire Book, we see a repeated cycle, one that we will call ‘**The cycle of sin**’.



Purpose of Writing

After Joshua's death the failure of Israel was more and more visible in:

- not obeying the commandments of God,
- not exterminating the Canaanites,
- and the increasing apostasy from Jehovah by even adopting the idol worship of the Canaanites.

Overview of Judges

Judges is the account of how Israel behaves between the death of Joshua and the leadership of a king. Instead of remaining loyal to God and following His laws, this generation of Israelites wanders in their faith, worships idols, indulges in violence, and generally becomes just like the other nations around them. (Which is a problem, as Israel was supposed to represent God to the other nations.)

Judges presents various examples of how God deals with His people during this time period. The stories of Judges follow a pattern:

1. Israel turns from God and serves idols.
2. God turns Israel over to the oppressive surrounding nations.
3. Israel turns to God and cries out for help.
4. God raises up a judge to deliver them.

Israel rebels, God disciplines; Israel repents, God delivers.

The Book of Judges mentions twelve leaders who judged Israel: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, and Samson. The First Book of Samuel mentions Eli and Samuel, as well as Joel and Abiah (two sons of Samuel). The First Book of

Chronicles mentions Kenaniah and his sons. The Second Book of Chronicles mentions Amariah and Zebadiah (son of Ishmael).

Probably the most notable judge was the 12th judge, **Samson**, who came to lead the Israelites after a 40-year captivity under the rule of the ruthless Philistines. Samson led God's people to victory over the Philistines where he lost his own life after 20 years as judge of Israel.

The last five chapters (17-21) occur chronologically sometime during the first chapter. I suggest you read them between chapters one and two so that the story of Samson and Delilah is the last thing you read.

The period of **Judges** is a dark era in Israel's history. This book shows how persistent Israel is in forgetting the Lord, and how faithful God is to discipline and deliver His people.

Quick Outline of Judges

1. Spiritual and political snapshot of Israel's disobedience (Judges 1:1–3:6)
2. Stories of the judges (Judges 3:7–16:31)
 - Othniel (Judges 3:7–11)
 - Ehud (Judges 3:12–30)
 - Shamgar (Judges 3:31)
 - Deborah and Barak (Judges 4–5)
 - Gideon (Judges 6–10)
 - Tola (Judges 10:1–2)
 - Jair (Judges 10:3–5)
 - Jephthah (Judges 10:6–12:7)
 - Izban (Judges 12:8–10)
 - Elon (Judges 12:11–12)
 - Abdon (Judges 12:13–15)
 - Samson (Judges 13–16)
3. Additions describing Israel's depravity (Judges 17–21)
 - Dan's rejection of their inheritance and the Levitical priesthood (Judges 17–18)
 - Benjamin's civil war against the other tribes (Judges 19–21)

The Book of Judges includes several interesting genres; Poetry, Riddles, a Song and mainly a Narrative History of Israel.

Types and Shadows:

- In Judges Jesus is the great judge and deliverer of His people
- The announcement to Samson's mother that she would bear a son to lead Israel is a foreshadowing of the announcement to Mary of the birth of the Messiah. God sent His Angel to both women and told them they would "conceive and bear a son" (Judges 13:7; Luke 1:31) who would lead God's people.

The Writer of Hebrews references several characters from **Judges**: Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah as examples of Old-Testament characters who gained approval through faith.

The Book of Judges opens with a snapshot of the political and spiritual landscape:

- The land is not fully possessed yet, as Israel does not drive out a few “pockets” of the people they were told to eliminate.
- The military and spiritual leader Joshua is dead.
- The people begin worshiping false gods (introduced by the Canaanites living among them).

Chapter One Outline: After the death of Joshua, Israel seeks the Lord, verses 1-2. Judah (with the tribe of Simeon) defeats Bezek and their king, verses 3-7. Judah’s victories in the southern part of the land given to Israel, verses 8-20. Incomplete victory and defeat, The tribe of Benjamin does not take possession of Jerusalem, verse 21. The house of Joseph conquers the city of Bethel, verses 22-26. Manasseh and Ephraim fail to drive out all the Canaanites, 27-29. The tribe of Zebulun compromises and accommodates the Canaanites, putting them under tribute, verse 30. The tribe of Asher fails in taking full possession of their land, verses 31-32. The tribe of Naphtali compromises and accommodates the Canaanites, putting them under tribute, verse 33. The tribe of Dan fails in taking full possession of their land, verses 34-36.

After the death of Joshua, Israel seeks the Lord, verses 1-2:

Judges 1, Verse 1

1 Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?

Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass... During this period of the Judges (lasting some 300 plus years), there was no standing “office” of national leadership. Israel had no Military Leader, no King, no President, and no Prime Minister on earth – only God in heaven. Yet at the necessary and appropriate times God brought forth a leader for the nation. For the most part these leaders would rise up, do his (or her) job, and then return to their obscurity. This required that the people of Israel maintain a real, abiding trust in God.

These national deliverers were not elected and they didn’t come to leadership through royal succession. They were specially gifted by God for leadership in their times, and the people of God recognized and respected that gifting.

When this Book uses the term **Judge**, it doesn’t mean someone who sits in a court and decides legal issues; the Hebrew word shaphat has more the idea of a heroic leader. The persons called Judges, שופטים Shophetim, from שפט, shaphat, to judge, discern regulate, and direct, were the heads or chiefs of the Israelites.

that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?... At the end of the book of Joshua, we saw the death of Joshua when he was 110 years old. “**asked the LORD**” is speaking of taking counsel from the LORD. This was a very sensible thing for them to do, and would also be an intelligent thing for us to do as well. We should never enter into any major decision without first consulting God. Joshua had been their leader, and now that he is gone they need someone to lead them in battle.

Verse 2

² And the LORD said, Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.

Judah shall go up... Judah received God's first go-ahead to push for a more thorough conquest of its territory. The reason probably lay in God's choice that Judah be the leader among the tribes (Genesis 49:8-12; 1 Chronicles 5:1-2) and set the example for them in the other territories.

God directed that the tribe of Judah – the tribe that the Messiah would come from – should lead the way in this fight. Judah was also the largest and strongest tribe. In this case, God's plan made obvious military sense as well.

We remember that The Children of Israel had not completely driven out the Canaanites at this time. Moses (the lawgiver) had been followed by Joshua (the great soldier). He is now replaced by Judah. Each time one leader is replaced by another, his way of leading is different because his personality is different. Remember, it is the LORD who put him in charge.

Judah (with the tribe of Simeon) defeats Bezek and their king, verses 3-7:

Verse 3

³ And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him.

The leaders of the tribe of Judah acted wisely here. By partnering with another tribe, the work was much easier. Here, the tribes functioned in the same way that God wants the church to function – as a body, with each part of the body helping out other parts of the body.

The tribes of Judah and Simeon were blood-brothers (Genesis 29:33-35) and are uniformly depicted as acting in the closest relationship.

Verse 4

⁴ And Judah went up; and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they slew of them in Bezek ten thousand men.

Seeking the Lord, obeying His guidance, and working together as a body always produces great results! Their success was plain to see: the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hands.

This place where the conquered was called **Bezek** and the leader of this city was **Adoni-Bezek**, which means "Lord of Lightning." This was an enemy with a fearful name, but Judah and Simeon defeated him none the less.

Verse 5

⁵ And they found Adonibezek in Bezek: and they fought against him, and they slew the Canaanites and the Perizzites.

The Perizzites and Canaanites were actually living in the land where Judah's inheritance was. They found Adonibezek in Bezek, where he tries to escape, but...

Verse 6

⁶ But Adonibezek fled; and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes.

and cut off his thumbs and his great toes... That he might never be able to draw his bow or handle his sword, and great toes, that he might never be able to pursue or escape from an adversary.

The punishment made Adoni-Bezek worthless as a warrior; he could trouble Israel no more as a military man.



Verse 7

⁷ And Adonibezek said, Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

Their punishment of Adoni-Bezek may seem cruel, yet we see that it was simply justice in its truest sense. He had done this same thing to seventy kings; so now he had his own toes and fingers cut off.

and they brought him to Jerusalem... To that part of Jerusalem which belonged to the tribe of Judah; see Joshua 15:8; here they brought him alive, and dying, buried him, as Josephus says; which might be their view in carrying him thither, perceiving he was a dying man; or they had him thither to expose him as a trophy of victory, and as an example of divine justice:

and there he died: whether through grief and vexation, or of the wounds he had received, or by the immediate hand of God, or by the hands of the Israelites.

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Judah's victories in the southern part of the land given to Israel, verses 8-20:

Judges 1, Verse 8

^a Now the children of Judah had fought against Jerusalem, and had taken it, and smitten it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire.

Here it is recorded that the city of Jerusalem fell to Judah. It was occupied for a time (Adoni-Bezek was taken there and died there), but later fell back to the Jebusites (see Judges 1:21). Under the leadership of King David Israel conquered the city again some 400 years later (2 Samuel 5:6-10).

The city of Jerusalem is one of the oldest cities in the world, having been occupied almost continually for a period of 5,000 years.

From:  **Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs:**

With the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Jerusalem became once more the capital of a sovereign Jewish state. Throughout the millennia of its existence, Jerusalem has never been the capital of any other sovereign nation.

Jerusalem has stood at the center of the Jewish people's national and spiritual life since King David made it the capital of his kingdom in 1003 BCE. The city remained the capital of the Davidic dynasty for 400 years, until the kingdom was conquered by the Babylonians. Following the return from the Babylonian exile in 538 BCE, Jerusalem again served as the capital of the Jewish people in its land for the next five and a half centuries.

The Christian link with Jerusalem is essentially a religious one. Except for the short-lived Crusader kingdom, it has not assumed political or secular connotations. During the six centuries of Roman and Byzantine rule, Caesarea, not Jerusalem, was the capital.

During Muslim rule over the city, whether Arab or non-Arab, Jerusalem was never made the political capital of a Muslim entity or even a province within the Muslim empire. Under Muslim Arab rule (638 - 1099) by the Umayyad, the Abbasid and the Fatamid caliphs, Jerusalem was ruled from Damascus, Baghdad and Cairo respectively. In the eighth century, the city of Ramia was made the capital of the district which embraced Jerusalem.

During the period of Mamluk rule (1250- 1516), the Land was ruled from Damascus; in Ottoman times(1517 - 1917), from Constantinople.

Under British rule (1922-1948), Jerusalem was the seat of the High Commissioner and most administrative offices of the Mandate, as well as of the central institutions of the growing Jewish community.

From 1948 to 1967, Jerusalem was a city divided as a result of a war thrust upon her. For nineteen years, concrete walls and barbed wire sealed off one part of the city from the other. Its eastern section, including the Old City, was annexed by Jordan, and ruled from its capital, Amman. The western sector of Jerusalem became Israel's capital.

Following another war in June 1967, Jerusalem was reunited. The barriers dividing the city were demolished, the gates of the Old City were opened to people of all faiths, and the eastern sector was reintegrated into the nation's capital.

In July 1980 the Knesset passed the Basic Law - Jerusalem, which restated Israel's rights and obligations concerning the capital. The Law affirmed that the holy places of all religions be protected from desecration, free access to them be guaranteed, and the Government provide for the development and the prosperity of the city and the well-being of its inhabitants.

From Pastor Hank: On December 6, 2017, US President Donald Trump announced the United States recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

Verse 9, The continuation of Israel driving those out of The Promised Land:

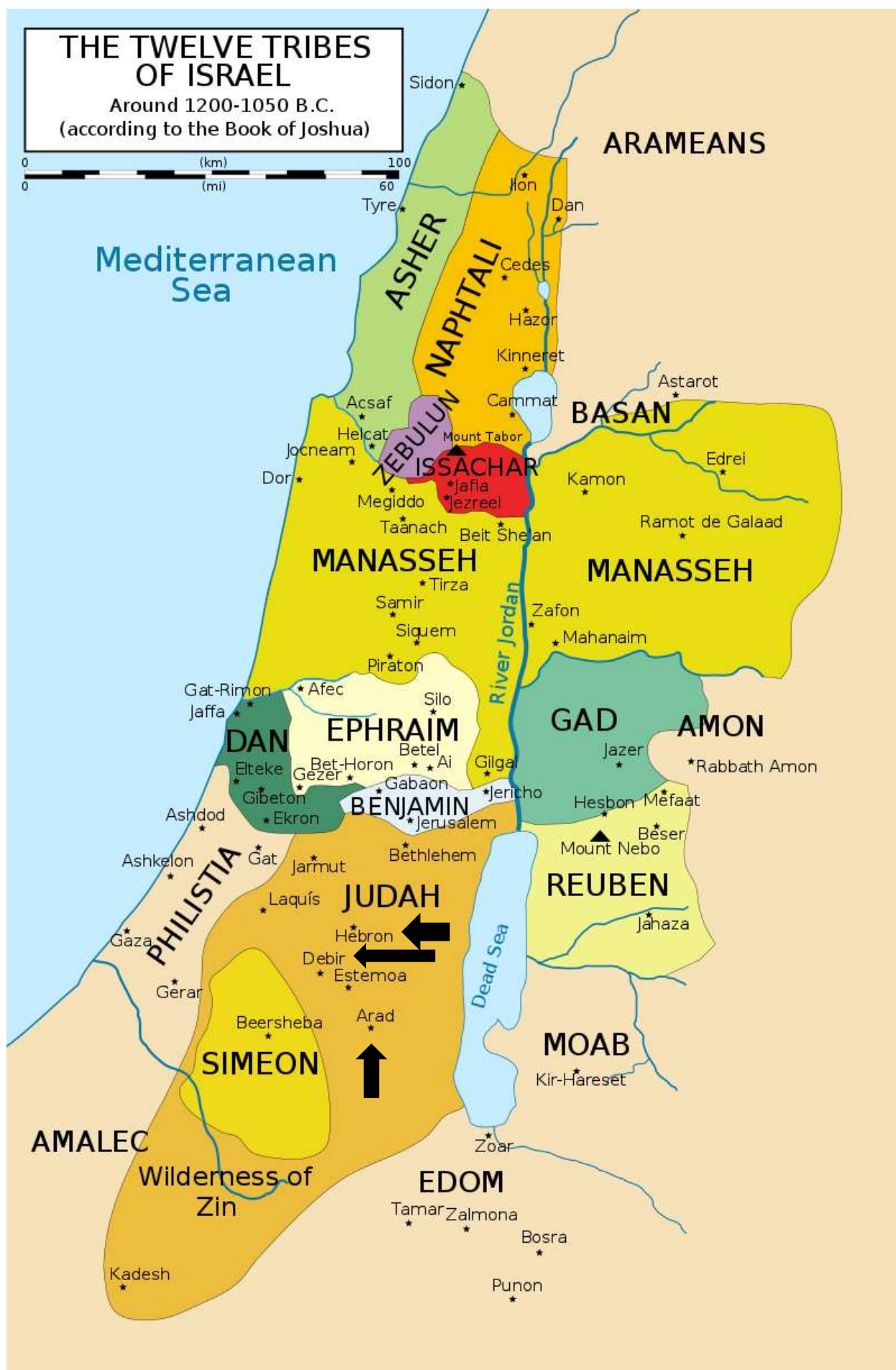
⁹ And afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites, that dwelt in the mountain, and in the south, and in the valley.

that dwelt in the mountain, and in the south, and in the valley... This is showing the advance of the battle. They were taking one area at a time. This area had been occupied by the Philistines. These three geographical characteristics of Canaan were:

(1) The mountainous region where Jerusalem and Hebron were located. Hebron had an elevation of 3,040 feet above sea level, and Jerusalem was 2,593 feet above sea level. These mountainous areas were the ones first taken by Israel and held the longest.

(2) The area called 'the South' was the Negev, or desert country, which began a few miles south of Hebron and terminated at Beersheba.

(3) The valley were the foothills lying between the coastal plain of Palestine and the Judean range of mountains. The Philistines were strongly entrenched in this area and were not dispossessed until the time of David, except occasionally when Israel under some strong leader would stage a temporary victory, sometimes lasting a long time.



Verse 10 & 11, The continuation of Israel driving those out of The Promised Land:

¹⁰ And Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron: (now the name of Hebron before was Kirjatharba:) and they slew Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmi.

Judah also conquered Hebron, and the city was given to Caleb and his family.

Hebron was the ancient city of Abraham and the city which discouraged the ten unfaithful spies from taking the promised land in Moses' day because of the Anakim which lived there (Numbers 13:22-23).

Verse 11

¹¹ And from thence he went against the inhabitants of Debir: and the name of Debir before was Kirjathsepher:

After Hebron, Caleb's next object was Debir, a city at the southern end of the Judean hills. It is called Kiriathsannah (city of palm leaf) in Joshua 15:49. Here it is called Kiriathsepher (city of writing) as in Joshua 15:16. Both names connect with scribal activity (palm leaves were writing materials) which suggests it was well known as a scribal city. The name Kirjath-sepher, was also known as Book-Town, was popular location of literature among the pre-Judaean inhabitants of Canaan.

Verse 12

Verses 12-15: This account first appears (in Joshua 15:13-19). The author of Judges **repeats** it here to remind readers that God honors such courage, initiative, and determination when His people pursue what He has asked them to do.

Verse 12

¹² And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjathsepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife.

Caleb... Question: "Who is Caleb in the Bible?"

Answer: The story of Caleb, a faithful man of God, begins in the book of Numbers. After being delivered from bondage in Egypt, the Israelites were led by God to the border of the land of Canaan, a land "flowing with milk and honey" that God had promised they would inherit (Exodus 3:8, 17). Moses had chosen twelve men, one from each tribe, to scout the land before entering. Among them was Caleb, representing the tribe of Judah. The twelve men spied out the land for forty days and then came back to Moses. They reported that the land was indeed fruitful but its inhabitants were the mighty descendants of Anak. Terrified by the size and strength of the Canaanites, ten of the spies warned Moses not to enter Canaan (Numbers 13:23-33).

Caleb silenced the murmuring, fearful men by saying, "Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Numbers 13:30). Caleb took his stand because he followed the Lord wholeheartedly (Joshua 14:8-9). Caleb knew of the promises of God to the Israelites, and, despite the evidence of his own eyes regarding the obstacles, he had faith that God would give them victory over the Canaanites.

Unfortunately, the people of Israel ignored Caleb and listened to the report of the other spies. They were so frightened that they wept all night and even wished they had died at the hands of their slave masters in Egypt (Numbers 14:1-4). They turned on Caleb and Joshua (the spy from

Ephraim) and wanted to stone them on the spot (Numbers 14:6–10). God was exceedingly angry with the people and threatened to destroy them until Moses interceded for them. God relented, but He decreed that the people would wander in the wilderness until all of that faithless generation had died. But God said that “because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it” and gave him the promise that he would own all the land he had seen as a spy (Numbers 14:11–24).



The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years until all of that generation, except Joshua and Caleb, died (Numbers 14:29–30). After the forty years of wandering and five more years of war within Canaan, Caleb was 85 years old; yet he was as strong as ever and able to fight the same Anakites that had frightened his countrymen. His confidence was born out of his absolute faith in the promises of God (Joshua 15:13–14).

Caleb’s territory in Canaan included “Kiriath Arba, that is, Hebron. (Arba was the forefather of Anak.) From Hebron Caleb drove out the three Anakites—Sheshai, Ahiman and Talmai, the sons of Anak. From there he marched against the people living in Debir (formerly called Kiriath Sepher)” (Joshua 15:13–15). Othniel, a nephew of Caleb, captured Kiriath Sepher and was given Caleb’s daughter Aksah to wed (verses 16–17). Later, Aksah asked her father to include some springs of water as part of her inheritance (verses 18–19), and Caleb gave them to her. Later still, Othniel, Caleb’s son-in-law, became Israel’s first judge (Judges 3:7–11).

From the accounts of the life of Caleb, we see a faithful man who trusted God to fulfill His promises when others allowed their fears to override their small faith. Even into his later years, Caleb remained steadfast in his faith. God blessed Caleb for his faithfulness and patience, an encouragement to us to believe God. Like Caleb, we should be prepared to follow God in every circumstance, patiently waiting for Him to fulfill His promises and ready to take action when the time is right.

Caleb said, He that smiteth Kirjathsepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife... In ancient times fathers assumed an absolute right over their children, especially in disposing of them in marriage; and it was customary for a king or great man to promise his daughter in marriage to him who should take a city, slay an enemy etc...

This was a kind of test of suitability. Chief's daughters were given to mighty champions to ensure continual strong leadership.

Verse 13

¹³And Othniel the son of **Kenaz**, Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife.

Kenaz who was Caleb's younger brother. The son and daughter were thus cousins.

Verse 14 & 15, A Father's "Wedding Present" to his daughter:

¹⁴And it came to pass, when she came to him, that she moved him to ask of her father a field: and she lighted from off her ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wilt thou?

Verse 15

¹⁵And she said unto him, Give me a blessing: for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her **the upper springs and the nether springs**.

The endowment which Caleb her father had given the newly-married couple was composed principally of very dry arid terrain, the value of which would be greatly enhanced by the additional ownership of **the upper springs and the nether springs** of water. Caleb even went beyond what his daughter asked, blessing her with a gift not only of the Upper Springs but of the Lower Springs as well.

And she said unto him, Give me a blessing... Devotional Note:

1. Aschsah was a good example because *she thought about what she wanted before she went to her father*. Before you pray, know what you need before God. She came to God with a very definite request that had been considered before hand. "Think what you are going to ask before you begin to pray, and then pray like business men. This woman does not say to her father, 'Father, listen to me,' and then utter some pretty little oration about nothing; but she knows what she is going to ask for, and why she is going to ask it." (Spurgeon)
2. Aschsah was a good example because *she asked for help with her request*, asking her husband – **she urged him to ask her father for a field**. "A friend, some time ago, said to me, 'My dear pastor, whenever I cannot pray for myself, and there are times when I feel shut up about myself, I always take to praying for you: 'God bless him, at any rate!' and I have not long been praying for you before I begin to feel able to pray for myself.' I should like to come in for many of those odd bits of prayer. Whenever any of you get stuck in the mud, do pray for me. It will do you good, and I shall get a blessing." (Spurgeon)
3. Aschsah was a good example because *she knew it was her father she asked*.
4. Aschsah was a good example because *she went humbly, yet eagerly*.
5. Aschsah's prayer was a good example because *her father asked her what she wanted*. God will ask us the same thing and we should know what we want.
6. Aschsah's prayer was a good example because *she shows that we should actually ask for what we want before God*. It is a pleasure for God to hear you ask.

7. Aschsah's prayer was a good example because *of what she simply prayed*. Her prayer was, "**give me a blessing.**"

8. Aschsah's prayer was a good example because *she mingled gratitude with her petition* (**you have given me land in the South**).

9. Aschsah's prayer was a good example because *she used past blessing as a reason to ask for more*.

10. Aschsah's prayer was a good example because *she realized that what she had been given before was of no use without continual springs of water*. "What is the use of the hearers if there be not the power of the Holy Spirit going with the Word to bless them? Give me springs of water." (Spurgeon)

11. Aschsah's prayer was a good example because *her father gave her what she asked*.

12. Aschsah's prayer was a good example because *her father gave to her in large measure*.

13. Aschsah's prayer was a good example because *her father was not critical of the request in the slightest way*.

Verse 16,

¹⁶ And the children of the Kenite, Moses' father in law, went up out of the city of palm trees with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which lieth in the south of Arad; and they went and dwelt among the people.

And the children of the Kenite... The children of the Kenite - the future generations of Jethro-, Moses' father in law, for though Jethro returned to his own country, after he had paid a visit to Moses in the wilderness. Moses had invited him to come to the Promised Land with them.

The Kenites were noted for their ferocity and yet (usually) for their kindly treatment of the Israelites (compare 4:11; 17-24; 5:24-27 with Exodus 2:16-22; 3:1; Num. 10:29-32). See Map, Page 10:

went up out of the city of palm trees... City of Palms was another name for the city of Jericho.

Verses 17, The continuation of Israel driving those out of The Promised Land, A Partial Victory:

¹⁷ And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah.

¹⁸ Also Judah took Gaza with the coast thereof, and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof.

Having defeated his Canaanites which were in his own land, according to his promise, he went with his brother Simeon, or the tribe of Simeon, into their lot to drive out the Canaanites that were in in land.

Gaza ... Ashkelon ... Ekron These were three of the five leading cities of the Philistines, but Judah's taking them was apparently only a temporary achievement, for these cities at different times to be controled by the Philistines. The next verse explains why Judah failed to keep these cities. The iron chariots of the Philistine (they were the people who dwelt in the "valley," that is,

the Shephelah) gave them a military advantage. However, Judah held on to these cities for at least a century.

Verse 19

¹⁹ And the LORD was with Judah; and he drove out the inhabitants of the mountain; but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had **chariots of iron**.



And the Lord was with Judah,.... Encouraging, strengthening, succeeding, and giving the tribe victory over the Canaanites. So far so good, but...

but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron... This was no reason why they could not drive them out, if God was with them, who could have easily given them over to defeat. **Why the partial victory?** God forsaking them, because they were afraid of them, or through slothfulness, and being weary of fighting, or because they fell into some sins? Which occasionally they did do to God's displeasure and Israel's chastisement of defeat.

As impressive as Judah's victory was it was nevertheless incomplete. They could not defeat nations that had the latest military technology: chariots of iron.

This spoke more to Judah's lack of full trust in God than it did to Canaanite military superiority. Chariots were no problem for God's people when they were trusting God (see Exodus 14:7-29, Joshua 11:1-8, and 1 Kings 20:21). Their attitude should have been like that reflected in:

Psalm 20:7

7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.

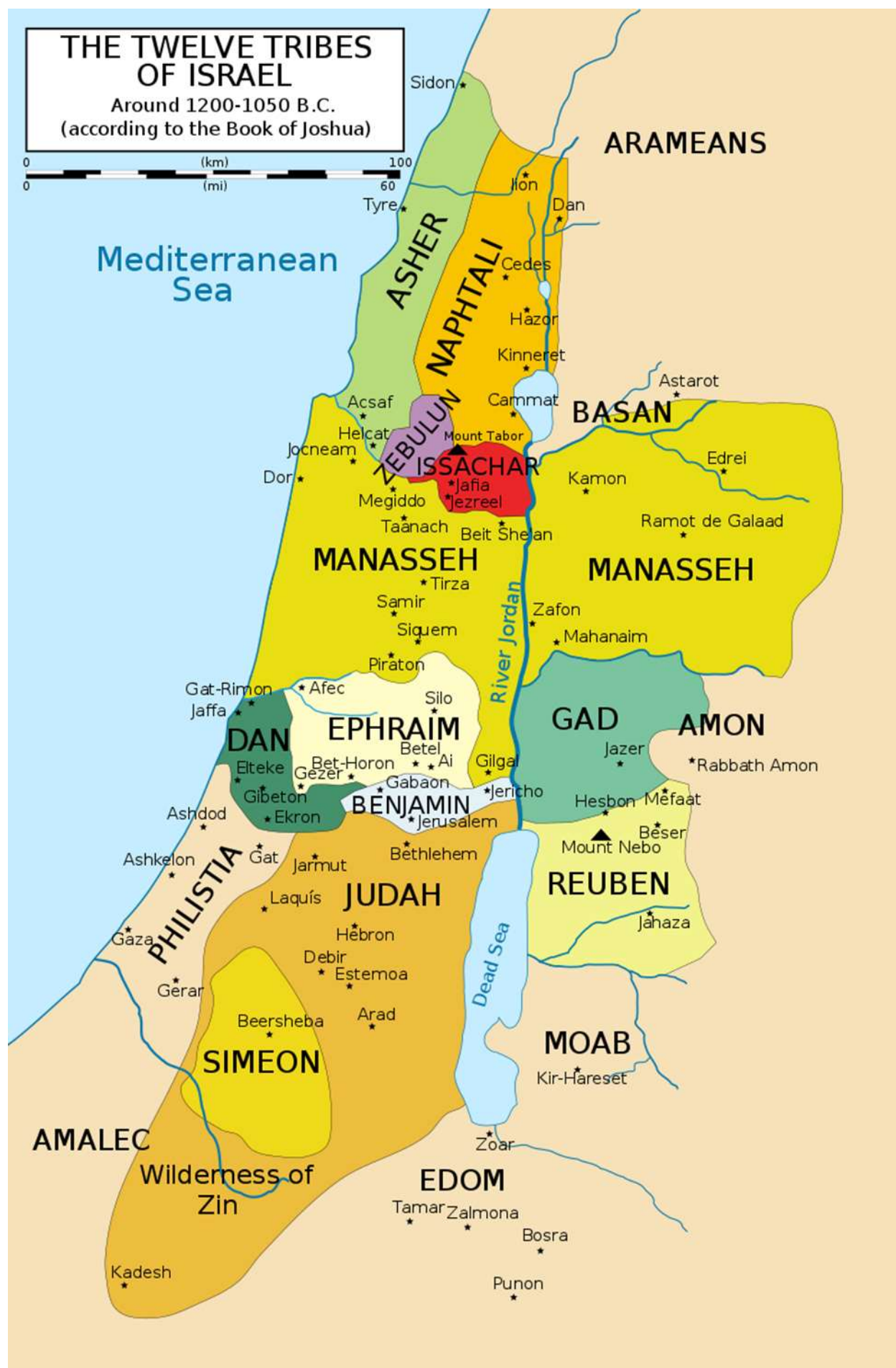
Verse 20

²⁰ And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said: and he expelled thence the three sons of Anak.

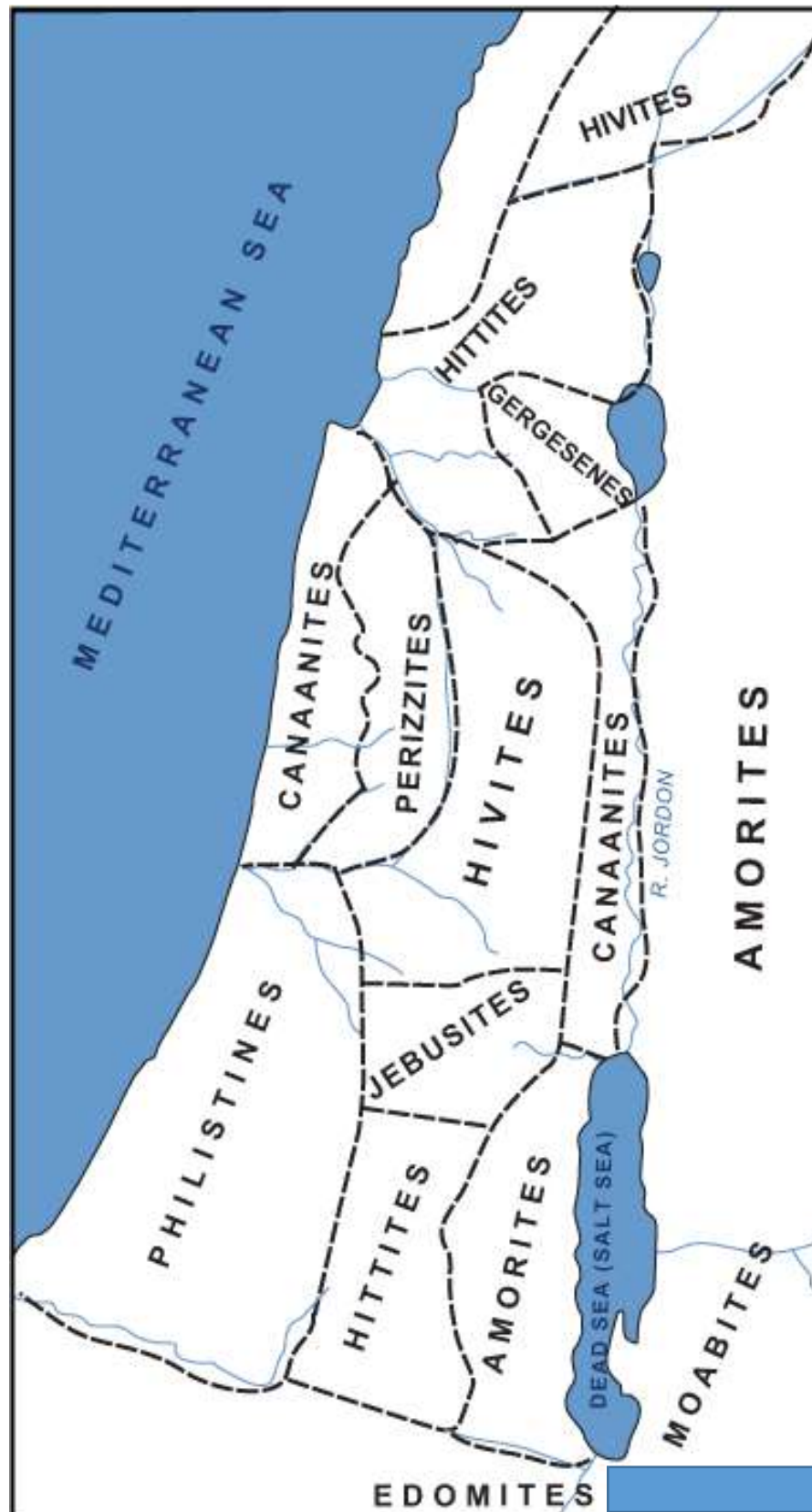
And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses said... Caleb's victory over the sons of Anak shows what a trusting Israel could accomplish. The sons of Anak were large men and fierce warriors (Numbers 13:33, Deuteronomy 9:2), yet with God's help Caleb defeated them

Caleb was a faithful spy, along with Joshua in the beginning. It was correct to give to his descendants the city they wanted. Hebron was that city. Caleb expelled the three sons of Anak. We remember, Caleb was a very brave man, knowing that God was with him.

Bonus: Caleb means _____?



Map of those who lived in The Promised Land during The Book of Judges



Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter One Outline: After the death of Joshua, Israel seeks the Lord, verses 1-2. Judah (with the tribe of Simeon) defeats Bezek and their king, verses 3-7. Judah's victories in the southern part of the land given to Israel, verses 8-20. Incomplete victory and defeat, The tribe of Benjamin does not take possession of Jerusalem, verse 21. The house of Joseph conquers the city of Bethel, verses 22-26. Manasseh and Ephraim fail to drive out all the Canaanites, 27-29. The tribe of Zebulun compromises and accommodates the Canaanites, putting them under tribute, verse 30. The tribe of Asher fails in taking full possession of their land, verses 31-32. The tribe of Naphtali compromises and accommodates the Canaanites, putting them under tribute, verse 33. The tribe of Dan fails in taking full possession of their land, verses 34-36.

Verses 21-36: In repeatedly failing to "drive out" all the Canaanites from the Promised Land, the Israelites directly disobeyed the Lord's instructions (Deuteronomy Chapter 7), which were intended to protect His chosen people from corrupting influences. Where evil is tolerated, it will be accepted and then imitated.

The continuation of Israel driving those out of The Promised Land: The tribe of Benjamin does not take possession of Jerusalem, Verse 21:

Verse 21

²¹ And the children of Benjamin **did not** drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

The children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites... Jerusalem was situated partly in the tribe of Judah, and partly in the tribe of Benjamin, the northern part belonging to the latter tribe, the southern to the former. The Jebusites had their strongest position in the part that belonged to Benjamin.

"Here we have another example of unbelief, and consequently of culpable timidity. The Lord had expressly commanded that there should be no affinity, nor treaty, with the Canaanites. But alas! Israel forgets the Lord's precept, and the Canaanites dwell in the land." - Hawker's Poor Man's Commentary

but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day... Up until the time of the writer of the Book of Judges, the tribe of Benjamin failed to cast out the Jebusites and therefore lived in constant military and spiritual danger. They were not wholly expelled till the days of David.

Verse 22, The continuation of Israel driving those out of The Promised Land: The house of Joseph conquers the city of Bethel, verses 22-26:

²² And the house of Joseph, they also went up against Bethel: and the LORD was with them.

and the LORD was with them... We might credit the victory to their effective use of military espionage; but the real reason was because **the LORD was with them.**

Verse 23

²³ And the house of Joseph sent to descry Bethel. (Now the name of the city before was Luz.)

Descry means: To spy out from a distance

House of Joseph... The combined forces of Ephraim and western Manasseh. **Bethel** belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, (Joshua 18:22,) but was so near the border of Ephraim that the security and peace of all the neighboring tribes required the expulsion of the Canaanites from it. So important was it to accomplish this conquest that the whole house of Joseph unite in the war.

Bethel. (Now the name of the city before was Luz.)... Bethel was the name given to the area by Jacob and later applied to the city by Israel. But the Canaanites called it Luz (Genesis 28:19; Genesis 35:6; Genesis 48:3).

Verse 24

²⁴ And the spies saw a man come forth out of the city, and they said unto him, Shew us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and we will shew thee mercy.

Spies (Scouts) were sent out (**to Descry**) to weigh up the situation and bring back information that would aid in the attack.

The Spies managed to capture a man who had left the city, innocent of the fact that an enemy was so close. Then he was taken for questioning. He was no doubt given two options, torture or a reward for his help. We do not know how soon he gave in but in the end he did.

Verse 25

²⁵ And when he shewed them the entrance into the city, they smote the city with the edge of the sword; but they let go the man and all his family.

And when he shewed them the entrance into the city... He betrayed his fellow Canaanites and showed them a means by which they could enter the city.

they smote the city with the edge of the sword; but they let go the man and all his family... The men of Joseph broke into the city and slaughtered its inhabitants. However, like Rahab before him, the man, by his action, saved his family. His departure was presumably a condition of the deal, or possibly his conscience was such that he could no longer stay near the place where he had betrayed his comrades. Either way it meant that the men of Joseph had fully obeyed **The LORD**. They had either slain or driven out all the inhabitants.

Verse 26

²⁶ And the man went into the land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called the name thereof Luz: which is the name thereof unto this day.

The man whom they had permitted to go free, went with his family into the land of the Hittites, and there built a town, to which he gave the name of his earlier home=Luz .

Verse 30:

³⁰Neither did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries.

The message of this whole chapter is evident enough. Israel totally failed to obey the word of the Lord regarding His Commandment to drive out the Canaanites.

but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became tributaries... Again the same complaint is made, the people of Zebulun did not obey JEHOVAH and failed to drive out the Canaanites, instead putting them to tribute and receiving tribute \$\$\$\$ from them.

Verse 31, The continuation of Israel driving those out of The Promised Land, The tribe of Asher fails in taking full possession of their land. :

³¹Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob:

The tribe of Asher also failed to take what God had apportioned for them. Each tribe who failed it seems made it easier for the other tribes to also fail...

Verse 32

³²But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out.

Sad, **we have the reverse here:** “the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites”. In Asher it was even worse; it was the Asherites who **dwelt among the Canaanites instead of the Canaanites dwelling among...** They suffered a worse degree of social and spiritual declension.

Verse 33, The continuation of Israel driving those out of The Promised Land, The tribe of Naphtali compromises and accommodates the Canaanites, putting them under tribute.

Verse 33

³³Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Bethshemesh, nor the inhabitants of Bethanath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: nevertheless the inhabitants of Bethshemesh and of Bethanath became tributaries unto them.

Neither did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants... The tribe of Naphtali found it difficult to counter the trend of the other tribes. The defeat of one affects the condition of others.

nevertheless the inhabitants of Bethshemesh and of Bethanath became tributaries unto them... Again tribute, \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$

The continuation of Israel driving those out of The Promised Land: The tribe of Dan fails in taking full possession of their land, verses 34-36:

Verse 34

³⁴And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain: for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley:

And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain... Here, we see the people of God being pushed around by their enemies. This should never be the case when God's people are walking in the strength of their God.

Verse 35

³⁵ But the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim: yet the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, so that they became tributaries.

yet the hand of the house of Joseph prevailed, so that they became tributaries... Again, instead of doing what God said should be done with these enemies (to completely drive them out), they decided to use them as they thought best; to put these enemies under tribute.

Verse 36

³⁶ And the coast of the Amorites was from the going up to Akkrabbim, from the rock, and upward.

And the coast of the Amorites was... The Amorites were the most powerful people among the Canaanites, and lay on both sides of Jordan. And were very troublesome to Israel. The end result was that the Amorites had an appointed boundary within the inheritance of God's people. This was an unnecessary and dangerous accommodation to the social and spiritual enemies of the people of God.

There is a dangerous and seductive form of pacifism in the Christian life, which ignores the reality of the spiritual battle so clearly described in Ephesians 6:10-20 and referred to by analogy in the Book of Judges. This pacifist attitude will happily make a peace with the devil that basically says, "I will not harm your interests if you leave me mostly alone." This attitude of spiritual surrender is unacceptable for the Christian.

Reflection of Judges Chapter 1:

Leon Trotsky, the infamous Communist leader said at least one correct thing: "You may not be interested in war, but war is interested in you."

To take an attitude of spiritual surrender is to willingly *lose* that war.

At this period of time, the tribes of Israel at their best experienced incomplete victory; at their worst they simply surrendered to and accommodated the enemy. This makes us value the complete and glorious victory of Jesus Christ on our behalf all the more. There was *nothing* left incomplete in the victory He won for us on the cross and through the resurrection.

The message of this whole chapter is evident enough. Israel totally failed to obey the word of the Lord regarding their replacement of the Canaanites. They enslaved them. They lived among them. They soon became tempted to worship their fertility gods. They did not destroy their pagan shrine, as God had specifically ordered them to do. Engrossed with their prosperity they soon forgot God, when this happened, God always brought enemies against Israel who oppressed and impoverished them, but God raised up various judges to deliver them, to bring them to repentance, and to restore them to the worship of the true God, and then, when peace and prosperity returned, the whole unhappy cycle was repeated again and again and again in the Book of Judges.

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter Two Outline: The Angel of the Lord preaches to Israel, Verses 1-3. The people respond with weeping and sorrow, Verses 4-6. The new generation in Israel, Verses 7-10. Israel falls into idolatry, Verses 11-13. God's wrath upon their sin of idolatry, Verses 14-15. The cyclical pattern of bondage and deliverance in the days of the Judges, Verses 16-19. God gives them over to their sinful compromise, Verses 20-23.

Judges 2

The Angel of the Lord preaches to Israel, Verses 1-3:

1 And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swear unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you.

And an angel of the LORD... This is the expression used in the O.T. to denote **God Himself in His manifestation to men**. The phrase is used nearly 60 times to designate the Angel of God's presence.. In all cases where "the angel of the LORD" delivers a message, he does it as God Himself were speaking, without the intervening words "Thus saith the Lord," which are used in the case of prophets. Here He speaks "unto all the children of Israel" (verse 4).

"The **angel** — Christ the angel of the covenant, often called **the angel of the Lord**, to whom the conduct of Israel out of Egypt into Canaan, is frequently ascribed. He alone could speak the following words in his own name and person." — John Wesley

and have brought you unto the land which I swear unto your fathers... The first thing Jesus (as the Angel of the Lord) did was to remind Israel of His great love and faithfulness to them. He delivered them from Egypt's bondage; He gave them an abundant land of promise; He gave them a covenant that He would never break.

I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swear unto your fathers... A type and picture of Salvation.

I made you to go up out of Egypt... Here, the angel of the LORD uses the first person singular, declaring that, "**I made you to go up out of Egypt.**" And He finishes with the denunciation in verse 2, "**ye have not obeyed my voice.**" Only God could say a thing like that!

I said... That is, I promised upon condition of your keeping covenant with me.

I will never break my covenant with you... God does put some conditions on His covenants: Unless you first break with HIM. How are The Children of Israel doing today?

I will never break my covenant with you... A type and picture of Eternal Life.

Verse 2

² And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?

And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land... No alliances or peace treaties with the inhabitants of the land. Why? = They're heathens. Verse 13 says: "they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth", the gods of the heathens.

This command was given through Moses.

Deuteronomy 7:2

² And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; **thou shalt make no covenant with them**, nor shew mercy unto them:

ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?...

***Paul addressed this in 2 Corinthians 6:15-16

¹⁵ And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

¹⁶ And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

The point here is to not adopt their gods or ways.

Verse 3

³ Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you.

Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you... This was God's announcement of the punishment of the Chosen People for their disobedience. The nations of the Canaanites would remain in the Promised Land along with the Chosen People. There would be many occasions when Israel would suffer for this...

but they shall be as thorns in your sides... Very troublesome and afflicting, tribulation, and distress them.

The Apostle Paul went through this...2 Corinthians 12:7

⁷ And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me **a thorn in the flesh**, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

and their gods shall be a snare unto you... Which they suffered to continue, and did not destroy them, as they ought to have done. They would be, as they proved, ensnaring to them. And whereby they were drawn to forsake the worship of the true God. And bow down to them, as we read in some following verses.

The people respond with weeping and sorrow, Verses 4-6:

Verse 4

⁴ And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept.

The children of Israel felt convicted upon by the word preached, even unto tears; as were likewise David, Josiah, Hezekiah, Magdalen, Peter had preached. So these hearers of his "were pricked in their heart," (Acts 2:37) and Paul's at Ephesus wept sore (Acts 20:37).

The subsequent record of the Book of Judges shows that this initial reaction of sorrow and repentance did not mature into a real, lasting repentance. Real repentance shows itself in action, not necessarily in weeping. We can be sorry about the consequences of our sin without being sorry about the sin itself.

This message is the Word of God. We have it in written form and we do not listen to the Words any better than these Israelites did. They weep because God is displeased with them, but they do nothing to try to make it right. They should repent and destroy these false gods. Christians today are too tolerant with things we know for sure are against the will of God.

One can weep and outwardly show repentance without ever inwardly repenting. This is why the Lord challenged Israel in:

Joel 2:13

¹³ And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.

Verse 5

⁵ And they called the name of that place Bochim: and they sacrificed there unto the LORD.

Bochim means weepers. Which signifies "weeping", from the general crying of the people.

and they sacrificed there unto the LORD... In this, they did the right thing. Any awareness of sin should drive us to God's appointed sacrifice. In their day that meant sin offerings of bulls and rams; in our day it means remembering God's sacrifice for us on the cross of Jesus Christ.

Verse 6

⁶ And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

In Verses 6-23, the author here is giving a history of the people, from the division of the land by Joshua to the time in which the angel speaks. Joshua divided the land to them by lot; recommended obedience to God, which they solemnly promised: and they continued faithful during his life, and during the lives of those who had been his contemporaries, but who had survived him. When all that generation who had seen the wondrous works of God in their behalf had died, then the succeeding generation, who knew not the Lord - who had not seen his wondrous works - forsook his worship, and worshipped Baalim and Ashtaroth, the gods of the nations among whom they lived, and thus the Lord was provoked to anger; and this was the reason why they were delivered into the hands of their enemies. This is the sum of their history to the time in which the angel delivers his message.

Verse 7

⁷ And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel.

And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua... The elders here are referred to as original witnesses who saw the miracles the miracles of God, who had left Egypt, survived the wilderness and outlived Joshua and have entered and fought in The Promised Land.

who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel... The elders had witnessed the crossing of the Jordan, the falling of the walls of Jericho, the battles of Beth-horon, Merom... Israel was also faithful to God in the days of Joshua's immediate successors. But afterwards, there arose a generation who had not seen all the great works of the Lord which He had done for Israel.

Verse 8

⁸ And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old.

being an hundred and ten years old... The same age as Joseph (Genesis 1:26). Moses attained the age of 120 (Deuteronomy 34:7), Jacob, of 130 (Genesis 47:9), Isaac, of 180 (Genesis 35:28).

And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD... Isn't it nice to be remembered as a Servant of The LORD!

Some Characteristics Of A Servant Of The LORD

Romans 1:8-12

A Thankful Servant

⁸ First, **I thank my God** through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.

A Prayerful Servant

⁹ For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, **that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;**

A Submitted Servant

¹⁰ Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey **by the will of God** to come unto you.

A Giving Servant

¹¹ For I long to see you, **that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift**, to the end ye may be established;

A Humble Servant

¹² That is, that I may be **comforted** together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.

Question: "What does the Bible say about being a servant / servanthood?"

Answer: The Bible has a great deal to say about servanthood because the central theme of the Bible is the **Servant of all—Jesus Christ.**

Mark 10:45: ⁴⁵ For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, **but to minister**, and to give his life a ransom for many.

How can we demonstrate love for God?

Our love for God will be expressed in our love for others as **Servants!**

2 Corinthians 4:5

⁵For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves **your servants** for Jesus' sake.

True leadership is servanthood, and the greatest leader of all time is Jesus Christ. Servanthood is an attitude and action exemplified by Jesus:

Philippians 2:6-7

⁶Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

⁷But made himself of no reputation, **and took upon him the form of a servant**, and was made in the likeness of men:

Serving others is the very essence of ministry. All believers are called to ministry (Matthew 28:18-20), and, therefore, we are all called to be servants for the glory of God. Living is giving; all else is selfishness and boredom.

Let's serve others by serving Christ (Colossians 3:23-24). God the Father has served us by sacrificing Christ on the cross for our sins, and we should serve others by giving the gospel and our lives to them (1 Thessalonians 1:5-6). Those who desire to be great in God's kingdom must be the servant of all (Matthew 20:26).

Matthew 20:26

²⁶But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your **minister**;

What is God's design for servanthood?

1. Servanthood is ... God's work for every believer.

All our actions should reflect the fact that Jesus is not only our Savior, but also, the master of our lives. We are to be His servant.

In the Old Testament many were referred to as servants. God spoke of Abraham as His servant (Genesis 26:24; Numbers 12:7). Joshua is called the servant of the Lord (Joshua 24:29), as are David (2 Samuel 7:5) and Isaiah (Isaiah 20:3).

In all of these instances, the term servant carries the idea of humble nobility. Being God's servant is an honorable position.

Throughout the New Testament, the word bondservant or servant is applied to someone absolutely devoted to Jesus.

Paul, Timothy, James, Peter, and Jude all describe themselves as "bondservants of Christ" (Romans 1:1; Philippians 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; Jude 1:1).

2. Servanthood is ... how God carries out His work.

John 14:11-14

¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

¹² Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do **shall he do also**; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

¹³ And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

¹⁴ If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

3. Servanthood is ... essential to spiritual growth.

If you are not serving God in some fashion, you simply are not maturing spiritually—nor can you mature spiritually. In every church and in every Christian organization, there are people who have talents, skills, or gifts but never use them for the work of the Lord—and each one of these is and remains a spiritual babe—a baby in Christ.

Ephesians 2:10

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

4. Servanthood is ... the purpose for spiritual gifts.

Every believer has one or more spiritual gifts, which we are to use in serving the body of Christ.

Romans 12:1-8

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your **reasonable service**.

Servanthood is a **reasonable service**. **What are some other reasonable services?**

² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

³ For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

⁴ For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:

⁵ So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

⁷ Or ministry, let us wait on **our ministering**; or he that teacheth, on teaching;

⁸ Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Verse 9 says: Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

Servanthood is love in action. We each have a different spiritual gift, and we are to use that gift serve others.



Verse 9

⁹ And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathheres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.

Buried him (Joshua)... Burial of a loved one is what a decent society does...

Verse 10

¹⁰ And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD... The new generation had no personal relationship with God, and no personal awareness of His power. God was someone who their parents related to and who did great things for their parent's generation.

Sadly this cycle continues in today's generations...



Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter Two Outline: The Angel of the Lord preaches to Israel, Verses 1-3. The people respond with weeping and sorrow, Verses 4-6. The new generation in Israel, Verses 7-10. Israel falls into idolatry, Verses 11-13. God's wrath upon their sin of idolatry, Verses 14-15. The cyclical pattern of bondage and deliverance in the days of the Judges, Verses 16-19. God gives them over to their sinful compromise, Verses 20-23.

Judges 2 Israel falls into idolatry, Verses 11-13:

Verse 11

¹¹ And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:

In verse 10 we read: “and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel”.

The result, verse 11: “And the children of Israel **did evil** in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim”

We have a new generation that does not know The LORD, the result is: They don't know Him as LORD. God had revealed Himself earlier to Moses in:

Exodus 3:14

¹⁴ And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

They don't know Jehovah God as: Saviour, As Life Giver, as Creator, as Counselor, as LORD, as God is Abba—He is your Father, as Jehovah-Jireh—The LORD will provide. They don't know who God is!

did evil in the sight of the LORD ... This states that the sin was even more offensive to God because it was done right before HIS eyes. To give an extreme example, it is bad enough for a married person to commit adultery; but to commit adultery before the very eyes of one's spouse would be especially evil.

and served Baalim... The Canaanite idol Baal (Baalim) was an attractive rival to Jehovah because he was thought to be the god over the weather and nature for the Canaanites; he was essentially the god of agricultural success.

Verse 12

¹² And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.

they forsook the Lord... God made it clear that Israel's pursuit of these gods was nothing less than forsaking the Lord God of their fathers.

Forsook means: To Renounce or give up, to quit or leave entirely; abandon; desert.

This is just the same as saying, they conformed to the world around them and giving up on God. Everyone else was doing it, so they did, too. They wanted to be like everyone else. God had separated them out as a holy people. They have gone back with the world to unholy living. They have broken the First Commandment. **Exodus 20:3** "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

The influence of the Canaanites is that they allowed to remain in their midst led them to idolatry. The result of not fully driving out the Canaanites was far worse than Israel imagined.

Verse 13

¹³ And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.

To forsake God is not a little hehehehe sin please forgive me, but leaving God altogether.

God made it clear that Israel's pursuit of these gods was nothing less than forsaking the Lord God of their fathers. The God of Israel is a jealous God who demands exclusive worship.

and served Baal and Ashtaroth... Question: "Who was Baal?"

Answer: Baal was the name of the supreme god worshiped in ancient Canaan and Phoenicia. The practice of Baal worship infiltrated Jewish religious life during the time of the Judges

Ashtaroth... Is associated with sex and fertility.

Verse 14

¹⁴ And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel... Why? For the idolatries they were guilty of; it burned within him, it broke forth, and was poured out like fire on them, and consumed them.

And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel... Anger and love are feelings of The LORD.

and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about ... Delivering over into the hands of an enemy. The punishment involved in being sold was a payment to the divine justice. They failed to render due service to their only true Lord, and he, their rightful owner, sold them into a miserable slavery.

so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies... But turned their backs on them, and fled whenever engaged in war with them.

Verse 15

¹⁵ Whithersoever they went out, the hand of **the LORD was against them** for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.

They prospered not in any business they undertook, or put their hands unto.

Verse 16

¹⁶ Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges... Why? Because of His great love for His people, God raised up judges – heroic leaders – to rescue Israel from their calamity.

This is the first occurrence of the term “**judges**” in this book, and it is from this that the Book receives its name.

A **judge** would rise up whom God would bless in His deliverance of Israel from oppression, but as soon as that judge died, Israel soon relapsed into their customary wickedness. Why did God keep on delivering them? The answer is in **Judges 2:18**. The Lord simply had pity upon His oppressed people.

Verse 17

¹⁷ And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so.

And yet they would not hearken unto their judges... *Their Judges* — Who admonished them of their sin and folly, and of the danger and misery which would certainly befall them.

but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them... Committing spiritual adultery. Though God gave Israel these heroic leaders, they did not listen to their judges in matters of spiritual leadership. They wanted the judges as political and military leaders, but not as spiritual leaders.

they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so... Grace is not hereditary. Just because their parents did right, doesn't mean that their kids are gonna do right, and the result is God putting the hurt on them.

Verse 18

¹⁸ And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge... The judges were tribesmen in Israel upon whom the Lord laid the burden of Israel's apostate and oppressed state. They were the spiritual ancestors of the prophets; that is to say, men raised up of God, the theocratic King, to represent Him in the nation. They were patriots and religious reformers because national security and prosperity were inseparably connected with loyalty and obedience to Jehovah. Not one of the chosen deliverers had anything whereof to glory in the flesh. Othniel was but the son of the younger brother of Caleb; Ehud was a left-handed man and an assassin; Shamgar, a rustic with an ox-goad; Deborah, a woman; Gideon, of an obscure family in the smallest tribe.

for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them... The LORD was moved with compassion, was grieved, because of their groanings.

Verse 19

¹⁹ And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.

And it came to pass, when the judge was dead... A lifelong appointment as a Judge.

that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them ...The cycle of corruption: bondage, deliverance and blessing; followed by sin and bondage again is a discouraging fact in many Christian lives today.

they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way...

Stubborn = Stiff-necked... Is someone difficult to move, remove, or cure.

It appears from this that they would slow their false worship down while the judge was actively judging them. As soon as he died, they were back to worshipping false gods again. This stubbornness is like rebellion.

Verse 20

²⁰ And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice;

And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel... God is not made all of mercy, as some dream, but can be angry: and who knoweth the power of HIS wrath?

Psalm 90:11

¹¹ Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.

Verse 21

²¹ I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died:

God had warned the Israelites in Joshua 23:13 that if they forsook Him and followed other gods, He would no longer fight for them. HE kept that promise here.

Verse 22

²² That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not.

That through them I may prove Israel... These nations would act as a continual proving ground, testing how faithful to the covenant Israel would be.

Verse 23

²³ Therefore the LORD left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into the hand of Joshua.

This illustrates the great danger of setting our hearts on sinful things; we may get to the point where God may allow us to have them – thus bringing sin, bondage, and pain into our lives, and the result is that The LORD leaves our enemies and leaves us open to constant attack!

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter Three Outline: Why God allowed these nations to continue in Israel's territory, verses 1-2, The pagan nations are specifically listed, verses 3-4, The apostasy of Israel in the days of Othniel, verses 5-7, Wow! Israel's servitude to the king of Mesopotamia, verse 8, God's deliverance through the first Judge Othniel, verses 9-11, The cycle continues: Israel sins and is sold into servitude, verses 12-14, God raises up a deliverer for Israel: Ehud, verse 15, Ehud's daring assassination of Eglon, verses 16-26, Ehud leads the Israelites in battle against the Moabites, verses 27-30, The third judge: Shamgar, verse 31.

Judges 3, Why God allowed these nations to continue in Israel's territory, verses 1-2:

Verse 1

1 Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan;

This passage gives two reasons why the Lord did not drive out all of the Canaanites before Israel, namely: (1) to prove them, whether or not they would obey the Lord; and (2) to teach those ignorant of the art of war; And Bonus # 3: (3) A third reason is namely, that of punishing Israel for their disobedience.

Verse 2

² Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof;

This was another reason why God allowed the Canaanites to remain where Israel did not drive them out. God wanted His people to be warriors, and the presence of these dangerous neighbors would make it necessary for future generations to know war, by teaching and being an example.

The pagan nations are specifically listed, verses 3-4:

Verse 3

³ Namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baalhermon unto the entering in of Hamath.

These were the rulers of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. At first, Israel occupied some of these cities (see Judges 1:18), but these enemies of Israel were able to re-take their territory from Israel as late as the times of Saul, whose kingdom they defeated, killing the King himself.

Verse 4

⁴ And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

The reason that God didn't just eliminate these nations is again stated. It was to prove Israel's commitment to God and His word. If they were obedient to the word of God the other nations would not hinder them and they would grow strong enough to drive them out completely.

The apostasy of Israel in the days of Othniel, verses 5-7:

Verse 5

⁵ And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites:

And the children of Israel dwelt among... Not the Canaanites dwelling in Israel, **but the children Israel dwelt among the Canaanites...** The Canaanites who were to be exterminated. Exodus 3:8, Exodus 3:17; Exodus 23:23-28. Deuteronomy 7:1-5.

Verse 6

⁶ And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.

The Israelites failed God's test, being enticed into (1) Marriages with Canaanites; and (2) Worship of their gods. God had distinctly forbidden them to marry these people. Even worse than them marrying, was the fact that Israel starting worshipping the false gods of these people.

Deuteronomy 7:3

³ Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son.

Verse 7

⁷ And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves.

And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD... By marrying with Heathens, and worshipping their gods, and forgot the LORD their God.

Here in Judges and in Numbers chapters 21-23 we see The Evil Counterfeit Trinity:

Balak: A Type or Picture of The Antichrist, The Devil Incarnate.

Baalim: A Type or Picture of a False Prophet or False Spirit.

Baal: A False God. According to Canaanite mythology, Baal was the son of El, the chief god, and Asherah, the goddess of the sea. Baal was considered the most powerful of all gods, eclipsing El, who was seen as rather weak and ineffective. In various battles Baal defeated Yamm, the god of the sea, and Mot, the god of death and the underworld. Baal's sisters/consorts were Ashtoreth, a fertility goddess associated with the stars, and Anath, a goddess of love and war. The Canaanites worshiped Baal as the sun god and as the storm god—he is usually depicted holding a lightning bolt—who defeated enemies and produced crops. They also worshiped him as a fertility god who provided children. Baal worship was rooted in sensuality and involved ritualistic prostitution in the temples. At times, appeasing Baal required human sacrifice, usually the firstborn of the one making the sacrifice (Jeremiah 19:5). The priests of Baal appealed to their god in rites of wild abandon which included loud, ecstatic cries and self-inflicted injury (1 Kings 18:28).

Before the Hebrews entered the Promised Land, the Lord God warned against worshipping Canaan's gods (Deuteronomy 6:14-15), but Israel turned to idolatry anyway.

the groves... Where the Heathens usually worshipped their Baalim or idols.



Phoenician bronze statue of Baal, god of the mountain, storm, and rain, from Ugarit, Syria, c. 1350 BC. Collection of the Louvre Museum, Paris.

Groves: A small wood or forested area, usually with no undergrowth: a grove of pines. a small orchard or stand of fruit-bearing trees

Deuteronomy 16:21

²¹Thou shalt not plant thee a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the LORD thy God, which thou shalt make thee.

The idea is that God doesn't like it when people place false idols in groves, where people will then worship the false idol.

Verse 8-11, Wow! Israel's servitude to the king of Mesopotamia, God's deliverance through the first Judge Othniel:

Verse 8

⁸Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushanrishathaim eight years.

Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel... God's getting mad at Israel, again...
and he sold them into the hand of Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia... Mesopotamia described the fertile, well-watered area that would be today Eastern Syria and Northern Iraq.

Verse 9

⁹And when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer to the children of Israel, who delivered them, even Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.

And when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD... The eight years of bondage is having an affect, they called out to The LORD, they cried for help/deliverance....

Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother... Question: "Who was Othniel?"

Answer: Othniel, the first judge, is first mentioned in Joshua 15:17 as "Othniel the son of Kenaz, the brother of Caleb" As a nephew of Caleb, Othniel took on the challenge of conquering the city of Debir (or Kiriath Sepher) and driving out the Canaanites there. As the victor, Othniel received the reward of Achsah, Caleb's daughter, as his wife. Othniel had two sons named Hathath and Meonothai and was from the tribe of Judah (1 Chronicles 4:13).

Othniel lived in Debir in the land of Judah after this time. Through his wife's influence, he obtained from his uncle Caleb the upper and lower springs in the land of the Negeb (Joshua 15:19).

Othniel is important in biblical history as the first judge listed in the Book of Judges. After eight years of bondage to Cushan-Rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia, the people cried out to God for help (Judges 3:9). In response, the LORD "raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, who saved them. The Spirit of the Lord came on him, so that he became Israel's judge and went to war. The Lord gave Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram into the hands of Othniel, who overpowered him. So the land had peace for forty years, until Othniel son of Kenaz died" (Judges 3:9–11).

We find in this passage that 1) Othniel was raised up as a judge and leader in Israel, 2) he defeated the king of Mesopotamia, and 3) Othniel and the Israelites lived in peace following this time. Othniel's leadership spanned a long time, covering approximately 1350—1310 BC.

Othniel is the first of 12 judges listed in the Book of Judges. His judgeship covered a transitional period connecting the leaders of the past to the leaders of his time. He was related to Caleb, who had left Egypt as a freed slave and entered the Promised Land as a leader.

Important lessons learned from the life of Othniel include the influence of family, the role of the Holy Spirit in empowering a person's life, and the tremendous value of godly leadership in keeping peace among a community of people.

Verse 10

¹⁰ And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war: and the LORD delivered Chushanrishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed against Chushanrishathaim.

And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel... We should NOT confuse the gift of the Holy Spirit to Christians today with the endowment of God's Spirit in the various judges and rulers to whom that Spirit came of old. That endowment enabled the possessor to perform feats of superhuman strength and to do many other things pertinent to the deliverance of Israel in the various surroundings confronting the heroes of the Book of Judges. The ministry of the Spirit should NOT be confused with that which accompanies regeneration (in the New Birth), which is permanent in nature and produces a change in life and character.

Old Testament saints were not permanently indwelt with “the Spirit of the LORD” as New Testament saints are. Rather, the Spirit temporarily “**came upon**” them, indwelling and empowering them in times of need. This phrase is used of many of the judges, as well as Saul and David.

Othniel lived the principle of **Zechariah 4:6**: “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts” Empowered by the Spirit of the Lord, he delivered Israel.

Verse 11

¹¹ And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

As long as the judge was alive, God blessed Israel. There was peace for 40 years.

The cycle continues: Israel sins and is sold into servitude, verses 12-14:

Verse 12

¹² And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.

And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD... It seemed that Israel would never learn. They immediately went back to their sinful way of life when Othniel died. As chastisement for the evil Israel did against God, God strengthens Eglon to overcome them. When Israel sins, God sends war for chastisement on them.

and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel... When You have enemies, it's because you're not living right...

Hello America? Russia, China, Iran...



Hello You? Who are your enemies?

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Judges 3, The cycle continues: Israel sins and is sold into servitude, verses 12-14:

Verse 13

¹³ And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm trees.

And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek... Israel loses again to **"the children of Ammon and Amalek"**. When The Children of Israel rebel, God Chastises via Israel's enemies **"the children of Ammon and Amalek"**.

the city of palm trees... Jericho

Verse 14

¹⁴ So the children of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years.

eighteen years... Ten years longer than they served the king of Mesopotamia in **Judges 3:8**.

Israel's sin brought them into bondage. They suffered 8 years of bondage before they cried out to the Lord in the days of Othniel. Then they endured another 18 stubborn years of bondage before they cried out to the Lord.

Sin always brings bondage, though it comes to us deceptively. The fish never contemplates the bondage of the hook when it goes after the bait; Satan snares us by making the bait attractive and hiding the hook.

God raises up a deliverer for Israel: Ehud The Assassin:

Verse 15

¹⁵ But when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, the LORD raised them up a deliverer, Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man lefthanded: and by him the children of Israel sent a present unto Eglon the king of Moab.

But when the children of Israel cried unto the LORD... This shows the mercy of God. When Israel repeatedly drifted from God, He had every right to cast them off completely. Yet He still responded when they finally did **call on Him** for deliverance = A Judge!

Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a man lefthanded... The Bible mentions left-handed people on three occasions: the story of Ehud's assassination of the Moabite king (Judges 3:12–30), the 700 Children of Benjamin who could use the sling with deadly accuracy (Judges 20:16) and the two-dozen ambidextrous warriors who came to support David in Hebron (1 Chronicles 12:2). All of these stories of left-handed people in the Bible appear in military contexts, and, curiously, all involve members of the tribe of Benjamin.

Question: "What does the Bible say about being left-handed?"

Answer: The Bible presents the right hand as the hand of strength (Exodus 15:6; Psalm 118:16). Sitting at someone's right hand is considered a position of honor (Psalm 110:1). The right hand is consistently valued over the left hand in Scripture (Genesis 48:13-18; Galatians 2:9). What does this mean about left-handedness? Is being left-handed considered a curse or a weakness? Answer: No. The Bible's emphasis on "the right hand" is simply a reflection of reality. The dominant arm is almost always stronger than the other arm, and 85-90 percent of people are right-handed. So, in the vast majority of people, the right hand is stronger. Thus, the Bible uses the right hand as a symbol of strength and honor.

This does not carry any negative connotations for left-handed people. It is simply a matter of symbolism. Whenever the Bible mentions left-handed people, it does not present left-handedness as a weakness. Ehud, a judge of Israel and a mighty warrior, was left-handed (Judges 3:15-21). Judges 20:16 mentions 700 left-handed warriors who could "could sling stones at an hair breadth" First Chronicles 12:2 seems to reference bowmen who were ambidextrous. When the Bible refers to left-handed people, it speaks of left-handedness **as an advantage**, not a weakness.

While it is not as honorable as sitting at someone's right hand, sitting at the left hand is still a position of honor (Matthew 20:21). Sitting immediately to a person's left was considered the second-most honorable position. It was not as if everyone to the right was more honored than those to the left. The right hand is used in the Bible as a symbol of strength due to the right hand usually being stronger than the left. This should not be understood as a slight against left-handed people.

Famous Left Handers Include: Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, Babe Ruth, Napoleon Bonaparte, Leonardo da Vinci, Aristotle, Left-Handed U.S. Presidents: James A. Garfield , Herbert Hoover, Harry S. Truman, Gerald Ford, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, Barack Obama.

Verse 16

¹⁶ But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length; and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh.

But Ehud made him a dagger which had two edges, of a cubit length... A little sword with two edges, that it might cut both ways, and do the execution he designed by it, and was about half a yard long; which he could the more easily conceal, and use for his purpose:

and he did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh... That it might not be seen, and give occasion of suspicion.

Verse 17

¹⁷ And he brought the present unto Eglon king of Moab: and Eglon was a very fat man.

And he brought the present unto Eglon king of Moab... The present — Which was to be paid to him as a part of his tribute.

and Eglon was a very fat man... There is irony in this description of Eglon”, no doubt he had fattened himself on all the goods he extorted from the Israelites. His name means “Calf”, so the author foreshadows his fate, portraying him as a fattened calf ready for slaughter.

Verse 18

¹⁸ And when he had made an end to offer the present, he sent away the people that bare the present.

And when he had made an end to offer the present... Ehud had delivered the present and probably made a speech to the king in the name of the people of Israel from whom he brought it.

he sent away the people that bare the present... The people that accompanied Ehud, and then Ehud dismissed them, and returned to Eglon alone, that so he might have more easy access to him.

Verse 19

¹⁹ But he himself turned again from the quarries that were by Gilgal, and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king: who said, Keep silence. And all that stood by him went out from him.

But he himself turned again from the quarries that were by Gilgal, and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king... Ehud here is perhaps playing on his vanity. The king sends his people away, so they will not see the secret that Ehud has for him. The king would not even let him speak of it, until everyone had left the room.

Verse 20

²⁰ And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone. And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat.

And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting in a summer parlour, which he had for himself alone... A Summer place of cooling and privacy for the King.

I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat... Ehud certainly told the truth when he said this. The message was, “Those who oppress the people of God touch the apple of His eye and will be judged for it.” And.... A Cliff Hanger!

What Happens Next? Find Out Next Week!



Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges

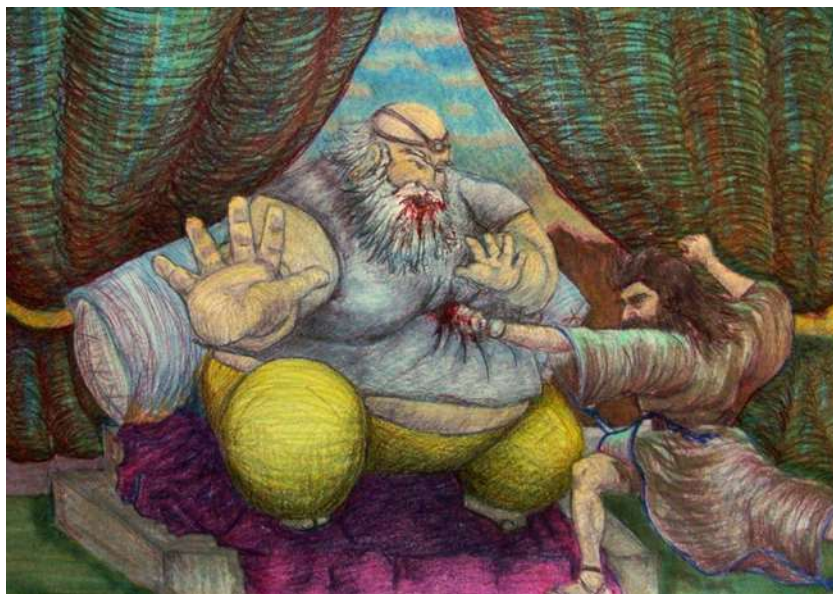


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Judges 3, Ehud's daring assassination of Eglon, verses 16-26:

Verse 21

²¹ And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly:



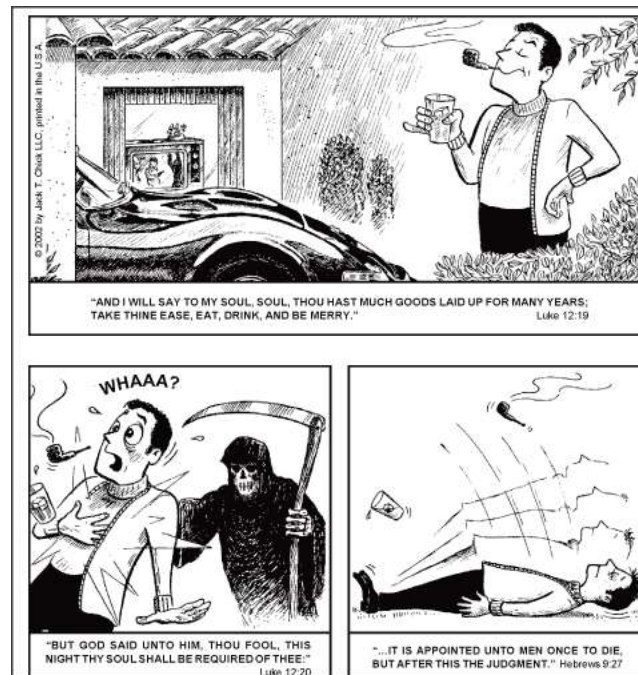
Remember in Verse 20 Ehud said to King Eglon right before he assassinated him: **“I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of his seat...”** God uses many messengers to speak to us, including death. “Ehud said, ‘I have a message from God for thee.’ It was a dagger which found its way to Eglon’s heart, and he fell dead. So shall death deliver his message to you.

God's message to Man: Luke 12:19-20

¹⁹ And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

²⁰ But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

The King of his Castle today...



Remember:

- God's messages are often secret.
- God's messages must be received with reverence.
- God's messages leap out from unexpected quarters.
- God's messages are sharp as a two-edged sword, and cause death.
- The preacher should also present the word of God with the sense that he has a message from God.

Verse 22

²² And the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat closed upon the blade, so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly; and the dirt came out.

And the haft went in, after the blade ... The handle of the dagger, as well as the blade; so strong and violent was the thrust, Ehud determining to do his business effectually.

and the fat closed upon the blade... Being an excessive fat man, the wound made by the dagger closed up at once upon it, through the fat.

so that he could not draw the dagger out of his belly... Being not able to take hold of the haft or handle, that having slipped in through the fat after the blade, so that he left it in him.

and the dirt came out... As the wound was closed up through fat, and the dagger stuck fast in it, it could not come out that way: rather therefore this is to be understood of his excrements, and of their coming out at the usual place, it being common for persons that die a violent death. As we would say: "He pooped in his pants!"

Verse 23, Ehud's Escape...

²³ Then Ehud went forth through the porch, and shut the doors of the parlour upon him, and locked them.

It appears that Ehud escaped by going through the porch to the other side. He locked the door from the inside, so the servants could not get to the king.

Verse 24

²⁴ When he was gone out, his servants came; and when they saw that, behold, the doors of the parlour were locked, they said, Surely he covereth his feet in his summer chamber.

When he was gone out, his servants came ... When Ehud was gone through the porch, and out of the palace, the servants of Eglon, who had been put out, came to the parlour door to reassume their former place, and finish their business with the king, or in order to wait upon him as usual.

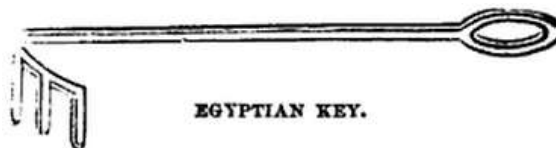
behold, the doors of the parlour were locked, they said, Surely he covereth his feet in his summer chamber... They assumed that the king had fastened the door inside for the sake of privacy.

Verse 25

²⁵ And they tarried till they were ashamed: and, behold, he opened not the doors of the parlour; therefore they took a key, and opened them: and, behold, their lord was fallen down dead on the earth.

And they tarried till they were ashamed... Ashamed — Or, confused, not knowing what to say or think; lest they should either disturb him, or be guilty of neglect towards him.

and, behold, he opened not the doors of the parlour; therefore they took a key, and opened them... The Egyptian key was quite different than modern keys. It was probably a wooden instrument with which they either lifted up the latch within, or drew back the wooden bar or bolt. The chief officer of Eglon's household probably had a second key.



and, behold, their lord was fallen down dead on the earth... The King was dead laying prostrate on the floor of the parlour, dead.

Verse 26

²⁶ And Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond the quarries, and escaped unto Seirath.

And Ehud escaped while they tarried ... While the servants of the king of Moab tarried waiting for the opening of the doors of the parlour, this gave Ehud time enough to make his escape, so as to be out of the reach of pursuers; that even when they had opened the doors, and found the king dead, while they were in confusion at it, not knowing what to ascribe it to, the dagger being enclosed in the wound, and perhaps but little blood, if any, issued out, being closed up with fat, and so had no suspicion of his being killed by Ehud; but rather supposing it to be an accidental fall from his seat, and might call in the physicians to examine him, and use their skill, if there were any hopes of recovery; all which prolonged time, and facilitated the escape of Ehud.

Verse 27

²⁷ And it came to pass, when he was come, that he blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the mount, and he before them.

And it came to pass, when he was come, that he blew a trumpet in the mountain of Ephraim... Ehud sounding the alarm-signal to call a people rapidly together.

Verse 28

²⁸ And he said unto them, Follow after me: for the LORD hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took the fords of Jordan toward Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over.

And he said unto them, Follow after me: for the LORD hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand... A victory speech. Ehud asked the Israelites to follow him, because he was their leader. Yet he also encouraged them to look with faith to the Lord (for the Lord has delivered your enemies into your hand).

Like any true leader, Ehud said “follow me.” A leader can’t expect his followers to go where he or she will not or has not gone. This was captain-like spoken. Caesar never said to his soldiers, Ite, Go ye, but Venite, Come along: I will lead you, neither shall ye go farther than ye have me before you. Hannibal was to be first in the battle, and last man out.

Verse 29

²⁹ And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all lusty, and all men of valour; and there escaped not a man.

And they slew of Moab at that time about ten thousand men,... They killed the King now slew about 10,000 of Moab who had been sent into the land of Israel to keep it in subjection.

All lusty... Fat, stout, robust men. The Moabite warriors seem to have been, like their king, (Judges 3:17,) large, plump men.

Verse 30

³⁰ So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest fourscore years.

And the land had rest fourscore years... = 80 Years. Ehud’s cunning and courage, coupled with Israel’s faithful following of a leader, brought Israel’s longest period of freedom under the 400-year period of the Judges. Ehud is a dramatic example of how in the Lord, one man can make a difference, and how God will call others to work with that one man.

Verse 31

³¹ And after him was Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad: and he also delivered Israel.

And after him was Shamgar... Shamgar is one of six individuals we call “minor” judges, because not much is written about them. Yet the work they did for God was just as important in their day as anyone else’s work.

Shamgar's great accomplishment: which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad: and he also delivered Israel.

What are we to say about Ehud's method of using assassination? The king was an enemy of Israel and illegally demanding tribute from them. He was thus at continual war with them. So it was an act of war and as such legitimate. It was no more deceitful than laying an ambush for someone and enticing them into it.

What about us Christians, if we don't like an oppressive King or President do we kill them?

Answer: No, We Pray for them!

1 Timothy 2:1-2

1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

²For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

But why Pray "For kings"?

Because they are such great instruments of good to mankind, because they most want our prayers, as they encounter extreme difficulties, are exposed to more dangers, and are liable to greater temptations, than other men.

Because so many powerful and influential political rulers are hostile to God, they are often the targets of bitterness and animosity. But Paul urges believers to pray that these leaders might repent of their sins and embrace the gospel. Which meant that the Ephesian's were even to pray for the salvation of the Roman emperor, Nero, a cruel and vicious blasphemer and persecutor of the faith.

The true Christian stands for law and order as any government is better than none at all. Nero was at the time of Paul's writing the emperor; and, as the apostle's instruction shows that the prayers of the church are to be offered for bad rulers as well as for good.



Gotta Pray for The President!

Ephesians 6:17-18

¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

¹⁸Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

The Word of God is our Sword, Amen!

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter Four Outline: The cycle begins again: apostasy, servitude and supplication, Verses 1-3, God raises up Deborah and Barak, Verses 4-10, Israel's defeat of Sisera, Verses 11-16, The death of Sisera by the hand of a woman, Verses 17-22, Conclusion of the battle, Verse 23-24.

Judges 4

Verse 1

1 And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead.

Ehud the assign and Judge was dead, which leads to the result and effect of the long rest and peace they enjoyed; and which is often the case of a people favored with peace, plenty, and prosperity, who are apt to abuse their mercies, and forget God. Though Israel kept forsaking Him, He kept working with them.

Verse 2

2 And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles.

And the LORD sold them ... Delivered them **into** a state of bondage and slavery.

Jabin king of Canaan... The land where the most of the Canaanites, now dwelt, in the northern part of Canaan. This seems to be of the descendants of that Jabin, whom Joshua slew earlier in Joshua 11:10 who watched all opportunities to recover his ancient possessions, and to revenge his own and father's fight upon the Israelites.

the captain of whose host was Sisera; King Jabin maintained a standing army to keep the people of Israel in subjection, the general of which was Sisera.

Do not to overlook the expression, "**the LORD sold them.**" Yes! Every event, as well afflictive as prosperous, is of the Lord's appointment. Painful as the Lord's corrections sometimes are, yet, when his hand is traced in them, and the heart is enabled to say, I know, Lord, that thy judgments are right

Psalm 119:75

⁷⁵ I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.

Verse 3

3 And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.

And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD... Even when God deals with one in this way, it still may take a good while until they turn their heart to in repentance Him. It took Israel **twenty years** of bondage before they cried out to the Lord.

Has anything kept you in bondage for a long time that you finally broke and cried unto The LORD or, are you still in bondage?

for he had nine hundred chariots of iron... The threat of the 900 chariots was enough to keep the children of Israel in subject to Hazor for twenty years.



and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel... As Israel increased their sins, and repeated their revolts, the Lord increased their oppressions, and continued them the longer; the first was only eight years, the next eighteen, and this twenty!

Oppressed - The same word is used Exodus 3:9 of the oppression of Israel by the Egyptians.

God raises up Deborah and Barak, Verses 4-10:

Quick Overview... Question: "What is the story of Deborah and Barak?"

Answer: The account of Deborah and Barak is found in Judges 4 and 5 in the Old Testament. The Israelites had been under the control of the Canaanite king Jabin and the commander of his army, Sisera. The Canaanites had 900 chariots of iron and ruled over Israel for 20 years (Judges 4:2-3).

A prophetess named Deborah judged or made rulings for the people of Israel under a palm tree during that time. One of Deborah's judgments was to instruct Barak to summon 10,000 men and attack Jabin's army. Likely fearful to comply with such a command, Barak told Deborah, "If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go" (Judges 4:8). She replied, "I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." (verse 9).

Deborah and Barak then gathered 10,000 troops and attack Sisera and his army. Barak's troops won: "and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not a man left" (Judges 4:16). Sisera himself fled to the tent of a Hebrew woman named Jael. She gave him milk to drink and covered him with a blanket in the tent. Then, "Jael Heber's wife took a nail of the tent, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died." (verse 21).

Following this battle, "So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel" (Judges 4:23). Deborah's prophecy was fulfilled: Barak won, Sisera was killed by a woman, and the Israelites were freed from their enemies.

Judges chapter 5 then records the song of Deborah and Barak, written to rejoice in God's victory over the Canaanites. The lyrics encourage the actions of Deborah and Barak, saying, "Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam" (Judges 5:12). Jael's role is also heralded: "Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent" (verse 24).

The song of Deborah and Barak also gives some more detail about the victory over the Canaanites: "Lord, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water" (Judges 5:4). Evidently, God used a flood to disable the iron chariots of Sisera. The victory was supernatural (verse 20). Chapter 5 concludes with the statement, "And the land had rest forty years." This impressive time of peace lasted until Midian took control of Israel, necessitating Gideon's rise.

Lessons for today from the lives of Deborah and Barak include the following: 1) God often calls people to step out in faith to attempt the unexpected, 2) God often uses unlikely people and sources to accomplish His plans, 3) God sometimes requires great risk and effort on our behalf as part of His divine plan. In the case of Deborah and Barak, they risked their lives in war, while Jael took in a runaway fugitive and risked her life to end his and help free Israel from oppression. Ultimately, this account reveals that God is in control of the nations and changes their leaders according to His desires.

Verse 4

⁴ And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.

Deborah, a prophetess... One on whom the Spirit of God descended upon, and who was the instrument of conveying to the Israelites the knowledge of the Divine will, in things sacred and civil.

Deborah is clearly the inspired leader of the deliverance that came to Israel in this crisis. Her authority was already recognized in Israel. Note her power to summon Barak, and note his immediate response. Her ability as a prophetess in the truest sense of the word appears in her divine prophecy that God would deliver Sisera into the hand of a woman, as well as details of where the battle would occur, and of its favorable outcome for Israel.

she judged Israel at that time... I believe this is the first instance of female government leadership on Biblical record. Deborah seems to have been supreme both in civil and religious affairs; and Lapidoth, her husband, appears to have had no hand in the government.

Deborah means? _____

Verse 5

⁵ And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim: and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.

and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment... They came unto the prophetess as unto a divine truth, seeking to know the divine will and judgment in cases of difficulty or danger.

Verse 6

⁶ And she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedeshnaphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun?

And she sent and called Barak... She appointed him to be general of the armies on this occasion; which shows that she possessed the supreme power in the state. Deborah never believed that God called her alone to deliver Israel. She realized that God would do much of the work through Barak.

Barak means? _____

and said unto him, Hath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, saying... That is, assuredly God hath commanded you Barak; this is not the command from Deborah woman, but the command of the great God by her mouth.

and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun?... To indicate approximately the force required. It was not to be too large, so as to be unwieldy; nor too small, so as to lack the force and enthusiasm

Verse 7

⁷ And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand.

These were the words of their battle general, Jehovah. Once Sisera heard of their gathering on Mount Tabor, in what was clearly an attempt at rebellion, he would take his chariots and men over to the mount in accordance with Jehovah's plan. Then Jehovah would arrange for them to be delivered into the hands of Barak's small army.

and I will deliver him into thine hand... Note that Deborah's words here are not her own, but the words of the Lord, despite the fact of the customary "Thus saith the Lord" being omitted.

Verse 8

⁸ And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go.

And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go... Which though it might discover some weakness in him, yet showed the high opinion he had of Deborah as a judge of Israel, and prophetess of the Lord. Being desirous that he might have her with him to pray to God for him, to give him advice and counsel on any emergency, she being as the Prophetess of God.

Barak should not be criticized for his reluctance. He was in excellent company. Moses himself was, at first, unwilling to undertake the rescue of Israel from Egypt, and Gideon also considered himself to be the least worthy to undertake his Divine assignment. Barak recognized the great difficulty and danger of his call to deliver Israel, and he needed the assurance that the presence of Deborah would provide.

Barak is mentioned in The Hebrew's Hall of Faith:

Hebrews 11:32

³² And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of **Barak**, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

Verse 9

⁹ And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.

notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman... Because of this, Barak would not be the one to personally defeat Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army – but a woman would be the one. We would expect this to be fulfilled by Deborah, but this prophecy will be fulfilled unexpectedly.

Verse 10

¹⁰ And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; and he went up with ten thousand men at his feet: and Deborah went up with him.

Barak and all who went with him showed real courage and trust in God to go out against Sisera and his army. They had essentially no weapons to fight with against a technologically advanced army (having 900 chariots of iron). In addition, God led them to fight on a plain, which gave great advantage to the forces with chariots.



Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



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Judges 4, Israel's defeat of Sisera, Verses 11-16:

Verse 11, The armies gather together against one another.

¹¹ Now Heber the Kenite, which was of the children of Hobab the father in law of Moses, had severed himself from the Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the plain of Zaanaim, which is by Kedesh.

Now Heber the Kenite... These were distant descendants of Israel, through Jethro, the priest of Midian and the father-in-law of Moses, back to Abraham and his second wife Keturah (Genesis 25:1-4).

had severed himself from the Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the plain of Zaanaim, which is by Kedesh... The purpose of this verse is to explain why Heber was where he was when the later events occurred. For some reason Heber had left the group of Kenites who had gathered to Hobab (Judges 1:16).

Verse 12, The Opening Engagement of the Battle:

¹² And they shewed Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to mount Tabor.

They reported to Sisera that Barak and an army of ten thousand have gone to Mount Tabor. We must remember in this that God has chosen the battle ground, and it was actually God who caused Heber to settle in this area. God had all of the plans, and knew exactly what would happen here.

Verse 13

¹³ And Sisera gathered together all his chariots, even nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that were with him, from Harosheth of the Gentiles unto the river of Kishon.

Sisera was taking no chances, and this was to be a massive show of. He called together his chariot force of nine units of chariots, and his soldiers and mercenaries who dwelt in Harosheth of the Nations

Verse 14

¹⁴ And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this is the day in which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: is not the LORD gone out before thee? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him.

And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this is the day in which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine hand:... By a Spirit of prophecy she knew this was the precise day, the exact time in which it was the will of God this deliverance should be produced; and she speaks of it as if it was past, of the certainty of it, and the full assurance she had of it!

is not the LORD gone out before thee?... When God goes before and in front of you, you're guaranteed a victory!

It wasn't that long ago God Promised Moses and Joshua:

Deuteronomy 31:6

⁶Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

Joshua 1:5

⁵There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him... It is a striking proof of the full confidence Barak and his troops had in Deborah's assurance of victory, that they relinquished their advantageous position on the hill and rushed into the plain in face of the iron chariots they so much dreaded.

Verse 15

¹⁵And the LORD discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword before Barak; so that Sisera lighted down off his chariot, and fled away on his feet.

And the LORD discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword before Barak;...Because of Barak's great trust in Deborah and God (as well as the trust his armies had in the Lord), God granted them a great victory against great odds.

so that Sisera lighted down off his chariot, and fled away on his feet... God discomfited Sisera so badly that he ran from the battle in fear.

The Canaanite army were gathered at the river Kishon, not expecting an attack. After all it was they who were the hunters. The last thing they expected was for the Israelites to come down to meet them, and they would be taken totally by surprise. It was probably the last thing that the Israelites had expected either. But at Deborah's words, communicated to them by Barak, they responded. **Is not the LORD gone out before thee?** And now she had promised that He would be with them.

Verse 16

¹⁶But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles: and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not a man left.

Barak's footmen had the advantage of the enemy's chariots, which, after the rain (which we'll discover in chapter 5), must have stuck in the softened soil.

and there was not a man left... They killed all that they could find. But there was at least one who had escaped their flashing blades, who fled for his life, seeking refuge.

Verse 17

¹⁷ Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite: for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite... In the tent of a woman, where he might imagine no search would be made; for women of note, in those times, had separate tents.

Genesis 24:67

⁶⁷ And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her: and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

Here the story takes an unexpected turn. God promised that a woman would defeat Sisera (Judges 4:9). We would logically assume that this would be Deborah, but God had something else in mind. He instead used the wife of a Kenite to accomplish Sisera's end.

Verse 18

¹⁸ And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not. And when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a mantle.

And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not... Because there was peace between the people of Sisera and the people of Jael, he had reason to believe he could trust Jael's invitation.

my lord... A polite address to an important man. But she would call her husband 'my lord' as well.

And when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a mantle... With a rug or blanket, to get him to fall asleep faster.

Verse 19

¹⁹ And he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink; for I am thirsty. And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him.

And he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink; for I am thirsty... Which might be occasioned by the heat of the battle, and by the heat of the day, and by heat in running; he asks for a little water, that being very thirsty.

And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him... Milk as a signification of greater respect.

Verse 20

²⁰ Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent, and it shall be, when any man doth come and enquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here? that thou shalt say, No.

He wanted just a few moments rest and then would run even further away from the troops. He thought he could trust Jael, and asked her to watch for anyone looking for him. He wanted her to lie, and say he was not there if they inquired.

Verse 21

²¹ Then Jael Heber's wife took a nail of the tent, and took an hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died.

It is said that the business of pitching and striking the tent was usually assigned to the women among the nomads, and Jael, therefore, would have been quite skilled in the use of this equipment.



Jael knew how to handle a tent-peg because it was customarily the job of women to set up the tents. She struck the peg so hard that it went down into the ground.

Verse 22

²² And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come, and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples.

This is the act, Deborah had mentioned to Barak that would bring a woman fame for the battle. It was not herself she was speaking of, but of Jael. Can you imagine the look of surprise on Barak's face, when he saw Sisera and what had happened to him?

Conclusion of the battle, Verses 23-24:

²³ So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel.

²⁴ And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

Jabin's efforts through his standing army had been thwarted, and instead it was he who had been subdued. His general was dead, his army decimated. It was something from which he would never recover.

And the hand of the children of Israel prospered... Which always is the result when you follow God!

What can we learn from this story?

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter Five Outline: The Song of Deborah, verses 1-31. E-Z Outline of chapter five.

Judges 5

Verse 1

1 Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying,

This is a Great War song of any age or nation.

Theme of the song: The joy and blessing in being a willing instrument of God.

This song is well within the tradition of other Jewish songs of deliverance and celebration, such as Miriam's song (Exodus 15:20-21) and the songs celebrating David's victory over Goliath (1 Samuel 18:7). "Deborah was a poetess as well as a prophetess.

Verse 2

²Praise ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves.

Praise ye the LORD... Full gratitude and acknowledgement of The LORD!

for the avenging of Israel ... The injuries done to Israel by any of their enemies, and particularly what wrongs had been done them by Jabin, king of Canaan, for the past twenty years.

when the people willingly offered themselves... The people could have refused Deborah and Barak to fight, but **willingly offered themselves** to fight.

Psalm 110:3

³Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

We can think of the relation between leader and people as that of the conductor and the orchestra. The conductor must lead, and the orchestra must be ready and willing to follow the conductor's leadership. When the conductor does his job and the orchestra does their job, then beautiful music is made.

Verse 3

³Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes; I, even I, will sing unto the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.

Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes... The prophetess begins her song with summoning the attention of the neighboring kings and princes. These kings and princes were not those of Israel; Israel had no kings or princes; these are the kings and princes of the heathen nations. That they

might understand and lay to heart what God had done for Israel. And learn from this event not to oppress them. Lest the same vengeance which had fallen upon Jabin and his people should be inflicted on them.

I, even I, will sing unto the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel... She declares that Jehovah should be the object of her praise. Who, she would have the world to know, was superior to all in power, and would defend his people while they depended on him alone.

Deborah calls the kings and princes to hear her song of praise to the LORD. Her praise is to the LORD God of Israel. Deborah is totally aware of who actually won the war.

Verses 4 & 5, Remembering God's preservation of Israel in the past.

Here properly begins the song:

⁴LORD, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water.

⁵The mountains melted from before the LORD, even that Sinai from before the LORD God of Israel.

Deborah is praising the LORD for bringing Israel out of Egypt. She reminds them that the presence of the LORD on Mount Sinai made it appear to be on fire. When God spoke to them from the mountain, the whole mountain quaked.

God won the victory for Israel over Sisera by sending a great rain (**the heavens dropped**). In this song Deborah recalled a time when God did the same thing on behalf of Israel in the days of the Exodus (Deuteronomy 33:2).

the earth trembled... God prepared the way for his people, and struck a dread into their enemies, by earth-quakes.

and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water... God sent storms and thunderstorms, thunder and lightning, to displeasure Israel's enemies.

Verses 6-8, Describing life under Canaanite oppression.

Verse 6

⁶In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through byways.

In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath,.... Of whom we saw in Judges 3:31; who succeeded Ehud as a judge. Shamgar the son of Anath, which slew of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox goad: and he also delivered Israel.

in the days of Jael... She is mentioned prominently in this very song as having put the finishing stroke to the victory of Israel by killing Sisera.

the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through byways... The public roads were so infested with thieves and robbers, who stopped all they met with. And robbed them of what they had, that travelers and merchants with their carriages were obliged either to quit their employments or not travel at all. Or, if they did travel, were obliged to go in private roads, and roundabout ways, to keep clear of those bandits the highways and public roads abounded with.

Verse 7

⁷The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel.

This is saying there was no one who came forth to lead the people against their oppressors, until God gave the message to Deborah to call Barak to battle. She was a mother to them in that she judged them. She was a woman of influence in the nation.

Verse 8

⁸They chose new gods; then was war in the gates: was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?

Israel had sinned greatly in turning from the One True God to the false gods of Canaan. It was chastisement from God that brought the enemy against them. They made no resistance, because they knew it was from God.

Verse 9, Bless the Lord for leaders who lead and followers who follow.

⁹My heart is toward the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye the LORD.

In this verse gratitude is expressed to the respective leaders of the tribes, who with so much enthusiasm took part in the contest; but above all, to God, who inspired the patriotic disposition, as well as the strength to fight. That they should lay by their parliament robes and put on their swords to fight against the common enemy.

Verses 10-12, A call to recount the great victory.

¹⁰Speak, ye that ride on white asses, ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.

Speak, ye that ride on white asses, ye that sit in judgment ... Because of this unusual color, they were a prize of kings and the rich.

and walk by the way... Because of the victory, you that can safely travel in those high ways, which before you didn't neither ride nor walk in.

Verse 11

¹¹They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates.

in the places of drawing water... The wells were at a little distance from towns in the east away from the battles and often places for pleasant reflection.

the gates... The scene of legal and business activity, would also be the logical places for a muster of local troops (see Ruth 4:1).

This is saying they can now draw water from the well without worrying about getting shot with an arrow. They need to remember and praise God. It is good to reflect on the miracles that God has done. It encourages faith to believe for new miracles. God is with his people, if they will just stay faithful to him.

They could return in security to the gates of their own cities for justice, or commerce, or to dwell there, now that the Canaanites was defeated.

Verse 12

¹² Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.

Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song... Stir up thyself and all that is within one's self to admire and praise the Lord.

Having in the previous verses sung of the sublime coming of Jehovah from Sinai to deliver the nation from its fallen state, and having called on all classes to join her in the song, she now begins her vivid picture of the war with Sisera with this impassioned introduction.

Verses 13-18, The tribes that helped and the tribes that didn't help.

Verse 13

¹³ Then he made him that remaineth have dominion over the nobles among the people: the LORD made me have dominion over the mighty.

Verse 14

¹⁴ Out of Ephraim was there a root of them against Amalek; after thee, Benjamin, among thy people; out of Machir came down governors, and out of Zebulun they that handle the pen of the writer.

Deborah praised the tribes that helped, notably Ephraim, Manasseh, Benjamin, and those of Zebulun came forth.

they that handle the pen of the writer... That is, even the Scribes, who gave themselves to study and writing, whereby they were exempted from military service, did voluntarily enter into this service.

Verse 15

¹⁵ And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; even Issachar, and also Barak: he was sent on foot into the valley. For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart.

And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; even Issachar... They rushed down on foot from Mount Tabor into the valley to attack the iron chariots of Sisera.

Verse 16

¹⁶ Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.

Reuben... They felt the patriotic impulse and determined, at first, to join the ranks of their western brethren, but resiled from the purpose, preferring their peaceful shepherd songs to the trumpet sound of war.

Verse 17

¹⁷Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in ships? Asher continued on the sea shore, and abode in his breaches.

Not every tribe was helpful. Reuben, Dan, and Asher did not join in the battle.

Gilead abode beyond Jordan... Here stands for the two and one half tribes that were settled east of the Jordan River, namely, Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh.

Verse 18

¹⁸Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field.

Zebulun and Naphtali... These are singled out for special praise. They were the first to respond to the call to fight Jabin and the Canaanites.

Verses 19-23, The battle described and a curse on a unhelpful city.

Verse 19

¹⁹The kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money.

The kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan... Several kings of Canaan, most probably, had united themselves with Jabin in this expedition and battle. There were small kings in those parts who were subject to Jabin.

they took no gain of money...i. e. either they got no booty, as they expected, or, they did not fight for plunder, but for life and victory

Verse 20

²⁰They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.

The battle was fought from the heavens in the sense that God sent rain that made the Canaanite chariots of no use. The powers of heaven were against Sisera, and the victory was not won by Israel alone.

Verse 21

²¹The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.

From the fact that the river rose and drowned them, we can assume there was a torrential storm. God was fighting for the children of Israel.

Verse 22

²²Then were the horsehoofs broken by the means of the pransings, the pransings of their mighty ones.

The storm frightened the horses so badly, that they broke their hoofs prancing up and down. With 900 chariots in this small area, it would have been difficult for them to move very far.

Verse 23

²³Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.

The inhabitants of Meroz (a village 12 miles from Samaria), hung back and gave no help in the day of battle. Although it was The LORD who called them. Hence, the curse pronounced by the Angel of the LORD.

There is really not anything known about the city or village or Meroz other than this one verse, and it doesn't paint a pretty picture of them. From what this is saying, when Israel went to battle against the Canaanite army to free themselves, the city of Meroz decided to sit that one out. They figured they just needed to stand on the side and cheer instead of getting involved and helping. For that reason, all the citizens of that city were cursed.

That is such a small passage and a seemingly insignificant mention of a somewhat obscure city. But it holds great lessons for us that I think we are guilty of more than we want to admit.

First off, when it comes to our home congregation, how many of us seem to fall into the category of 'seat warmer'? "You guys go do the work, and I'll sit here just in case something else comes up that needs to be done." Or maybe it's "They have a talent for that kind of thing, so I'll let them take care of it." There is always a reason to not get involved. There is always an excuse that keeps us from helping out with the work on the congregation. If we aren't careful, we will forever be cheerleaders on the sidelines and never get involved in the actual game.

But let's take this a little broader. How is our participation in the universal sense of the Church? Do we look for opportunities to share the gospel with those we are around? Do we even think of ourselves as Christians outside of Sunday, and maybe on the occasional Wednesday night? Our lives are going smooth, and there's no reason to mess that up. We don't look for those who are in need. We don't help to evangelize. We are so wrapped up in our own lives that we miss the battle where we are needed.

Satan is a fierce and mighty enemy that is seeking whom he may devour (**1 Peter 5:8**). Keep in mind that Jesus said in **Matthew 12:30** says "*He that is not with me is against me.*" There is no middle ground. There is not sitting on the sideline. Either you are fighting with God, or you are fighting against Him. May it never be said of us that we "came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty."

Verses 24-27, Praise for Jael for her killing of Sisera.

Verse 24

²⁴Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent.

Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be... The words here are very similar to Elizabeth's greeting of the Virgin Mary, "Blessed art thou among women" (Luke 1:42).

Under the same influence that Meroz was cursed, Jael is blessed. The one for not helping Israel in a public way, the other for doing it in a private manner.

What Jael did would be condemned by many in the days of the Judges. The responsibility to protect and bless a guest was an almost absolute command, and Jael killed a guest. Yet she was blessed

here because her obedience to the cause of God was greater than her obedience to tradition and custom.

Verse 25

²⁵ He asked water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.

Which signifies either the same, the milk with cream on it, for that is meant by butter; or having first taken off the cream, she gave him milk to drink, and then brought the cream in a dish for him to eat, and thereby the more incline him to sleep; and this she brought in a dish fit for any lord or nobleman to eat out of; in such a polite and courteous manner did she use him, so that he could have no suspicion of her having any ill design against him.

Verses 26 & 27

²⁶ She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen's hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples.

²⁷ At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead.



Rembrandt: Jael killing Sisera, 1659-1660.

Verses 28-30, Reflection on the soon disappointment of Sisera's survivors.

Verse 28

²⁸ The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?

The mother of Sisera looked out at a window... Every death has consequences and Deborah thought of and celebrated the consequences of Sisera's death.

The mother of Sisera was not used to him losing in battle. She was looking for the return of her boy, but he is dead in Jael's tent. Never dreaming of defeat, this proud mother confidently awaits her son's triumphal return, but grows impatient at his long delay, and she and her royal maidens entertain themselves with speculations...

Verse 29

²⁹ Her wise ladies answered her, yea, she returned answer to herself,

This is speaking of the women around her not being able to answer why he has not returned, so she answers herself.

Verse 30

³⁰ Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey; to every man a damsel or two; to Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?

Have they not sped?... Or "found" the enemy, Barak and his army, or the spoil of them?

have they not divided the prey; to every man a damsel or two... That is, one or two captive females assigned to each warrior, a common custom of the ancient times.

to Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?...Suits of clothes of different colors, such as were the works of the women of Sidon, and those curiously interwoven or wrought with a needle, and that on both sides of the silk or material of which they were made; and so such as were of great worth and esteem, and such it was expected, and with confidence and assurance of it, Sisera would bring with him, and make presents of to his mother and her ladies, or which he would have for his own wear and use.

Verse 31, Final praise to God and the long-term effect of the victory.

Verse 31

³¹ So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest forty years.

This began with praise to the LORD, and ends the very same way. The battle is won, there is peace and rest for forty years. The battle of good and evil rages on for all ages. Jesus won the victory for all believers at Calvary. He defeated sin and Satan at the cross. He defeated death, when He rose from the grave. He has made life everlasting available to all who will have faith enough to receive it.

The enemies of the Lord will perish like the host of Sisera, and all their hopes will end, like those of Sisera's mother, in bitter disappointment and shame; but all that love our Lord Jesus Christ shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

Matthew 13:43

⁴³ Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Daniel 12:3

³ And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Amen, Amen and Amen!

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter Six Outline: Israel's apostasy brings them into servitude, Verse 1. The details of Israel's bondage to Midian, Verses 2-6. In response to Israel's cry to the Lord, God sends a prophet, Verses 7-10. The deliverer is called, The Angel of the Lord appears to Gideon, Verses 11-13. Gideon's Call to God's Service, his Ministry and his Battle, Verses 14-40.

Judges 6, Israel's apostasy brings them into servitude, Verse 1:

Verse 1

1 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.

The forty years of rest (Judges 5:31) following the defeat of Sisera eventually came to an end. In their prosperity and complacency, Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord.

and the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years... God brought Israel into bondage through the oppression of the Midianites. This was an example of God's grace and mercy to Israel because the oppression would make them turn back to God. It would have been worse if God had just left them alone.

The details of Israel's bondage to Midian, Verses 2-6:

Verse 2

2 And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel: and because of the Midianites the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds.

These caves were where they lived, when they were hiding from the Midianites. The caves afforded a certain amount of protection from the enemy. They set up places where they could hide and withstand their enemies. At least in the caves, the enemy could attack from only one side. This was a place where they were relatively safe.

Verses 3

3 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 so it was, when Israel had sown... Israel's sin made all their hard work profitless. All their produce and livestock was stolen after they worked hard to bring it to completion. Sin does this; it robs us of what we work hard to gain. There are many accomplished men who lose everything in life because they won't stop their sin. All is lost in order to gain what, in retrospect, was nothing.

Galatians 6:7

⁷ Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Verse 4

⁴ And they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass.

When the Israelites attempted to raise crops for the support of themselves and their flocks and herds, the Midianites and their allies, which included the Amalekites and the "children of the east," came up against them, bringing vast numbers of their own herds and cattle as well as countless camels, pasturing and feeding them on the defenseless crops of the Israelites, and robbing the Israelites of whatever stores of grain and other produce they might have attempted to hide. The situation was absolutely pitiful.

Verse 5

⁵ 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.

That is, so many that it was not easy to number them. And not in a regular army to engage, but in a confused swarm, to plunder the country. Yet Israel, being forsaken of God, had not spirit to make fight against them.

Verse 6

⁶ And Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the Lord.

Only now they cry out to God, when they are destitute. Now that they are out of food and cannot help themselves, they call out for help unto the Lord.

In response to Israel's cry to the Lord, God sends a prophet, Verses 7-10:

Verse 7

⁷ And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord because of the Midianites,

when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord... If men can find a praying heart, God will find a pitying heart...

Verse 8

⁸ 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;

Before providing a Judge/Deliverer God sends a unnamed prophet to reprove them for their sins, and impress them with the thought that all their woes were a punishment for idolatry. This is the only specific mention of a prophet in the history of the Judges

Verse 9

⁹ And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land;

God spoke through the prophet, reminding Israel of all He did for them in the past. To face their current crisis, Israel needed a reminder of what God did before.

Even after they were brought out of Egypt, when the Egyptians pursued after them, and overtook them at the Red sea; where they were in the utmost distress, and the Lord wrought salvation for them, gave them a passage through it, and destroyed the Egyptians in it:

Verse 10

¹⁰ 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.

but ye have not obeyed my voice... God sent this messenger to tell them where the real problem was. It wasn't that the Midianites were so strong; **it was that Israel was so disobedient.**

Israel thought the problem was the Midianites but the real problem was Israel. It is human nature to blame others for problems that we cause.

The Angel of the Lord appears to Gideon, Verses 11-13:

Verse 11

¹¹ And there came an angel of the Lord, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites.

And there came an angel of the Lord... When the Angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, we recognize this is as a theophany – an Old Testament appearance of Jesus Christ, in human, bodily form, but before His incarnation in Bethlehem.

The description of the encounter with the **Angel of the Lord** shows that this is not merely an angel speaking on behalf of God. It shows that **God himself**, appearing in human form, spoke to Gideon:

· *And the Lord looked upon him, and said* (Judges 6:14)

· *And the Lord said unto him* (Judges 6:16)

and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites... This was both difficult and humiliating. Wheat was threshed in open spaces, typically on a hill-top so the breeze could blow away the chaff. Wheat was not normally threshed in a sunken place like a winepress. Things had come to such a pass that the 'beating out' had to be done in secret, so that the Midianites would not know about it. For this reason his son Gideon did it himself by hand. He was in a panic lest the Midianites discover it. They had scanty enough food to see them through the year.

Verse 12

¹² And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour.

One of the most interesting things to me, is that God calls those who are the least likely to expect it. They are generally not trained in the job God has for them to do. Their ability and strength to carry through on what God wants them to do, lies in God's abilities, not in their own. The land of Israel is caught up in idolatry. They are heavily oppressed on every side, but God knows who to

choose to serve Him. He sends the angel of the LORD to speak. Gideon raised wheat and hid it from the Midianites. What an unlikely person to be called of God! Gideon was a simple man.

The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour... This was a strange greeting to Gideon. It didn't seem like the Lord was with him and it didn't seem that he was a mighty man of valor.

Verse 13

¹³ And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be 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.

Gideon was not sure to whom he was talking, but he sensed from his words that he was somehow from Jehovah. So he challenged Him as to why, if Jehovah was with him, they were in this state. Why had these troubles befallen them? Why had Jehovah not done something about it before? Those who still clung to the covenant were constantly being told by their fathers of what Jehovah had done for them in the past, when He had brought them out of Egypt (Exodus 13:8; Deuteronomy 6:20 on). They had heard it so often. But that was just a recounting of history. Where was His powerful activity now? For seven long years they had suffered abominably but He had done nothing.

Gideon, Character Study: Question: "Who was Gideon?"

Answer: The account of Gideon's life is recorded in Judges 6:11-8:32. The backdrop for Gideon's biography begins with the Israelites being ravaged by the Midianites as a consequence of their disobedience to God (Judges 6:1). For seven years they faced invasions from the Midianites, Amalekites, and Eastern foreigners who ruined their crops and destroyed their cattle. Although they had been unfaithful to God by worshipping the gods of the Amorites, they cried out to God for His help without realizing why this was happening to them (Judges 6:6). And so God sends them a prophet to remind them of how the one true God had provided for them in the past and yet how quickly they had forsaken Him (Judges 6:8-10).

God hears their cries and graciously intervenes by sending an angel to Gideon to call him into service (verses 11-14).

Gideon, whose name means "_____ " or "_____,

Gideon belonged to an undistinguished family of the Abiezrites, but from the angel's greeting we can assume that Gideon had already proved to be a mighty warrior (Judges 6:12). Though Gideon was a willing servant of God, he needed assurance that it was, in fact, God calling him to this divine service (vs.17). In accomplishing the mission set before him by God, Gideon proves himself to be faithful, a mighty warrior, a strong leader of men (Judges 7:17), and a diplomat (Judges 8:1-3). As such, he is included in a fitting testimonial for the great men of faith in Hebrews 11:32-34. Gideon was the fifth judge and renowned as the greatest of Israel.

Hebrews 11:32-34

³² And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of **Gedeon**, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

³³ Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.

³⁴Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

The highlights of Gideon's life include his victorious battle against Israel's enemies. However, we mustn't overlook his amazing faith, by which he carried out God's mission and which was first put to the test and confirmed when he destroyed the Baal idols his father and the community had been worshipping (Judges 6:25-27). Gideon's battle triumph is preceded by God's anointing (Judges 6:34). It was no small feat that Gideon managed to enlist his tribesmen, the Abiezerites, to go into battle with him. These were the men whose idols he had destroyed and who had renamed him "Jerubbaal" (Judges 6:32). Before entering battle, Gideon's troops number 32,000, but in obedience to God he reduces them by 22,000 (Judges 7:2-3). Again in obedience to God he decreases the remaining 10,000 by a further 9,700, leaving him with just 300 men (verses 7-8). This was against an enemy that is described as "lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude" (Judges 7:12). With the battle finally won, the people suggest that Gideon rule over them as their king, but he declines their accolades and tells them the Lord will rule over them (Judges 8:22-23).

Gideon had proved his faithfulness to God, and his obedience had required him to take a stand against his own father and tribe. And, although he feared his own people (Judges 6:24), from the three requests he made for the Lord's confirmation of His will, it is evident he feared God much more. In battle he took on far greater odds than were realistic to mere mortals. When the Israelites wanted to honor him as their king for triumphing over their enemies and restoring Israel's pride, Gideon, recognizing God as the real victor in the battle, declines their request and affords the rightful sovereignty to God. This was a great test of Gideon's faithfulness, when he could so easily have succumbed to pride by accepting the people's honor. So, it is with great surprise that we see Gideon go on to compromise his faith by requesting they all contribute gold from the plunder of the battle so he could create an "ephod," a breastplate or mask used in cultic worship (Judges 8:24-26). And, as we see in verse 27, it became a snare to Gideon and his family.

From Gideon's example we can learn that no matter how great the odds against us may be, our faithful God is sovereign, and He will always see us through whatever battles we face in life, as long as we remain faithful to His calling and obedient to His commands. We can also see how God uses ordinary people to accomplish His plans, although with Gideon, the key factor was his willingness to obey God.

Sometimes, the most difficult people to witness our faith to are our families. And we can see after Gideon destroys the false gods his family had been worshipping that he receives an anointing from the Lord. It was because of this anointing that he was able to accomplish the mission that God had set before him. And it is with God's anointing on our lives that we can truly claim "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). Gideon had gone from being a warrior in hiding, threshing wheat at the foot of a hill out of sight of the enemy, to vanquishing the same enemy in battle. However, he was careful to ensure that it was God's will he was obeying. As the Apostle Paul wrote, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:2).

There may be times when everyone around us does lack the faith to go on, and it is up to us, like Gideon, to take the lead by our example and encourage the weak among us (Judges 7:17; Romans 15:1).

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Judges 6, Gideon's Call to God's Service, his Ministry and his Battle, Verses 14-40:

Verse 14

¹⁴ 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 the Lord looked upon him, and said... This was Gideon's commission from God Himself to deliver Israel, but Gideon, like many another great man who has been called to some tremendous task, hesitated from a strong feeling of humility and unworthiness. Such humility is the usual companion of true greatness. Both Jeremiah and Moses expressed similar feelings of unworthiness and inadequacy when called to their mighty work.

The change of phrase from "the angel of the Lord" to "the Lord" is remarkable. The same before called the angel of the Lord, and who was no other than Christ himself; who looked upon him with great earnestness, and with great delight and pleasure smiled upon him, and thereby showing he had a kindness for him, and meant well to him

Might = Is power or strength. Synonyms: power, force, energy, ability

Go in this thy might... It is hard to see that Gideon had *any* **might** to go in. Yet the Angel of the Lord didn't mock Gideon when he told him, "**Go in this might of yours.**" Gideon indeed had **might**, but not as we might normally think.

- Gideon had the **might** of the *humble*, threshing wheat on the winepress floor
- Gideon had the **might** of the *caring*, because he cared about the low place of Israel
- Gideon had the **might** of *knowledge*, because he knew God did great things in the past
- Gideon had the **might** of the *spiritually hungry* because he wanted to see God to great works again
- Gideon had the **might** of the *teachable*, because he listened to what the Angel of the Lord said
- Gideon had the **might** of the *weak*, and God's strength is perfected in weakness

and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?... He tells him to fight for Israel. There is a promise in this, that the Lord will be with him and strengthen him for the battle. God has promised him victory over the Midianites.

Verse 15

¹⁵ And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.

And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel?... Gideon neither has men nor money.

behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house... Thus God is often pleased to choose the weak things of the world to confound the strong.

Verse 16

¹⁶ And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee... God's assurance to Gideon was not to build up his self-confidence, but to assure him that God was indeed with him. Gideon did not need more self-confidence, he needed more God-confidence.

God promised that Gideon would be victorious, not because Gideon was mighty but because "Surely I will be with thee" (Exodus 3:12; Joshua 1:9).

Exodus 3:12

¹² And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

Joshua 1:9

⁹ Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

The Christian's confidence should rest in God's presence and power, not in personal abilities or resources. (Hebrew 13:5)

Hebrews 13:5

⁵ Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man... As easily, as if they were all but one man.



Verse 17

¹⁷ And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me.

And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight... Grace is basically unmerited favor--God's choosing to love us, save us, and bless us while we are yet in our sins. Because of grace, we can receive something for nothing.

then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me... It was not wrong for Gideon to ask for a confirming sign. It made sense to ask God to confirm some area of direction that was not specifically detailed in His word, and in regard to something as life-or-death as leading Israel into battle against an enemy.

then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me... Moses asked for a Sign and Grace as well:

Exodus 33:11-23

¹¹ And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.

¹² And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight.

¹³ Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people.

¹⁴ And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.

¹⁵ And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.

¹⁶ For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.

¹⁷ And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name.

¹⁸ And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory.

¹⁹ And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.

²⁰ And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.

²¹ And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock:

²² And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by:

²³ And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.

GRACE

You need it. You can't live without it, but you can't purchase it and you can't earn it. It only ever comes by means of a gift, and when you receive it, you immediately realize how much you needed it all along, and you wonder how you could've lived so long without it.

In a fallen world, populated by selfish, lost, fearful, and rebellious people, it's the one thing that everyone needs. And you can only give it to someone else when you have first been given it yourself, because you can't give away that which you don't have.

You see, God's grace is the most powerful force in the universe, so I would have to argue that it's the most beautiful word in the universe. It reaches you where you are and takes you where God wants you to be. It has the power to do something that nothing else can do: transform you at the causal core of who you are as a human being - your heart.

OVERUSED & UNDER-DEFINED

Grace, however, is also one of the most overused words in the church. I'm afraid that we use all these theologically beautiful words without knowing what we're saying.

So you may be thinking "Okay, Paul, I get your definition that grace is the freely-given love, forgiveness, acceptance and help of God. I get that there's nothing I could ever do to earn it, but I'm not sure I understand what grace looks like."

Let's look some different types of grace. I don't believe that these are the *only* variations of grace, but for the sake of this Article, I'm only going to focus on these few.

1. FORGIVENESS

First and foremost, there's the grace of forgiveness. We all do wrong - the Bible calls that sin - and that leaves us guilty. Guilty people need to be condemned and punished unless they're forgiven and declared guilt-free.

Jesus Christ went to the Cross to carry our sin and to bear our punishment so we could experience radical, comprehensive, and complete forgiveness. In Jesus Christ, we're forgiven for everything we've ever done in the past, everything we now do in the present, and everything we'll ever do in the future.

2. ACCEPTANCE

God not only forgives us through grace, but He welcomes us into relationship with Him. He invites us into His family. He adopts us as His children, and because of that, we now have this Father-child relationship with Him where we can come to Him.

We can sit on His lap and bring our needs, concerns, and failures to Him, and He responds as a loving and kind Father. Sin once separated us from God; by grace, we now have acceptance.

3. PRESENCE

Like acceptance, the grace of God's presence means that our Father is not distant. In fact, God is present with us wherever we are, whomever we're with, and whatever we're doing.

The Bible tells us that God, in His grace, has made us the place where He dwells. It wasn't enough for God to forgive us - He literally unzipped us and got inside us by His Holy Spirit, and so He is with us all the time.

4. FREEDOM

God's grace also delivers. Sin turns us into addicts - we're slaves of sin, but God's grace breaks that bondage. Grace gives us the power to say "No!" and turn in a much better direction.

5. COMPLETION

Finally, God's grace is the grace of completion. There will be a day when you and I will be fully restored to who we were meant to be. There will be no more sin; there will be no more struggle. Everything will be restored, and we will worship in the presence of this amazing God of grace.

6. COMMON GRACE

God loves everyone. So, there is a common grace that He gives all people whether they acknowledge Him or not. Matthew 5:45 tells us, "He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."

This is God's ETERNAL GOODNESS

- A. Established by God in creation
- B. Preserves sinful man and sin cursed creation from self-destruction.
- C. It is the fullness of God's goodness found in all creation.

COMMON GRACE – IS THE LAW OF LIFE

7. SAVING GRACE

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God." (Eph 2:8) By His saving grace, God has paid the ransom for everyone who will receive His gift of salvation. This alone is overwhelming.

This is God's ETERNAL LOVE

- A. Established in Christ
- B. Drawing all mankind toward His salvation
- C. It is the fullness of God's love found in Christ

SAVING GRACE – IS THE LAW OF LOVE

8. EMPOWERING GRACE

This is God's ETERNAL LIFE

- A. Established in you
- B. It is our empowering so we can fulfil our God purpose.
- C. It is the fullness of God's eternal life found through the Holy Spirit.

EMPOWERING GRACE – IS THE LAW OF ETERNAL LIFE

9. SANCTIFYING GRACE

There is power in God's grace and immediately after we are saved, it goes to work to purify or sanctify us. You play a part in your purification through obedience, but ultimately you have to count on His sanctifying grace and know that "he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion" (Philippians 1:6).

10. PROVISIONAL GRACE

Through His provisional grace, God provides for all our needs. As James 1:17 says, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights." When you get a better job or an unexpected gift, count it as grace from God.

11. MIRACULOUS GRACE

Look at what was happening in the early church. "Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, performed amazing miracles and signs among the people" (Acts 6:8). Through His grace, God still does miraculous things every day. He doesn't have to do this. He does it because He is full of grace.

12. SERVING GRACE

Every believer is freely given spiritual gifts to serve others and bolster their faith. 1 Peter 4:10 tells us, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." We each receive serving grace.

13. SUSTAINING GRACE

Finally, in those times of trial and suffering, Jesus says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor 12:9). And the Bible says, "Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need" (Heb 4:16). God sustains us.

14. HABITUAL GRACE

Is the permanent disposition to live and act in keeping with God's call, a supernatural push or encouragement, whether at the beginning of conversion or in the course of the work of sanctification.

God's Grace Abounds in Many Different Ways

God gives us unmerited favor in so many different forms. His grace and mercy are *limitless*.

I pray that you will know that "God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work" (2 Cor 9:8).

WHERE DO I FIND GRACE?

Hebrews 4:16

¹⁶Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

First notice that God calls His throne the "**throne of grace.**" This means that our God is a God full of mercy, help, compassion, and divine favor, and that He can release His divine power and grace into any situation that we will need His help on.

Then notice how this verse ends – “that we may obtain mercy and FIND GRACE in time of need.”

In other words, if you properly approach the Lord with your petitions and requests, then He can give you His divine grace and power to help you handle any type of problem, no matter how extreme or severe the problem may appear to you in the natural.

The grace of God will find you. No matter where you’ve gone or how far you’ve drifted, nowhere is out of the reach of God’s grace.

Biblical examples of Grace. GOD SHOWED GRACE TO:

- Noah Genesis 6:8
- Abraham Genesis 18:3, Genesis 24:12
- Lot Genesis 19:19
- Jacob Genesis 32:9-10, 33:5, 11, 47:29
- Joseph Genesis 39:21, 43:29, Deuteronomy, Acts 7:10
- Moses Exodus 33:12-13,16-17, 34:9
- Naphtali Deuteronomy 33:23
- Joshua Joshua 2:12-14
- The Judges Judges 2:18
- Gideon Judges 6:17
- Ruth Ruth 1:8
- David 1Kings 3:6, 2Chronicles 1:8, Acts 7:46
- Solomon 1Kings 3:6
- Samuel 1Samuel 2:26
- Esther Ester 2:9, 15-17
- Israel 1Samuel 15:6, 2Kings 13:23, Nehemiah 9:31, Psalms 78:38, 85:1, 102:13-14, Ezekiel 9:9, Jeremiah 2:2, 30:2, Isaiah 54:8, Micah 7:20
- Hezekiah Jr Jr 26:19
- Ezra Ezra 7:27-28
- Nehemiah Nehemiah 2:8
- Mary Luke 1:30
- The Apostles Acts 4:33

THEY WERE FULL OF

- Jacob Genesis 33:8-11
- Ruth Ruth 2:10
- David 1Samuel 20:14, 24:18, 2Samuel 2:5-6, 9:1-7, 10:2, 1Kings 2:7, 1Chronicles 19:2, Acts 7:46

Stephen Acts 6:8

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter Six Outline: Israel's apostasy brings them into servitude, Verse 1. The details of Israel's bondage to Midian, Verses 2-6. In response to Israel's cry to the Lord, God sends a prophet, Verses 7-10. The deliverer is called, The Angel of the Lord appears to Gideon, Verses 11-13. Gideon's Call to God's Service, his Ministry and his Battle, Verses 14-40.

Judges 6, Gideon's Call to God's Service, his Ministry and his Battle, Verses 14-40:

Verse 18

¹⁸ 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 thou come again.

Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee... Gideon wants The Lord to remain until he can go and get something (**my present**). The Lord agrees to wait for the return of Gideon.

Having at this point in the theophany recognized that it was a Divine Person (**The Lord**) who visited him, Gideon desired to worship Him, and he sought and received permission to take time to prepare his **present**. The Lord promised to wait until he returned.

and bring forth my present, and set it before thee... To treat The Lord with, as a stranger and a messenger of God; the word for the "present" is "minchah", often used for a meat offering, therefore some have thought of a sacrifice; but it appears by what follows that it was not of the nature of a sacrifice; and, besides, Gideon was no priest, nor was this a place for sacrifice, nor was there here any altar. This sacrificial gift consisted of such food as they were accustomed to set before a guest whom they wished especially to honour.

Verse 19

¹⁹ 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.

The flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot. The flesh seems to have been roasted, which is done by cutting it into small pieces, fixed on a skewer, and put before the fire. The broth was for immediate use. The other, brought in a hand-basket was intended to be a future supply to the traveler.

This **present** is like a sacrificial offering that Gideon has brought out to the angel of the LORD.

Verse 20

²⁰ 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.

And the angel of God said unto him,.. Instead of sitting down and partaking of the food made for him, The Lord asked him do as follows:

Take the flesh, and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock... Not as a table to eat it from, but as an altar to offer it upon; and which the rock and altar might be type or picture of Christ, who sanctities every gift, present, and offering of his people: this rock was undoubtedly in sight, and very probably near the oak. We the combination of food to eat and fellowship as a offering to The Lord.

Colossians 3:17

¹⁷ And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.



and pour out the broth... The Lord orders Gideon to put the broth upon the flesh and cakes, and upon the rock also, which by bringing from his house must have been cool and it became cooler by being poured out, and cooler still by being poured upon a cold rock...

And he did so... Gideon readily obeyed The Lord's orders

Verse 21

²¹ 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.

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... This miracle must have astounded Gideon, leaving him no room whatever to doubt the identity of his celestial visitor.

"Fire" is often a sign of the divine presence (compare Exodus 3:2-4; 13:21-22; 19:18; Isaiah 4:4; Ezekiel 1:27; Daniel 7:9; Zechariah 2:5; Acts 2:3; Hebrews 12:18; Revelation 1:14).

Zechariah 2:5

⁵ For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.

This fire that consumed the offering, showed it was accepted from heaven. This should be a sufficient sign for Gideon that the message was truly from God. This is what happened here.

Verse 22

²² 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 when Gideon perceived that he was an angel of the Lord... By the miracle he just witnessed, and the manner of The Lord's departure.

Alas, O Lord God! for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face... In seeing Jesus, we behold the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. And seeing Jesus, we see in him the Father also without danger.

Hebrews 1:3

³ Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

Verse 23

²³ And the Lord said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die.

There is a great beauty in this verse, if read in the gospel language. The eye that beholds God in Christ, is so far from being in danger of death, that in him he beholds peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Verse 24

²⁴ Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovahshalom: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord,.. On the top of the rock where he had laid his food, and which had been consumed by fire issuing out of it, as a token of divine acceptance, and as an assurance of his destroying the Midianites as easily and quickly as the fire had consumed them, and therefore had great encouragement to erect an altar here for God.

Gideon's naming the altar which he built, in commemoration of the words of peace spoken by The Lord, is very similar to what we read of Abraham in Genesis 22:14, and of Moses (Exodus 17:15, when he named the altar Jehovahnissi.

Gideon's response to this assurance was to erect an altar there to Jehovah, which he called Jehovahshalom. Shalom is the Hebrew word for "Peace."

And God gave Gideon the Victory against the Midianites and brought Peace to Israel!

JEHOVAH-SHALOM reminds us that God gives peace to His people because of the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1 says:

1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have **peace** with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

Do you want Peace in your life? Then turn to God!

In the Bible God is often called the God of peace!

Romans 15:13

¹³ Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Do you want Peace in your life? Then turn to The Lord Jesus Christ!

Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace!

Isaiah 9:6

⁶ For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, **The Prince of Peace.**

The Gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ is the Gospel of peace!

Romans 10:15

¹⁵ And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of **peace**, and bring glad tidings of good things!

JEHOVAH-SHALOM reminds us that God gives peace to His people because of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Philippians 4:7

⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Other Jehovah Banners, Altars and Names...

JEHOVAH-JIREH: Jehovah will provide.

JEHOVAH-JIREH is the name Abraham gave to an altar after God had provided a sacrifice in the place of Isaac (Genesis 22:1-14).

Genesis 22:14 we read:

¹⁴ And Abraham called the name of that place **Jehovahjireh**: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

JEHOVAH-JIREH reminds us of God's mercy in seeing man's need of Salvation and in providing His Son The Lord Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for sin.

JEHOVAH-JIREH provided a Saviour for us His Son The Lord Jesus Christ! John 3:16 says:

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

JEHOVAH-JIREH provided us with a Saviour!

JEHOVAH-JIREH provided us with Salvation!

JEHOVAH-JIREH provided us with His Holy Spirit the very second we become Saved!

JEHOVAH-JIREH provided us with Eternal Life Amen!

JEHOVAH-JIREH provided us with a Home called Heaven!

JEHOVAH-NISSI: Jehovah is my banner.

JEHOVAH-NISSI is the name Moses gave to an altar after God defeated Israel's enemy, Amalak, and promised to destroy him utterly. This name reminds us that God is powerful and faithful to defeat the enemies of His people. God is the believer's victory over all enemies. (Exodus 17:8-17)

Exodus 17:15

¹⁵ And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it **Jehovahnissi:**

JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU: Jehovah is our righteousness.

Which means: Jehovah is our righteousness.

A name is given prophetically to The Lord Jesus Christ. It is another proof of Jesus Christ's Deity.

Jeremiah 23:6

⁶In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

Righteousness means morally right or justifiable but some of its synonyms help us more: blameless, guiltless, holy, innocent, just, sinless. When God revealed himself as "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS", we see a Righteous, Blameless, Holy God!

How exactly is the Lord our righteousness? Since every one of us has sinned, we have no right to stand before God and say; "Here I am Lord, right, just, sinless and blameless. I'm innocent God."

But Our Lord and Saviour Jesus can stand before the Father and say all those things. So by carrying our sins on the cross, he is letting us ride on his righteousness. He can say to the Father; "I've got You covered. Don't look at her sin because I paid for it and I want you to see her as blameless." The Father accepts Jesus' righteousness as if it were ours.

JEHOVAH –RAAH or ROI: The Lord my Shepherd.

David writes in Psalm 23

¹ **The Lord is my shepherd (JEHOVAH –RAAH);** I shall not want.

David describes God not as "a" Shepherd but as "my" Shepherd, which pictures the personal, intimate concern God has for every aspect of the life of His "sheep".

God loves His people, God cares for His people, God protects His people, He's a personal God. He's my Shepherd; He's your Shepherd, Amen!

And God's Son The Lord Jesus Christ is our Shepherd as well!

Jesus Himself said in: John 10:11

¹¹ I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

JEHOVAH MEKODDISHKEM: The Lord Who Sanctifies you.

The Lord Who Sanctifies You, The Lord Who Makes Holy.

Exodus 31:13

¹³Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that **I am the LORD that doth sanctify you.**

That word **Sanctify** means: to cleanse, purify or make holy. To separate, set apart or appoint to a holy, sacred or religious use.

And when You become a Christian God Sanctifies You!

God has chosen us to be special, different, and holy, as a testimony of His love and grace in a world that is infected and enslaved by sin.

1 Peter 2:9 says:

⁹ But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; We're to be different from this World.

1 Peter 1:16

¹⁶ Because it is written, **Be ye holy; for I am holy**. Why? Because we're Sanctified!

"Be ye holy; for I am holy" That means were not a Christian by name only, but also in our whole lives. We're to talk the talk and walk the walk!

Matthew 5:16

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

JEHOVAH RAPHA: The Lord That Heals.

Exodus 15:26

²⁶And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am **the LORD that healeth thee.**

Under what conditions would Jehovah Heal Israel and exempt them from the plagues of Egypt?

1. Listen, 2. Obey, 3. Seek ear to His Commandments, 4. And keeping His Statues.

Health, illness & Obedience go together & give us the principle: Obedience brings Blessing & Disobedience brings judgment even as Pharaoh's rebellion against God brought 10 plagues.

JEHOVAH RAPHA who heals in The Old Testament is Jesus Christ who heals in The New Testament!

The ministry of the Lord Jesus began with healing, In the synagogue at Nazareth, He opened His public ministry by stating in:

Luke 4:18

¹⁸ The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

Matthew writing of Jesus in **Matthew 4:23**

²³ And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

We have a **JEHOVAH RAPHA**: The Lord who heals is Jesus!

And The Lord Jesus can heal any heart!

The Bible says about Jesus in 1 Peter 2:24

²⁴ Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.

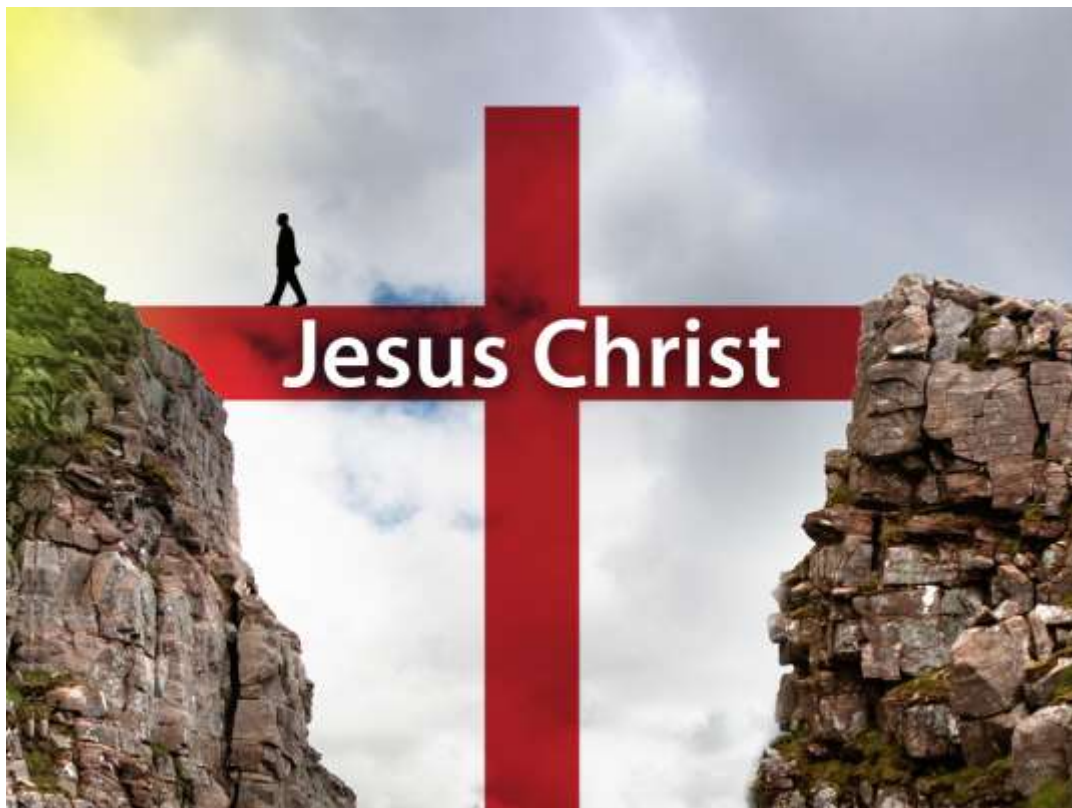
And if you have some Physical Ailments, a Broken Heart, or a Broken Relationship with God there's someone I know that can heal You,

And that's The Lord Jesus Christ our Jehovah Rapha!

JEHOVAH SAVES: JESUS

Romans 10:9 says:

⁹ That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.



Bonus Bible Verses!

JEHOVAH SABAOTH

JEHOVAH SABAOTH means The Lord of Hosts, The Lord of Powers, The Lord of Armies. This name denotes His universal sovereignty over every army, both spiritual and earthly. The Lord of Hosts is the king of all heaven and earth.

1 Samuel 1:3

³And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto **the LORD of hosts** in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there.

Isaiah 6:5

⁵Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, **the LORD of hosts.**

JEHOVAH SHAMMAH (The Lord is there).

Ezekiel 48:35

³⁵It was round about eighteen thousand measures: and the name of the city from that day shall be, The LORD is there.

Jehovah-SHAMMAH is but one of several **NEW NAMES** by which Jerusalem will be known in the future ages

JEHOVAH-ELYON, Means: Most High God-God is Sovereign!

Psalms 7:17

¹⁷I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness: and will sing praise **to the name of the Lord most high.**

Daniel 4:34-35

³⁴And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed **the most High**, and I praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation:

³⁵And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter Six Outline: Israel's apostasy brings them into servitude, Verse 1. The details of Israel's bondage to Midian, Verses 2-6. In response to Israel's cry to the Lord, God sends a prophet, Verses 7-10. The deliverer is called, The Angel of the Lord appears to Gideon, Verses 11-13. Gideon's Call to God's Service, his Ministry and his Battle, Verses 14-40.

Judges 6, Gideon's Call to God's Service, his Ministry and his Battle, Verses 14-40:

Verse 25, Gideon's first assignment from God.

²⁵ 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 throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath,...What is commanded here is that Gideon should take two bullocks (which would be required in the work of demolition and in the building of the altar to Jehovah), including the FAT one, which was probably being reserved for a sacrifice.

and cut down the grove that is by it: As being usual with the Heathens to plant groves near or around their altars and temples where religious worship was performed; partly to make them more pleasant.

Significantly, the very first assignment for Gideon was that of cleaning up his own residence. His father had violated God's will by sponsoring the altar to Baal and the abominable Asherah that stood by it.

In Gideon's community, Baal was worshipped right alongside of Jehovah. God called Gideon to get his own house in order first.

"This action might seem injurious to his father's authority; but God's command was a sufficient warrant, and Gideon was now called to be the supreme magistrate, whereby he was made his father's superior, and was authorized to root out all idolatry, and the instruments thereof." – John Wesley

Verse 26

²⁶ 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.

This bullock was to be offered up, and with the wood of the grove, in sacrifice to the Lord. We see then that things which have been abused to idolatry, may afterwards be lawfully used in God's service.

Verse 27

²⁷ 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.

and did as the Lord had said unto him:.. Gideon obeyed God!

that he did it by night... Gideon probably did this at night and under the cover of secrecy because he feared that his father's household and the men of the city would prevent him from doing what needed to be done.

Verses 28 & 29

²⁸ And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was cast down, and the grove was cut down that was by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that was built.

Verse 29

²⁹ And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they enquired and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash hath done this thing.

When the irate citizens inquired as to who had done it, they quickly learned that it was Gideon. As with people, "A secret known to ten men is no secret." They didn't have a hard time figuring out who was responsible for the destruction of the altar. Gideon was found out immediately. What he did could not be hidden.

Verse 30

³⁰ Then the men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die: because he hath cast down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the grove that was by it.

This shows just how powerful Baal worship was in Israel at this time. A Death Sentence for offending Baal!

Verse 31

³¹ And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning: if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar.

Gideon's father made a very logical argument for preserving his son's life. Since Baal was the offended party, he could defend himself.

Verse 32

³² Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar.

Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal,..This incident gave Gideon the nickname Jerubbaal. The name means, “A man against whom Baal is to strive and contend”; a title of honour.

Verses 33-35, Gideon gathers an army.

Verse 33

³³ Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel.

Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east were gathered together... The enemies of Israel were gathered together; not as being alarmed with this fact of Gideon in destroying the altar of Baal, and so came to avenge it; but it was their usual time of gathering together to come into Canaan, being harvest time, as appears earlier by Gideon being employed in threshing of the wheat.

Verse 34

³⁴ But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered after him.

But the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon,... This follows the familiar pattern of the Spirit's work upon men under the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit comes upon specific people for specific reasons, usually for divinely empowered leadership. The Holy Spirit empowered individuals in the Old Testament in order to accomplish a divine plan. Samson's mighty deeds were performed when "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily" (Judges 14:6, 15:4). Other examples abound, including the Spirit's work in Joseph (Genesis 41:38), Moses and the 70 elders of Israel (Numbers 11:17), Gideon (Judges 6:34), David (1 Chronicles 28:12), and many others. When the task was accomplished, the Holy Spirit would leave the person. This is in contrast to the Holy Spirit's current role of indwelling believers and abiding with them "forever" (John 14:16). Under the New Testament, a broad, secure and generous outpouring of the Holy Spirit is promised upon all flesh (Joel 2:28-29, Acts 2:17-18).

and he blew a trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered after him... As an alarm of war. Because of this divine empowering, Gideon was able to gather an impressive number of troops on short notice. Judges 7:3 tells us that 32,000 men came to follow him into battle.

“Though clothed and armed with the Spirit of the Lord, yet, as the Lord is graciously pleased to work with human instruments, Gideon calls in the Lord's people to his aid. **And are we not taught to do the same by prayer?**” – Hawker's Poor Man's Commentary

Verse 35

³⁵ And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh; who also was gathered after him: and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.

and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali... Because these tribes were nearest to him, and so could quickly join with him; and were nearest the enemy.

Verse 36-40, God assures Gideon's doubts.

³⁶ And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said,

Gideon showed that he had a weak, imperfect faith. For such a bold, life-endangering mission, one might understand (and encourage) his request for one sign (fulfilled in Judges 6:17-21). But asking for second and third signs showed that his faith was weak.

Verse 37

³⁷ Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said.

Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor... On the floor where he was threshing, where the angel first appeared to him, and which lay exposed to the open air, so that the dew might easily fall upon it.

God already gave Gideon a sign (Judges 6:17-21). Here, Gideon asked God to do a second miracle to confirm His word — and then a third miracle to confirm it again.

Sometimes Christians talk about putting out a “fleece” before the Lord. This phrase refers back to what Gideon did here. He used a literal fleece in asking God to confirm His Word with a sign.

******Sometimes God shows His displeasure with such requests. In Luke 1:18, when Zechariah, John the Baptist’s father, asked for a confirming sign, the Lord made him mute until the birth of his son.

Verse 38

³⁸ And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water.

God graciously provided him with the sign he requested, so much so that a whole dish full of water was wrung from the fleece while the ground was bone dry. He was promised the dew of heaven.



Verse 39

³⁹ And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew.

Gideon also did not keep his word. God fulfilled the sign once, and Gideon said that would be enough for him. But he went back on his word after God fulfilled the first sign. Yet the Lord was still merciful and gracious to Gideon. This is an outstanding example of God's gracious patience with a troubled child.

Verse 40

⁴⁰ And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

Just in case that was an accident, Gideon asks him for the reverse to happen. God does just as he asks.

“With the physical properties of fleece lying overnight exposed on a bare rock, the differentials of condensation and evaporation are entirely understandable. Fishermen living on one of the streamless and springless desert islands have obtained sufficient water for their livelihood by spreading out fleece in the evening and wringing dew from them in the morning (S. Tolkowsky, *Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society.*, 3, 1923, pp. 197-199). The true miracle is the REVERSE of the process, and that is what young Gideon required.” - Anchor Bible Commentary

Gideon and You: What He Did, and What You Shouldn't Do.

Drawing inspiration from the story of Gideon, Christians “lay out the fleece” in an attempt to discern God's will. But let's make some observations about Gideon's situation:

- **Gideon did not put out the fleece to figure out God's will.** He already *knew* God's will. That was plain within the first thirty seconds of his meeting with the angel. He put out the fleece even though he already knew what he was supposed to do.
- **Gideon put out the fleece because he was faithless and unbelieving.** Gideon had already seen miracles. Why did he need a wet fleece and dry ground? He laid out the fleece, because He did not trust God to fulfill His promises. He knew God's will, but refused to go and do it.
- **Gideon put out the fleece, knowing he was asking for a miracle.** Often, Christians “put out the fleece” by saying something like “If I see an advertisement for a cruise in the next five minutes, then I'll *know* God wants me to take a vacation to the Bahamas.” If that actually happened, and a cruise for Royal Caribbean Cruises showed up, it wouldn't be much of a miracle, nor should you take it as a “sign.” What Gideon was asking for was a straight-up miracle. There is nothing wrong with asking God for miracles; perhaps we should do *more* of it. But please notice again *why* Gideon was asking for a miracle. He wasn't asking God to save a loved one from cancer or save a soul from sin. He was asking to see a personal miracle show from God, which would allegedly help reverse his own faithlessness and disobedience.

Obviously, we don't want to be too hard on Gideon. After all, God was asking him to rally the squashed nation and rise up to defeat a huge and powerful enemy (Judges 7:12). Nonetheless, let's not carelessly import Gideon's fleece techniques into our own situation merely because it's mentioned in the Bible. Let's understand the context.

Back to Your Life, Fleece Included: Why Fleece Isn't Necessary

Do you sometimes try to lay out the fleece before God?

Think about what you're doing. Whether it's figuring out if you should take the job offer, move to another area of the country, have children, buy the car, take the vacation, or start the new ministry, you don't need fleece. You simply need faith.

God still performs miracles. God still shows His power. God still provides direction, but He doesn't need your fleece to do it. When you think that maybe you should lay out the fleece, instead surrender in faith. God does not reveal His will by having us devise little tricks and tests to see what He will do. He is gracious and kind, but He doesn't do stunts on demand. He guides in His own ways, on His own terms, in His own timing. That's what sovereignty is. That's why we can submit to God's gracious and loving sovereignty.

Discerning God's will isn't voodoo or divination. We don't need fleece, or any other techniques to figure it out. It is a matter of simple obedience and submitting to His leading, step-by-step. God is big enough to carry through without fleece, tests, or other tricks. Your "fleece" may simply be confusing you or getting in the way.

Instead of laying out the fleece or trying other techniques to figure out God's will, merely trust and obey.

Yet before being too critical of Gideon, we should consider the challenge that was ahead of him. Many of us would immediately refuse such a call, without even considering allowing God to confirm it. Gideon's weak faith was still greater than no faith. For this reason, Gideon is rightly included in the register of great men and women of faith (Hebrews 11:32).





Chapter Seven Outline: God tells Gideon to tell all his soldiers who are afraid to go home. Verses 1-3, Gideon must separate the men according to a particular test. Verses 4-8, Gideon must spy on the camp of the Midianites and find encouragement. Verses 9-11, God reassures Gideon through the Midianites. Verses 12-15, Gideon announces a strange battle plan. Verses 16-18, God strikes the army of Midian with a surprise attack. Verses 19-23, Working towards total defeat of Midian. Verses 24-25.

God tells Gideon to tell all his soldiers who are afraid to go home. Verses 1-3:

Judges 7, Verse 1

1 Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, rose up early, and pitched beside the well of Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

Then Jerubbaal, who is Gideon... It appears that Jerubbaal was now a new name of Gideon, from the circumstance mentioned Judges 6:32. The change of names is common upon remarkable occasions. As Saul, after his conversion to the gospel, is called Paul. Jacob's name changed to Israel. Abram to Abraham.

The people were now with him and they rose up early, ready for battle. The odds did not seem good. 32,000 against 135,000 (Judges 8:10). But they were encouraged by the signs that Gideon had received.

Verse 2

2 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands... This was a great test of Gideon's faith. His army of 32,000 men was already overmatched by 135,000 Midianites. Yet God thought his army was too big, and He commanded Gideon in the next verse to invite all who were afraid to go home. He would be left with only 10,000 men.

lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me... This explains why the army of 32,000 was too large. Israel could still take credit for a victory if they had 32,000 troops. They could believe they were underdogs who triumphed through their own great bravery or strategy. God wanted the odds so bad that the victory would clearly be His alone. The great purpose of God in the defeat of the Midianites was that it might thwart the movement of God's people toward idolatry and turn them again to their allegiance to God. For the

accomplishment of that goal, it was absolutely necessary that the victory should be clearly that of God Himself and not by Israel in their own might.

Verse 3

³ Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

32,000 responded of their own accord came and joined Gideon with an intention and resolution to stand by him, and fight the enemy. Yet when they came and saw what a large host they had to engage with, and how small the army was with Gideon, their hearts failed them. And they were glad to take the advantage of the proclamation. 22,000 left and only 10,000 remained.

Gideon must separate the men according to a particular test. Verses 4-8:

Verse 4

⁴ And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go.

God already reduced Gideon's army from 32,000 to 10,000. Here He reduced it from 10,000 to 300. He did this because 10,000 were still too many for God's purpose.

It is not Gideon who is separating them out, it is the LORD. The Lord will choose His army.

Verse 5

⁵ So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink.

So he brought down the people unto the water: and the LORD said unto Gideon... God has frequently devised a "water test" in the achievement of his holy purposes. It was a water test that selected Rebekah to be the wife of Isaac (Genesis 24:43-46). It was the water test that separated liberated Israel from the pursuing legions of Pharaoh, and here God selected the triumphant three hundred from the ten thousand by a water test. Even today, God chooses among the sons of men by another water test - Baptism (Mark 16:15-16).

At this point, God takes Gideon and the troops down to the river and have them all drink from the running water. The troops who knelt down and drank from the river got sent home; all of the troops who lap up the water like dogs get to stay. The number of dog-like drinkers out of 10,000? Only 300.

Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth... The word lappeth= לִלֵּק (Hebrew) is the sound which a dog makes when he is drinking. The picture here is that of Egyptian dogs do, when he lappeth the water of Nile in fear of a crocodile.

A qualification in a soldier. For in the heat of battle it might often give a warrior great advantage over his foe, if, coming to a stream, he could thus easily refresh himself with drink without being

obliged, if he drank at all, to fall down on his knees, and thereby expose himself to almost certain death from his enemy.

Verse 6

⁶ And the number of them that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water.

Out of 10,000 Men only 300 lapped, putting their hand to their mouth.



Gideon started with 32,000 and ended up with 300...

Only 25% complete The Navy Seal program,

The College Graduation rate is around 50%,

God always uses the Minority and not the Majority.

If you're in the Majority you're on The Broad Road that leads to Destruction,

But the Minority is on the strait gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Matthew 22:14

¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen.



Verse 7

⁷ And the LORD said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.

God assured Gideon that victory was certain, even though only 300 men. Now the Israeli army was less than 1% of its original size and the proportion was 400 Midianite soldiers to each Israeli soldier. Gideon could only trust in God because there was nothing else to trust.

Verse 8

⁸ So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets: and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men: and the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

So the people took victuals in their hand... The 300 men took provisions that they needed.

and their trumpets... That is the trumpets belonging to the whole army, which he retained for the use following.

and he sent all the rest of Israel every man unto his tent.. Not to his tent in the army, but to his own house, in the tribe and city to which he belonged: and retained these three hundred men; that had lapped water, to engage with the Midianites.

Gideon must spy on the camp of the Midianites and find encouragement. Verses 9-11:

Verse 9

⁹ And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand.

And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host... God wanted Gideon to find encouragement in this visit to the enemy's camp. This shows that when God asks us to do hard things for Him, He doesn't fold His arms and sit back and expect us to do it on our own. He is there to guide us and to keep us and to encourage us all along the way.

for I have delivered it into thine hand... God is saying the victory is a guaranteed win! As if it were done already...

Verse 10

¹⁰ But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host:

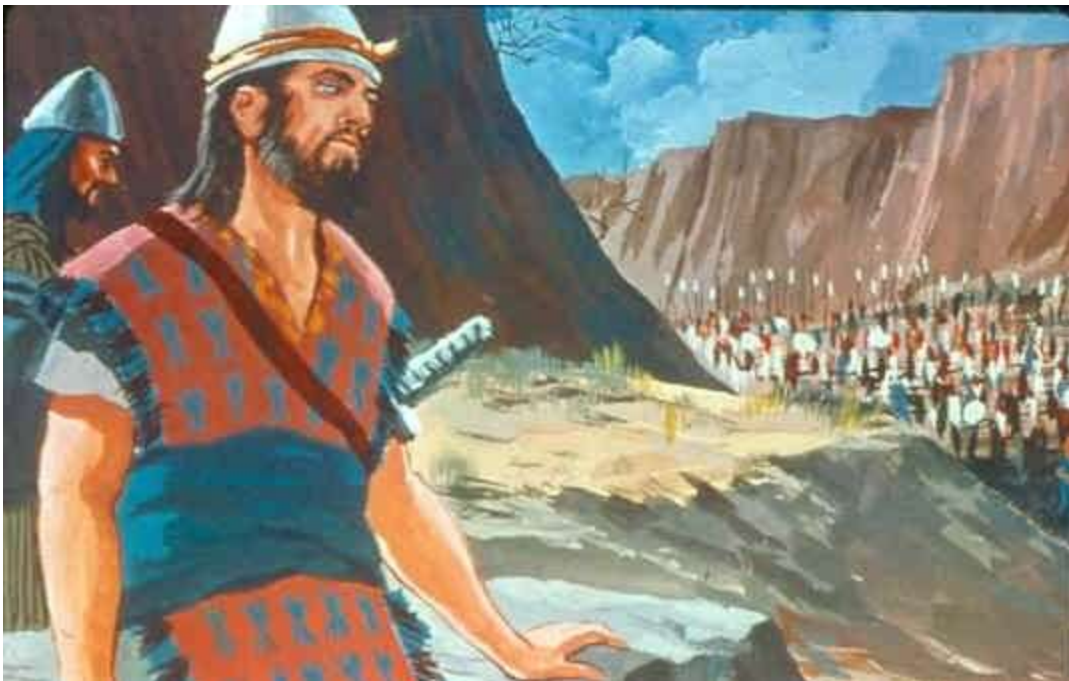
But if thou fear to go down... With his little army, to attack a numerous host in the night, then he is directed to take this step first. God understood Gideon's fear ("But if thou fear") and compassionately offered an opportunity to build up his courage. He did not, however, dismiss Gideon from his task.

go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host... Two is better than one. Christ sent out the seventy disciples by two and two. And himself took Peter, James, and John with him into the garden, where he was to begin his passion. This Phurah was but a servant; yet, for his faithfulness, he is renowned in God's Book!

Verse 11

¹¹ And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host.

And thou shalt hear what they say... The sentinels, who were without side the camp, and stood complete in armour to guard it to pass time at night would talk amongst each other about the upcoming battle and plan, which Gideon hear their plans and confirming what God had already said and strengthening Gideon's faith ("and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened").





Chapter Seven Outline: God tells Gideon to tell all his soldiers who are afraid to go home. Verses 1-3, Gideon must separate the men according to a particular test. Verses 4-8, Gideon must spy on the camp of the Midianites and find encouragement. Verses 9-11, God reassures Gideon through the Midianites. Verses 12-15, Gideon announces a strange battle plan. Verses 16-18, God strikes the army of Midian with a surprise attack. Verses 19-23, Working towards total defeat of Midian. Verses 24-25.

God reassures Gideon through the Midianites. Verses 12-15

Judges 7, Verse 12

Verse 12

¹² And the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the children of the east lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand by the sea side for multitude.

like grasshoppers for multitude... This army consisted at least of 135,000 men, as is clear from Judges 8:10.



Verse 13

¹³ And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along.

And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream... However extraordinary this dream, and the interpretation of it, may appear; we must remember, that it was immediately inspired by God himself, to encourage Gideon...

Dreams were considered of great importance in Bible times, especially if the dreamer was an important man, for it was thought that the gods revealed the future by these means. Every dream was seen as having some significance, the only problem being to discern what the dream ment.

and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along... In this case barley bread was the food of the poor. It was half the value of fine flour (2 Kings 7:1) and was clearly seen as symbolizing oppressed Israel. It would have been their staple diet at this time of oppression. The fact of only one barley cake may indeed suggest the bareness of their provisions. Thus the dream could only mean the destruction of the Midianite confederacy by Israel. That is certainly how the sentinels saw it. The writer probably saw some significance in the fact that they were camped 'by the hill of Moreh' (verse 1). Moreh means 'diviner, oracle giver'.

This dream signified that God would deliver the whole host of the Midianites and their allies into the hands of Gideon.

Verse 14

¹⁴ And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host.

for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host... This is a full proof that God had inspired both the dream and its interpretation.

Verse 15

¹⁵ And it was so, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

and returned into the host of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian... Gideon had already received, by God's own Messenger, the word, "Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." (Judges 6:16) Was not this enough for him?

Gideon announces a strange battle plan. Verses 16-18:

Verse 16

¹⁶ And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.

And he divided the three hundred men into three companies... One hundred in a company, partly to make the better figure, a show of an army, with a right and left wing, and partly that they might fall upon the camp of Midian in different parts

and he put a trumpet in every man's hand... The divine intelligence of this strategy is in this matter of the trumpets. A trumpet (singular) was the signal for movement of a whole company of

men, and any soldier hearing such a signal would have expected a charging assault by the company following that signal. Thus, when three hundred trumpets sounded simultaneously from all sides of the Midianite encampment, the message for the Midianites would certainly have been interpreted as the charge of an almost innumerable host of attackers. There is no wonder that the ensuing panic completely destroyed the invaders.

Lamps... or, *torches*, made of such materials as would quickly take fire, and keep it for some time.

within the pitchers; Partly to preserve the flame from the violence of wind and weather; and partly to conceal it, and surprise their enemy with sudden and unexpected flashes of light.

This story brings the happy assurance to every heart who hears it, that even a child may be a vessel to carry the power of God. God can fill the weakest and most fragile with power for His work. He asks only that the heart shall receive His life.

II. More wonderful still, this is a picture of our dear Lord. He also, as a man, was but an earthen vessel. His enemies broke the vessel which contained His life, but by their cruelty they brought defeat and shame to themselves, and glory to Him.

The Apostle Paul wrote in: 2 Corinthians 4:7

⁷But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

Verse 17

¹⁷And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the outside of the camp, it shall be that, as I do, so shall ye do.

And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise... Gideon will give the signal. What the men see him doing is what they are to do. Observe what I do, and do the same, in blowing a trumpet, breaking a pitcher, and shouting with the words expressed by him.

Verse 18

¹⁸When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.

God didn't use Guns, Swords, Spears, Cannons or Chariots

God used Trumpets, empty pictures & Lamps.

God didn't use a 32,000 man Army; He used 300 Tested Obedient Soldiers.

God does things different than man does. **1 Corinthians 1:27 says:**

²⁷But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;

God strikes the army of Midian with a surprise attack. Verses 19-23:

Verses 19

¹⁹ So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers that were in their hands.

So Gideon, and the hundred men that were with him, came unto the outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; and they had but newly set the watch... Ancient Israel divided the night into three watches of four hours each - 6 o'clock to 10 o'clock, etc. Therefore, the beginning of the middle watch would have been about 10:00 p.m., shortly after the changing of the guard. By far the greater portion of the Midianite host would have been sound asleep.

Verse 20

²⁰ And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal: and they cried, The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.



Verse 21

²¹ And they stood every man in his place round about the camp; and all the host ran, and cried, and fled.

The early Christian writer **Origen** often emphasized elaborate spiritual meanings to Biblical accounts. In this story he made the 300 men types of preachers of the gospel. Their trumpets were a picture of preaching Christ crucified. Their torchlights represented the holy conduct of the preachers.

Verse 22

²² And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Bethshittah in Zererath, and to the border of Abelmeholah, unto Tabbath.

And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow... They were so frightened they fought everything that moved, **and killed each other.**

Those who did not die here, fled to Beth-shittah in Zererath and to the border of Abel-meholah. The more Gideon and his men blew their trumpets, the more frightened they became.



Verse 23

²³ And the men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after the Midianites.

This tactic that God instructed Gideon to use the Midianite soldiers awoke to an explosion of noise, light, and movement coming down on them from all directions. They thought they were being attacked by an army even bigger than they were.

This caused confusion and fear on the Midianites to the point where they were fighting and killing each other in the confusion of the dark.

The odds were 450:1 against Gideon, his 300 Soldiers and One Great, Beautiful, Just, Eternal, Mighty, Holy, Righteous, Loving Faithful God!

And we know who won! God won, we won, because God is Faithful!

In a "normal" situation, a night attack is the hardest thing for an army to defend itself against. They're not ready for an attack, and in the darkness, can't distinguish friend from foe. The attackers usually have some identifier, such as strips of white cloth.

If the Israelites had actually launched a night attack, they would have taken some casualties in the resulting melee. But they simulated a night attack, and let the Midianites "fight it off," which really meant fighting (and destroying) themselves. God knew what He was doing when he used unusual tactics.

Working towards total defeat of Midian. Verses 24-25:

Verse 24

²⁴ And Gideon sent messengers throughout all mount Ephraim, saying, come down against the Midianites, and take before them the waters unto Bethbarah and Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and took the waters unto Bethbarah and Jordan.

Gideon had not invited the tribe of Ephraim to get involved in the war at first. Now he does. He gives them a specific task to do. Ephraim is to block the escape of Midian and mop up. They immediately joined in and took the waters unto Bethbarah and Jordan. They have now trapped the Midianites and their allies.

Verse 25

²⁵ And they took two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb; and they slew Oreb upon the rock Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the winepress of Zeeb, and pursued Midian, and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side Jordan.

And they took two princes of the Midianites, Oreb and Zeeb... These were mighty princes of Midian; and to **Ephraim** went the honor of executing these leaders of the multitudes of the invasion of Israel.

and they slew Oreb upon the rock Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at the winepress of Zeeb... Nothing is known of "the rock" or the "winepress" where those princes met their death; but no doubt the Israelites pointed out the places for years afterward. "'Oreb' means 'raven,' and 'Zeeb,' means 'wolf.'"

Gideon and his men won because: They Passed God's Test of Courage, They let God get The Glory, They were Alert, Obedient Soldiers for God, They let God do the Fighting, They Trusted God's unusual ways and because of that, They Won the Battle! You wanna win those Battles of Life? Then Join God's Army!

Are there any areas of your life where it would serve you well to incorporate a less is more approach? The story of Gideon is really a story about the sovereignty of God!

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve.

I was made weak, that I might learn humbly to obey.

I asked for health, that I might do greater things.

I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.

I asked for riches, that I might be happy.

I was given poverty, that I might be wise.

I asked for power that I might have the praise of men.

I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.

I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life.

I was give life, that I might enjoy all things.

I got nothing that I asked for—but got everything I had hoped for.

Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered.

I am, among all people, most richly blessed.

- The Prayer of an Unknown Confederate Soldier

The Sword of the Lord

Philip Paul Bliss, 1875

♩ = 100

1. It was mid - night in the val - ley, and the camp was dark and still, Where the
 2. Where the faint and fear - ful thou - sands had re - turned at God's com - mand, By the
 3. Christ - ian sol - diers, be not fear - ful; on - ward with your Cap - tain go; Ev - er

slum - b'ring host of Mid - ian lay a - long the slop - ing hill, When a
 cho - sen few of faith - ful, vic - t'ry came to Gid - eon's band; Hear them
 "look - ing un - to Je - sus" you shall con - quer ev - 'ry foe; He hath

blind - ing flash of torch - es, and a trum - pet loud and shrill, Threw out the bat - tle cry:
 giv - ing God the glo - ry, and a - round the camp they stand And shout their bat - tle cry:
 tri - umphed —take your trum - pets, let the world your vic - t'ry know; Sing loud your bat - tle cry:

Refrain

Blow ye the trum - pet, for the Lord hath made us free; Your blaz - ing lamps raise high! "The

sword of the Lord and of Gid - e - on," shall be Our con - qu'ring bat - tle cry.

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Chapter Eight Outline: Ephraim's complaint and Gideon's answer. Verses 1-3, The battle still continues and the sins of Succoth and Penueh. Verses 4-9, Two Midianite kings and their armies are routed. Verses 10-12, Gideon repays Succoth and Penueh. Verses 13-17, Gideon repays the two Midianite kings. Verses 18-21, Gideon refuses to be made king, His Wealth, Mistakes and Death, Verses 22-32, After Gideon, Israel rebels and makes a covenant with Baal. Verses 33-35.

Judges 8, Ephraim's complaint and Gideon's answer. Verses 1-3:

Verse 1

1 And the men of Ephraim said unto him, Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him sharply.

And the men of Ephraim said unto him, Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites?... The men of Ephraim joined in the fight against Midian when Gideon called out to them, at the end of the battle (Judges 7:24-25). Yet they were upset that Gideon did not call them before the battle started. Gideon's initial call for help went out to the tribes of Manasseh (his own tribe), Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali (Judges 6:35).

And they did chide with him sharply... The pride and conceit of Ephraim as the most powerful of the tribes of Israel is evident here. Their inheritance in the mountains had preserved them from many of the marauding expeditions of Israel's enemies. Joshua had been of their tribe, and Bethel and Shiloh in their territory were the earliest locations of the Tabernacle, thus making Ephraim somewhat like the religious capital of the Twelve Tribes.

Chide = To criticize adversely, to harass, nag, impel.

Verse 2

² And he said unto them, What have I done now in comparison of you? Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?

Here is an excellent illustration of the proverb that says, "A soft answer turneth away wrath" (Proverbs 15:1). These verses indicate the diplomatic ability of Gideon as he made every effort to preserve the unity and coherence of the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

Verse 3

³ God hath delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison of you? Then their anger was abated toward him, when he had said that.

Gideon is a wise statesman as well as a great warrior. He has chosen his words of praise carefully. He reminds them that they killed Oreb and Zeeb. He is giving them full credit for what they have done. Gideon praised them instead of himself, and they enjoyed the praise. They were satisfied.

The battle still continues and the sins of Succoth and Penuel. Verses 4-9:

Verse 4

⁴ And Gideon came to Jordan, and passed over, he, and the three hundred men that were with him, faint, yet pursuing them.

Gideon long pursued the enemy until they were completely destroyed, just as God had commanded, because as long as they remained, there would be no peace in Israel.

Verse 5

⁵ And he said unto the men of Succoth, Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto the people that follow me; for they be faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian.

And he said unto the men of Succoth, Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto the people that follow me; for they be faint... We can imagine how tired they were. They fought hard and pursued the enemy over a long distance.

Gideon is asking for the bare necessities of bread, to keep his soldiers going in pursuit of the kings of Midian. "Succoth" is on the east side of the Jordan River. The men of Gideon have come a long way without food, and they are weak in their bodies.

Through Gideon, the request came to the people of the city of Succoth to support those who fought the battle. They were not asked to engage in the actual battle, but simply to support those on the front lines.

Verse 6

⁶ And the princes of Succoth said, Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thine army?

Instead of help, the princes of Succoth and Penuel had an excuse. They didn't want to support Israel in the fight against Midian until the battle was already won.

We can suppose that this was discouraging for Gideon and those fighting the battle. They didn't ask the people of Succoth and Penuel to fight on the front lines, only to support those who did. Yet they were unwilling and made excuses. When we set out to do the Lord's work, often the resistance we face is from our **FRIENDS and FAMILY**. We can't allow this to hinder or discourage our work.

Verse 7

⁷ And Gideon said, Therefore when the LORD hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into mine hand, then I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers.

Gideon's threatened discipline of Succoth's leaders for refusing to help their brothers. He had them either whipped or dragged under heavy weights over thorns and briers, which painfully tore their bodies. This was a cruel torture to which ancient captives were often subjected. He did it on his return, not wanting to delay the pursuit (verse 16).

Verse 8

⁸ And he went up thence to Penuel, and spake unto them likewise: and the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered him.

And he went up thence to Penuel... A place not far from Succoth.

and spake unto them likewise:... Gideon desired bread for his men, as he had asked of the inhabitants of Succoth.

and the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered him... Denied him his request in the same scornful manner.

Verse 9

⁹ And he spake also unto the men of Penuel, saying, When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower.

With or without the help of the people of Succoth and Penuel, Gideon knew he would win the battle (saying **When**, not if). Yet he vowed to take revenge on these cities that refused to help the army of Israel at this strategic time.

“Some have said that this showed resentment and harshness, but when a man is at war, he is not in the habit of sprinkling his adversaries with rosewater. War is in itself so great an evil that there are many other evils necessarily connected with it. It seems to me that if, when Gideon was trying to deliver his own countrymen, they scoffed at him, and refused him bread for his soldiers in the day of their hunger, they deserved to be punished with great severity.” –Spurgeon

Two Midianite kings and their armies are routed. Verses 10-12:

Verse 10

¹⁰ Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor, and their hosts with them, about fifteen thousand men, all that were left of all the hosts of the children of the east: for there fell an hundred and twenty thousand men that drew sword.

The two kings with their fifteen thousand men had fled far enough east of the Jordan that they thought themselves to be beyond the reach of the Israelites, and had not even bothered to post a watch.

Verse 11

¹¹ And Gideon went up by the way of them that dwelt in tents on the east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and smote the host; for the host was secure.

Gideon, continuing in the boldness of the Lord, led a courageous surprise attack. This wasn't the same as 300 attacking the vast army described in Judges 7:12, but it was still a small army against a much larger army.

We can suppose that Gideon was bold enough to do this because he saw God do great things in similar circumstances before. The previous work of God encouraged him to trust God for great things in the present.

Verse 12

¹² And when Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued after them, and took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and discomfited all the host.

he pursued after them, and took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and discomfited all the host... This shows the persistence of Gideon. He fought until the battle was won, and he went after the leaders of Midian.

Gideon returns and repays Succoth and Penuel. Verses 13-17:

Verses 13 & 14

¹³ And Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle before the sun was up,

Verse 14

¹⁴ And caught a young man of the men of Succoth, and enquired of him: and he described unto him the princes of Succoth, and the elders thereof, even threescore and seventeen men.

Just before Gideon came to the city, he spied a young man which belonged to it, and laid hold on him, and inquired of him about the chief princes of the city. Who they were, what were their names were, and where they lived.

The young man they caught told Gideon about the 77 princes of Succoth. He described them so Gideon would know who they were.

Verse 15

¹⁵ And he came unto the men of Succoth, and said, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, with whom ye did upbraid me, saying, Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thine hand, that we should give bread unto thy men that are weary?

Gideon could not forgive what they had done to his valiant men, instruments of The LORD in the deliverance of Israel. Now they could see that Zebah and Zalmunna really were in his hand. The elders would be in no doubt of their fate. They knew the penalty for the breach of the tribal covenant.

Verse 16

¹⁶ And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he taught the men of Succoth.

Apparently Gideon publicly whipped the leaders of the city of Succoth with thorns and briers as a method of public rebuke.

Interesting that in The Bible Law of First Mention that thorns have to do with sin and a curse.

Genesis 3:17-18

17 And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

18 **Thorns also and thistles** shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;



Verse 17

¹⁷ And he beat down the tower of Penuel, and slew the men of the city.

As he threatened he would (Judges 8:9). This is exactly what he had said he would do. He tore down their tower. In addition, he killed the men of the city.

Gideon repays the two Midianite kings. Verses 18-21:

Verses 18 & 19

¹⁸ Then said he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of men were they whom ye slew at Tabor? And they answered, As thou art, so were they; each one resembled the children of a king.

Verse 19

¹⁹ And he said, They were my brethren, even the sons of my mother: as the LORD liveth, if ye had saved them alive, I would not slay you.

Zebah and Zalmunna had killed Gideon's brothers at Mount Tabor. They tried to explain to Gideon, that his brothers looked like princes and they were afraid not to kill them. Gideon did not accept their excuses.

These two Midianite kings were responsible for the death of Gideon's brothers. Gideon wanted this known and confessed before he executed these kings.

Verse 20

²⁰ And he said unto Jether his firstborn, Up, and slay them. But the youth drew not his sword: for he feared, because he was yet a youth.

And he said unto Jether his firstborn, Up, and slay them... Gideon desired to place a great honor on his son by killing the enemies of Israel and of God.

But the youth drew not his sword: for he feared, because he was yet a youth... He was young and probably had never killed anyone. He could not do it.

Verse 21

²¹ Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, Rise thou, and fall upon us: for as the man is, so is his strength. And Gideon arose, and slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the ornaments that were on their camels' necks.

Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, Rise thou, and fall upon us: for as the man is, so is his strength... Zebah and Zalmunna knew they deserved death and even encouraged their executioner.

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter Eight Outline: Ephraim's complaint and Gideon's answer. Verses 1-3, The battle still continues and the sins of Succoth and Penueh. Verses 4-9, Two Midianite kings and their armies are routed. Verses 10-12, Gideon repays Succoth and Penueh. Verses 13-17, Gideon repays the two Midianite kings. Verses 18-21, Gideon refuses to be made king, His Wealth, Mistakes and Death, Verses 22-32, After Gideon, Israel rebels and makes a covenant with Baal. Verses 33-35.

Judges 8, Gideon refuses to be made king, His Wealth, Mistakes and Death, Verses 22-32:

Verse 22

²² Then the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian.

"**The men of Israel**" who made this the basis of their inviting Gideon to be king probably does not mean all of the tribes, but only those which had participated in the removal and defeat of the Midianites. Note that Israel, true to their rebellious character, gave the honor and glory which belonged to God to one of themselves, namely, Gideon.

and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian... That is, Gideon become our king, and let the crown be hereditary in your family.

Verse 23, Gideon's Answer:

²³ And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you.

Not that he declined the government of them as a judge, to which he was raised of God, but as a king, for which he had no authority and call from God. The choice of a king belonging to the Lord, and not to the people.

neither shall my son rule over you.. Some Scholars believe he spoke as a prophet here, and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. For after his death neither Jether his eldest son, nor any of the rest of his legitimate sons, ruled over them. For they were all slain by Abimelech, the son of his concubine, who was made king.

This was a good response from Gideon. He understood that it was not his place to take the throne over Israel, and that the Lord God was king over Israel.

Verse 24, But Asks For Gold Instead:

²⁴ And Gideon said unto them, I would desire a request of you, that ye would give me every man the earrings of his prey. (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)

This didn't seem like much to ask for, yet when it was added up, it came to more than 50 pounds (22 kilograms) of gold. This was quite a fortune.

Verse 25

²⁵ And they answered, We will willingly give them. And they spread a garment, and did cast therein every man the earrings of his prey.

The people were happy to give this, and it is hard to say that Gideon did not deserve this huge fortune. At the same time it was inappropriate, because it lifted him far above the level of the people he would lead, and it was at their expense.

Note: A general rule of thumb is that Christian leaders who make their living from the gifts of God's people should live at the level of their own people – not below or above.

Verses 26

²⁶ And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold; beside ornaments, and collars, and purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that were about their camels' necks.

A large amount of gold was gathered (50 pounds 22 kilograms)) as well as some purple cloth. Purple was a favorite color for rulers.

Ornaments - Crescent-like plates of gold suspended from the necks, or placed on the breasts, of the camels.

Collars - Necklaces of gold or pearl.

Purple raiment - A royal color of clothing.

Verse 27, Gideon, using the riches he received, assumes an inappropriate role of religious leadership and leads Israel into idolatry.

²⁷ And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah: and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house.

And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah... This does not say that he used all of that gold in making the ephod, but that the material in the ephod came from it.

In making this **ephod**, Gideon invaded the sacred precincts of that which belonged exclusively to the High Priest of Israel. In Exodus 28:4 and 39:3, one may find the Divine directions for making the ephod. It was a vestment to be worn exclusively by the High Priest.

It was made of blue, gold, purple and scarlet, along with pure white linen. It was supported by two shoulder-pieces and held together with an elaborate girdle. On the shoulder-pieces were two onyx stones bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraved upon them. Attached to the ephod by chains of pure gold was the breastplate, which contained four rows of three precious stones each, standing for the tribes of Israel. Under the ephod, yet part of it, was a blue robe extending to the feet of the High Priest. In the breastplate, there was also the Urim and Thummin, by means of which the High Priest could submit questions to the Lord and receive heavenly direction on what should be done.

and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house... It is believed that Gideon's sin in making such an ephod might have been due, in part, to the fact that the High Priesthood had probably lost its respect in the eyes of the people during the time of The Judges. The people of Israel enjoyed this idolatrous worship. The beautiful and expensive ephod became a snare to Gideon, his family, and all Israel.



Verse 28

²⁸ Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more. And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon.

Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they lifted up their heads no more... The Midianites were so completely humbled that they could make head no more against Israel during the forty years in which the government of Gideon lasted.

And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon... God kept His Word. While Gideon was alive (40 years), there was peace for Israel. It seems, Midian would give no more trouble. They are defeated.

Verse 29

²⁹ And Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and dwelt in his own house.

That is, Gideon, Jerubbaal being another name of his (see Judges 6:32). Went and dwelt in his own house; which was at Ophrah, as appears from (Judges 9:5). The war being ended, he disbanded his army, and retired to his own house. Not that he lived altogether a private life there, but as a judge in Israel.

Verse 30

³⁰ And Gideon had threescore and ten sons of his body begotten: for he had many wives.

And Gideon had threescore and ten sons of his body begotten... Gideon had 70 sons. Gideon was Judge over Israel for forty years. We know the spoils had made him rich. He lived richly with many wives.

for he had many wives... Now we know what Gideon did with the rest of his Gold. (hehehehe)

A harem was not only a reflection of a man's inability to control his sexual lust, it was also a way for him to proudly express his wealth, by saying "Look at all the wives and children I can support."

The Old Testament never directly condemns polygamy (though the New Testament does in Matthew 19:4-6 and 1 Timothy 3:2). Yet the Old Testament shows the bitter fruit of polygamy. The stories of polygamous families in the Old Testament (such as with Jacob or David) are the stories of conflict and crisis.

Verse 31

³¹ And his concubine that was in Shechem, she also bare him a son, whose name he called Abimelech.

Abimelech was the ruler of the city of Shechem during the period of the Judges (8:30 – 10:1). He was the son of Gideon by a concubine from Shechem. Abimelech tried to become king and managed to reign three years in Shechem (9:22). To eliminate all possible rivals, he killed the 70 sons of Gideon, his own brothers and half-brothers, who were potential successors to his father (9:5). Only the youngest son of Gideon, Jotham, escaped this massacre. Ultimately, Abimelech was killed in a battle when he went too close to the city's walls and a woman dropped a millstone on his head. He commanded his armor-bearer to kill him, so no one could say he died at the hands of a woman (9:50-54 and Chapter 9).

The name **Abimelech** means, "My father, a king."

Verse 32

³² And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age ... Having lived it seems forty years after his war with Midian, blessed with a large family, much wealth and riches, great credit and esteem among his people, and in favor with God and men.

and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites; a city which belonged to the family of the Abiezrites, who were of the tribe of Manasseh, in which Gideon lived, and his father before him; and where there was a family vault, in which he was interred.

After Gideon, Israel rebels and makes a covenant with Baal. Verses 33-35:

Verse 33

³³ And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baalberith their god.

This is the very same story we have heard with every judge. The people are relatively faithful to God as long as the judge is alive. The minute the judge dies, they begin to worship false gods again. They go the way of the rest of the world.

and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baalberith their god... The name Ball-Berith means “Baal of the Covenant.” The Israelites sadly regarded Baal as their covenant god!



Verse 34

³⁴ And the children of Israel remembered not the LORD their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side:

And the children of Israel remembered not the LORD their God... They forgot him, forsook him and stopped worshipping HIM.

who had delivered them out of the hands of their enemies on every side... Not only out of the hands of Midian, but all other nations round about them, as Edom, Moab, Ammon, &c. not one attempting to oppress them.

Verse 35

³⁵ Neither shewed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, namely, Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had shewed unto Israel.

Neither shewed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, namely, Gideon... Great unkindness and cruelty towards Gideon’s family, slaying his seventy sons, as related in the following chapter.

according to all the goodness which he had showed unto Israel.. Gideon, in exposing his life to danger for their sake, in delivering them out of the hands of their oppressors, in administering justice to them, in protecting them in their civil and religious liberties, and leaving them in the quiet and peaceable possession of them for forty years, his family didn’t get any respect.

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter Nine Outline: TRAGIC TALE OF GIDEON'S SON BY A CONCUBINE, Verses 1-57

Judges 9

Verse 1

1 And Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem unto his mother's brethren, and communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying,

We have already seen that Abimelech was the son of Gideon, by his concubine at Shechem. His going immediately after his father's death was to induce his townsmen to proclaim himself Ruler in the place of his father. Shechem was the residence of his mother, and of all her relatives.

Abimelech's ambition to be a king in Israel, an honor Gideon had refused (compare 8:22-23), was first put to the test in "Shechem", because his mother, a concubine of Gideon, came from there. Accordingly, the citizens of Shechem were invited to make one of their own, and a son of Gideon at that, to be their king.

Verse 2

² Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, Whether is better for you, either that all the sons of Jerubbaal, which are threescore and ten persons, reign over you, or that one reign over you? remember also that I am your bone and your flesh.

Note: He was not the clear successor to his father's place of leadership. This was for two reasons: God had not established a hereditary monarchy in Israel, and there were sixty-nine other sons of Gideon (Judges 8:30) who might also want to succeed their father.

Verse 3

³ And his mother's brethren spake of him in the ears of all the men of Shechem all these words: and their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech; for they said, He is our brother.

All the men of Shechem decided they wanted Abimelech for their king. His close relatives convinced all of the other men that Abimelech should be their leader.

Verse 4

⁴ And they gave him threescore and ten pieces of silver out of the house of Baalberith, wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light persons, which followed him.

The relatives of Abimelech on his mother's side gave him some "start-up money" to establish his leadership. He did this, but in a way that they never imagined – he hired worthless **vain and light persons** to kill all his brothers, making certain there would never be a challenger to his leadership.

And they gave him threescore and ten pieces of silver out of the house of Baalberith...

Abimelech received his pay from the temple dedicated to Baal. A work begun under the name and influence of the devil is not likely to end to the glory of God, or to the welfare of man.

Verse 5

⁵ And he went unto his father's house at Ophrah, and slew his brethren the sons of Jerubbaal, being threescore and ten persons, upon one stone: notwithstanding yet Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left; for he hid himself.

This atrocity, was common in ancient times, eliminated the greatest threat in the revolution, all the legitimate competitors.

They actually killed 69 of his half-brothers, so he could take over as king. Jotham, the youngest of the brothers, hid himself and was not found.



James Tissot (1836-1902), Abimelech Slays His Seventy Brethren

Verse 6

⁶And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went, and made Abimelech king, by the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem.

It is almost hard to tell who was worse; Abimelech who did the murdering, or the men of Shechem who approved of it. This was an ungodly leader given to an ungodly people, who first rejected God's leadership over the nation and then embraced a cruel and brutal man.

Jotham's warning. Verses 7-15: The Fable of the trees.

In the **Fable** told here in verses 7-15 by Jotham, the worthy trees (such as the olive, the fig, and the vine) didn't want to be king; but the unworthy bramble agreed to be king.

Fable is a very short story containing talking animals or forces of nature and one that teaches us a moral lesson. Often the moral of the story is expressed at the end of the story to make children learn a lot from the short story.

Parable is a short story that teaches a moral lesson to the reader or listener. Parables contain human characters only, and they are drawn from real world situations with real problems and real struggles of people. They also have spiritual flavors. The Good Samaritan and The Prodigal Son are two of the most well-known parables from the Gospel. The word parable comes from the Greek Parabole which means to draw comparison or analogy. One can learn how to behave and react when faced with a dilemma in real life situations as these parables teach by comparing the actions and behaviors of characters in them.

What is the difference between Fable and Parable?

- Both parables and fables are short stories containing moral lessons for the readers but, whereas parables contain human characters only, fables are known to have talking-animals and plant with even super natural forces.
- Fables are set in an imaginary world, whereas parables have real humans facing the real world problems.
- Parables often have spiritual or religious aspect, whereas fables stay away from religion.
- Tortoise and the Hare and The Fox and the grapes are some of the most popular fables whereas The Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan are examples of most popular parables.

Verse 7

⁷And when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood in the top of mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.

Jotham was the only son of Gideon to escape the massacre at the stone (Judges 9:5). Here he told a parable to rebuke the men of Shechem for their choice of Abimelech as a king.

Verse 8

⁸The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us.

The trees in this, are speaking of the men who had tried to get Gideon/Jerubbaal (The Olive Tree) to reign over them at the end of the battle. Jerubbaal refused. The olive trees make the oil for the offerings to God, and for the anointing of men.

Verse 9

⁹ But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my **fatness**, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness... Rejecting the offer made to rule.

By "**fatness**" oil is meant. In the worship and service of God oil made from olives was used for divers things; as, about the lamps, Exodus 35:14, and offerings, Leviticus 2:6,7, and for the anointing of sacred persons and things. Oil was also used in the constitution of kings, and priests, and prophets, and for a present to great persons, and to anoint the head and face.

honour God and man... God was honored by the fatness of the olive in its use for light in his sanctuary, (Exodus 27:20,) and for the holy offerings and rites of his house. Exodus 29:23; Exodus 29:40. Man was honoured by it in its various domestic uses.

Verse 10

¹⁰ And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us.

Another useful and fruit bearing tree, the fig tree, and to which also good men are sometimes compared, see Song of Solomon 2:13.



Verse 11

¹¹ But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?

But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness... Rejecting the offer made to rule.

Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?... For such the fruit of the fig tree is, sweet and good: so says various authors, Aristophanes, Herodotus, and Homer, that nothing is sweeter than figs, excepting honey, and that no kind of fruit is better, and, where they are, no good is wanting:

Verses 12 & 13

¹² Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, and reign over us.

¹³ And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?

And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine... Rejecting the offer made to rule. Vine: Another fruit of good and useful to men. And it may be observed, that Jotham takes no notice of any trees but fruitful ones till he comes to the bramble.

Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?... Grape juice being drank, revives, refreshes, and makes glad, and Wine when before sorrowful, drooping, faint, and weary (Psalm 104:15).

Verse 14

¹⁴ Then said all the trees unto the bramble, Come thou, and reign over us.

Finally, the position was offered to the bramble, which not only produced nothing of value and was quite worthless as timber, but was a positive menace to the farmer who had to wage continual war against its encroachments.

Verse 15

¹⁵ And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.

And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow ... Accepting of their offer at once

The bramble or thorn, which, however useful as a hedge, is dangerous to come near; and is here the emblem of an wicked, cruel, and oppressive king.

Abimelech was the bramble; and the cedars of Lebanon, all the nobles and people of Israel. Could they therefore suppose that such a low-born, uneducated, cruel, and murderous man, could be a proper protector, or a humane governor? The condensed moral of the whole fable is this: Weak, worthless, and wicked men, will ever be foremost to thrust themselves into power; and, in the end, to bring ruin upon themselves, and on the unhappy people over whom they preside.

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



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- (3) Also, there is a perfect example here of what government by "a king" would inevitably mean for Israel. Yes, David, and a very few others, were exceptions to the rule, but the long, wretched story of the kings of Israel followed perfectly the pattern of that type of government which God allowed His chosen people to see in the wicked behavior of the scoundrel of Shechem, Abimelech.

Judges 9

Verse 16

Jotham applies the Fable that he spoke in verses 7-15: the city of Shechem will be repaid for choosing such a worthless man. verses 16-21:

There are tremendous lessons in this fable. The general worthlessness of kings appears in this. In this fable, the briar, which is good for nothing else, has the leisure to become king, but it cannot provide shelter for the trees, and is more likely to catch fire and involve them all in its ruin.

Verses 16 & 17

¹⁶Now therefore, if ye have done truly and sincerely, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his hands;

Now therefore, if ye have done truly and sincerely... Jotham didn't believe that 70 of his brothers were murdered for the same of **truth and sincerity**.

Verse 17

¹⁷ (For my father fought for you, and adventured his life far, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian:

For my father fought for you... He's reminding them of his father Gideon, In the valley of Jezreel, and at Karkor, where with three hundred men he routed and destroyed the Midian army of 135,000.

and delivered you out of the hand of Midian... From the oppression and bondage of the Midianites, under which they had labored seven years. Jerubbaal (Gideon), had won the war with the Midianites for them, as well as for his own people. The tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh were benefited by Gideon's victories.

Verse 18

¹⁸ And ye are risen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons, upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maidservant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother;)

And ye are risen up against my father's house this day... Abimelech wanted the benefits of being Gideon's son. He did not however, recognize his 70 true sons. Jotham is telling them here, if they have done the correct thing with Gideon's/Jerubbaal's family and have truly chosen Abimelech as king, it would alright.

and have made Abimelech, the son of his maidservant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother... The real reason the men of Shechem supported Abimelech was because he was **their brother (from their town Shechem)**. Abimelech's mother, though only a maidservant to Gideon, was from Shechem. Abimelech probably grew up in Shechem.

Verse 19

¹⁹ If ye then have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you:

If they could in their consciences think and believe they had done well, and acted the faithful and upright part by him and his family, which he left with them to consider of. Jotham is willing to accept their decision, if they have dealt truly and sincerely with the house of Gideon.

Verse 20

²⁰ But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech.

Jotham's warning to the men of Shechem was that their unwise choice would come back to hurt them. He predicted that "fire" would come forth from Abimelech and devour them.

Verse 21

²¹ And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

After this bold warning he ran away and fled for fear of his life.

Verse 22, Jotham's warning fulfilled:

²²When Abimelech had reigned three years over Israel,

The word used for “**reigned**” here refers to a prince or commander rather than a true king. The author of Judges does not dignify Abimelech with the verb that is normally used for kings because God had not anointed him. It was said that Abimelech was more a Tyrant than a prince...

Verse 23

²³Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech:

Everything seemed fine between the men of Shechem and Abimelech for three years. Then, in judgment, God removed the peace that was between them and sent this evil spirit of ill will.

God gave the devil commission to enter into or work upon their minds and hearts; knowing that he of himself, and by his own inclinations, would fill them with mistakes, and jealousies, and dissensions, and heart-burnings, which would end in civil wars and mutual ruin.

God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem. This was more than just a bad feeling of ill will, but a genuine evil spirit, a devil being sent to stir up strife. The Bible tells us that the devils are at God's disposal. We see the devil sent by God to Job, an evil spirit sent to Saul, as well as one sent to stir up the prophets to lie to Ahab so he would go to war and be killed.

Verse 24

²⁴That the cruelty done to the threescore and ten sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood be laid upon Abimelech their brother, which slew them; and upon the men of Shechem, which aided him in the killing of his brethren.

We remember that Abimelech hired some ruthless people to help him kill his brothers. We see from this that Shechem does not want to be accounted guilty of the murder of the brothers of Abimelech. They want Abimelech and those he hired, to be held accountable for the crime.

Verse 25

²⁵And the men of Shechem set liers in wait for him in the top of the mountains, and they robbed all that came along that way by them: and it was told Abimelech.

The men of Shechem in rebellion towards Abimelech set ambushes on the mountain roads, hoping to disrupt the trade routes that profited Abimelech.

Verses 26-45: A failed coup

²⁶And Gaal the son of Ebed came with his brethren, and went over to Shechem: and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him.

The men of Shechem lost their confidence in Abimelech, so they chose a new leader named Gaal, the son of Ebed.

Verse 27

²⁷And they went out into the fields, and gathered their vineyards, and trode the grapes, and made merry, and went into the house of their god, and did eat and drink, and cursed Abimelech.

and went into the house of their god, and did eat and drink, and cursed Abimelech... The house of their god was the temple of Baal-berith (Judges 9:5). The men of Shechem gathered their grapes, made fermented wine and had a drunken party. They worshipped Baal. They were drunk in the temple of Baal, and they cursed Abimelech in this evil temple.

Verse 28

²⁸ And Gaal the son of Ebed said, Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? is not he the son of Jerubbaal? and Zebul his officer? serve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem: for why should we serve him?

The men of Shechem were so confident that their new leader Gaal could protect them against Abimelech that they started throwing drunken parties and openly questioning their loyalty to and cursing Abimelech.

Verse 29

²⁹ And would to God this people were under my hand! then would I remove Abimelech. And he said to Abimelech, Increase thine army, and come out.

And would to God this people were under my hand!... That Gaal would be the ruler of their city, and general of their forces (**this people were under my hand**).

then would I remove Abimelech; From his kingly office, and rid Shechem of him, and all the country round about, and indeed remove him out of the world.

And he said to Abimelech, Increase thine army, and come out... They challenged Abimelech to a fight ("Increase thine army, and come out!").

Verses 30 & 31:

³⁰ And when Zebul the ruler of the city heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, his anger was kindled.

Verse 31

³¹ And he sent messengers unto Abimelech privily, saying, Behold, Gaal the son of Ebed and his brethren be come to Shechem; and, behold, they fortify the city against thee.

The fatal flaw in this rebellion was that Zebul, Abimelech's deputy governor of Shechem, was present and reported the whole affair to Abimelech, and offers a plan of attack on Shechem to Abimelech.

Verses 32 & 33

³² Now therefore up by night, thou and the people that is with thee, and lie in wait in the field:

Verse 33

³³ And it shall be, that in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, thou shalt rise early, and set upon the city: and, behold, when he and the people that is with him come out against thee, then mayest thou do to them as thou shalt find occasion.

Zebul instructed Abimelech to come that night after sunset, bringing the men who were with him, and they were to lie hidden in the open country and in the hills outside the city. No one would be expecting them, and the men in the city would be recovering from their hangovers.

Verses 34-41, Abimelech defeats the rebellion of the men of Shechem, organized by Gaal.

³⁴And Abimelech rose up, and all the people that were with him, by night, and they laid wait against Shechem in four companies.

Abimelech agreed with and followed the plan suggested by Zebul. He divided his army into four parts, which he placed on the four sides of the city, at some distance from it, to act as they should have opportunity, to find ways and means of getting into it on either quarter.

Verse 35

³⁵And Gaal the son of Ebed went out, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and Abimelech rose up, and the people that were with him, from lying in wait.

When the gates of the city were opened next morning Gaal went out to survey the position, not expecting that his enemy was already near. He had his men at the ready within the city (Judges 9:39). But the opening of the gates was the signal for the attack, so Abimelech and his men rose from their ambush to approach the city quickly before the gates could be closed against them.

Verse 36

³⁶And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, Behold, there come people down from the top of the mountains. And Zebul said unto him, Thou seest the shadow of the mountains as if they were men.

Gaal was accompanied by Zebul, probably not suspecting that he knew of the rebellion, and as he looked towards the mountains he thought he spotted a company of men coming down towards the city. So he pointed them out to Zebul to ask him what he thought it was.



And Zebul said unto him, Thou seest the shadow of the mountains as if they were men... Zebul had his wits about him and replied calmly that Gaal was deceiving himself. What he was actually seeing was moving shadows on the mountains which simply gave the appearance of being men. All this gave Abimelech time to get nearer.

Verse 37

³⁷ And Gaal spake again, and said, See there come people down by the middle of the land, and another company come along by the plain of Meonenim.

Gaal looked again and now he knew he was right. He saw two more companies, one coming through the middle between the two mountains and one coming by way of the Diviner's oak, a tree where soothsayers practiced their arts, which were forbidden in Israel (Deuteronomy 18:10; Leviticus 19:26), another sign of the disobedience of the land.

Verse 38

³⁸ Then said Zebul unto him, Where is now thy mouth, wherewith thou saidst, Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him? is not this the people that thou hast despised? go out, I pray now, and fight with them.

The approaching forces were now so visible, and their purpose so obvious, that Zebul knew that he could keep up the pretense no longer. So now he challenged Gaal to live up to his boasting. Let him consider what he had said so arrogantly. He had spoken disparagingly of this people. So now let him prove his words and go out and fight them.

Verse 39

³⁹ And Gaal went out before the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech.

Gaal called the Shechemites who were supporting him and went out to meet Abimelech in battle. And there the battle was fought.

Verse 40

⁴⁰ And Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him, and many were overthrown and wounded, even unto the entering of the gate.

Defeated, Gaal and his troops retreated towards the gates, but in their retreat many fell wounded, until at last they reached the gates where men held them partly open until they were inside and obtained refuge. And then the gates were closed to keep out Abimelech and his men.

Verse 41

⁴¹ And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah: and Zebul thrust out Gaal and his brethren, that they should not dwell in Shechem.

Having gained his first victory Abimelech now withdrew to Arumah to await events until he had heard from Zebul. And meanwhile Zebul was rallying those who were loyal to Abimelech (probably increased since the battle) and fought with Gaal and his brothers, their supporters having deserted them, and managed to drive them out of the city.

What are we learning from Chapter 9?

1. The conspiracy of Abimelech: a picture of selfish ambition and the lust for power (V, 1-6).
2. The Fable and prophetic curse upon Abimelech: a declaration of God's judgment (V, 7-21).
3. The rebellion against Abimelech: the picture of division—a divided kingdom (V, 22-41).
4. The destruction of Shechem by Abimelech: a picture of evil vengeance (V, 42-49).
5. The death of Abimelech: the just judgment of God (V, 50-57).

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Judges 9 Verse 42

Verses 42-45, Abimelech attacks the citizens of Shechem and conquers the city.

⁴²And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people went out into the field; and they told Abimelech.

Either, first, To renew the fight, and avenge themselves for their last loss. Or, secondly, To their usual work and farming of their lands. This was then reported to Abimelech.

Verse 43

⁴³And he took the people, and divided them into three companies, and laid wait in the field, and looked, and, behold, the people were come forth out of the city; and he rose up against them, and smote them.

Abimelech divided his forces into three companies and waited in the countryside outside the city, and when many of the people in the city came out to work in their fields he arose with his men and attacked them.

Verse 44

⁴⁴ And Abimelech, and the company that was with him, rushed forward, and stood in the entering of the gate of the city: and the two other companies ran upon all the people that were in the fields, and slew them.

This now explains the attack in more detail. Before attacking the people, now out in the countryside, they seized the gates to prevent them being closed against them, and then two of the companies smote the people outside, while the third held the gate.

Verse 45

⁴⁵ And Abimelech fought against the city all that day; and he took the city, and slew the people that was therein, and beat down the city, and sowed it with salt.

Having dealt with the people outside, and no doubt having joined up with Zebul and his supporters, Abimelech now took the attack to the city itself.

Resistance was fierce and the battle continued all day. But eventually after much slaughter he took the city itself, apart from the fortified Temple, showing little mercy on the inhabitants and killing them, apart of course from those who had remained faithful to him. He was in no mood for compromise. Then he destroyed much of the city and spread salt in it.

and sowed it with salt... When they had killed all the men who had come out into the field, then Abimelech and his men went into the city and killed the people in it. It appears he tore down buildings and everything that was standing. The "sowing of the salt" had to be to kill whatever vegetation was growing. Salt is used as a preservative many times, but that is not the use here.

Shechem was not rebuilt until the reign of Jeroboam I, almost two centuries later (1 Kings 12:25).

1 Kings 12:25

²⁵ Then Jeroboam built **Shechem** in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and went out from thence, and built Penuel.

Side Teaching Moment: Salt in The Bible!

1. A condiment.

Job 6:6

⁶ Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without **salt**? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?

2. An offering to God.

Leviticus 2:13

¹³ And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with **salt**; neither shalt thou suffer the **salt** of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering: with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.

From Bible Scholar Matthew Henry: Salt was required in all of the offerings to God (Leviticus 2:13). The salt thus symbolized:

(1) The permanence of God's love for His people, and

(2) The communion of God with His people. “The altar was the table of the Lord; and therefore, salt being always set on our tables, God would have it always used at his. It is called the salt of the covenant, because, as men confirmed their covenants with each other by eating and drinking together, at all which collations salt was used, so God, by accepting his people’s gifts and feasting them upon his sacrifices, supping with them and they with him (Revelation 3:20), did confirm his covenant with them. Among the ancients salt was a symbol of friendship”.

3. Salt was used to signify covenants.

Numbers 18:19

¹⁹ All the heave offerings of the holy things, which the children of Israel offer unto the LORD, have I given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, by a statute for ever: it is a **covenant of salt** for ever before the LORD unto thee and to thy seed with thee.

Covenants were ordinarily cemented in the East by the rites of hospitality; of which salt was the obvious token, entering as it does into every article of diet. It indicates permanence.

4. Judgment.

Genesis 19:26

²⁶ But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of **salt**.



"Lot's Wife" pillar, Mount Sodom, Israel.

5. Character. “ye are the **salt** of the earth” (Matthew 5:13) can signify many things:

(1) Salt penetrates; it even penetrates metal; signifying the power of the Gospel to change men’s lives.

(2) Salt cleanses. Sodium chloride is still used in many cleansing agents. Likewise the Gospel and the presence of born-again people have a cleansing effect in the world.

(3) Salt purifies, as does the Gospel.

(4) Salt preserves. It is used to preserve food in the absence of refrigeration. Likewise the Gospel preserves righteousness and truth in an evil world.

(5) Salt burns. If left piled in one place it results in sterility. Likewise the Gospel and the churches are to be spread across the world and not to be congregated in only one place (Matthew 28:18-20).

(6) Salt irritates, as when placed on a wound. Likewise, the Gospel irritates the unsaved, and they do not appreciate God’s message or people.

Jesus warned that **salt** can lose its savor (Matthew 5:13; Mark 9:50; Luke 14:34). “He was apparently referring to rock salt (rather than the purified salt obtained from evaporation), used as fertilizer. The rock salt of Jesus’ day could lose its saltiness. Minerals were leached from it by moisture, and the salt deteriorated under high heat. Without saltiness, what remained had no value to anyone.

6. The Christian’s speech is to be “alway with grace, seasoned with **salt**” (Colossians 4:6). That our conversation should be seasoned with piety or grace in a way similar to that in which we employ salt in our food. It makes it wholesome and palatable. So with our conversation. If it be not filled with the spirit of piety, it is flat, insipid, unprofitable, injurious. The spirit of piety will make it what it should be—useful, agreeable, beneficial to mankind. This does not mean that our conversation is to be always, strictly speaking, religious—wherever we may be—any more than our food should be mere salt; but it means that, whatever be the topic, the spirit of piety should be diffused through it—as the salt in our food should properly season it all.

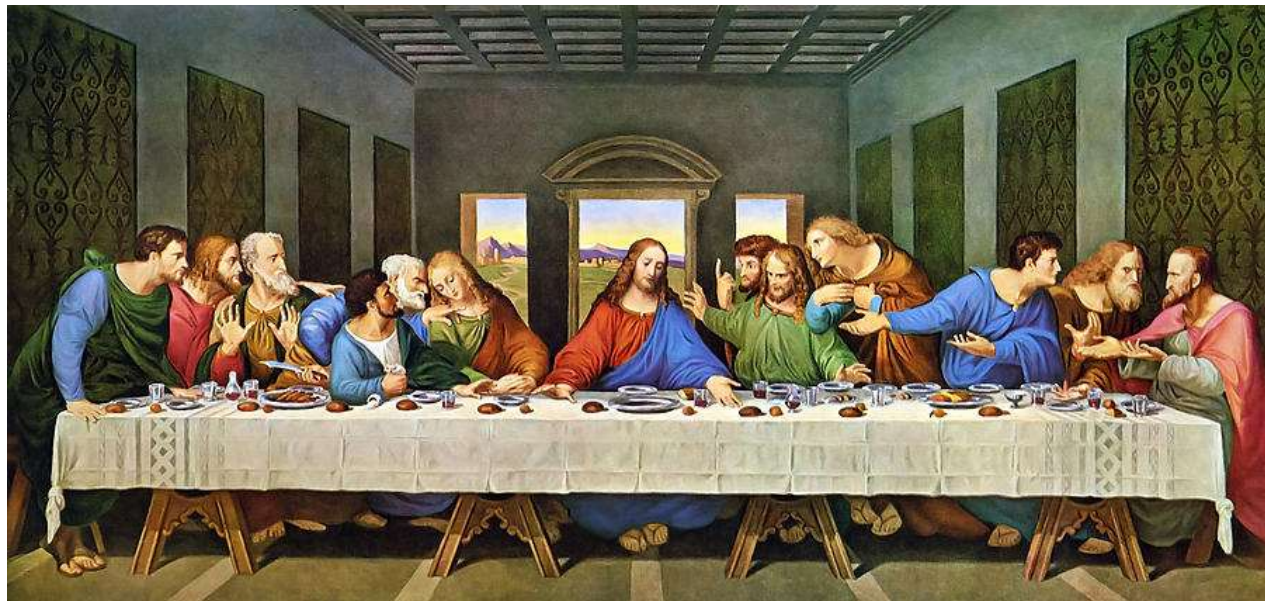
“Let all your discourse be as becomes Christians, suitable to your profession—savory, discreet, seasonable. Though it be not always of grace, it must be always with grace; and, though the matter of our discourse be that which is common, yet there must be an air of piety upon it and it must be in a Christian manner. Grace is the salt which seasons our discourse, makes it savory, and keeps it from corrupting” -Matthew Henry.

7. Destruction.

Judges 9:45

⁴⁵ And Abimelech fought against the city all that day; and he took the city, and slew the people that was therein, and beat down the city, and sowed it with **salt**.

Superstitions About Salt



In the painting “The Last Supper” Leonardo da Vinci Judas is shown spilling the salt. Some say this show that the spilling of salt superstition is quite old indeed. Who hasn’t heard that spilling salt is most unlucky?

The only way to turn your luck around is to take a pinch of salt and throw it over your left shoulder. This would hopefully keep the evil spirit away. It was important that it was the left shoulder as it was believed your guardian angel was behind your right shoulder. You certainly wouldn't want to harm your guardian angel. Salt has a long tradition as a protective omen. During the 19th century England it was not uncommon to sprinkle salt in every room of a new home before moving bringing in the furniture. This was believed to protect the home from evil spirits.

It has also been reported that salt is most effective to keep away unwanted company. If you had a visitor in your home and preferred that the particular caller not return, you simply sprinkle salt on the floor and doorstep immediately after that person leaves. Sweep up the salt and then burn it. You should not receive another visit from the unwanted guest.

In Buddhist folk tradition it was common to throw salt over your shoulder before entering your home when returning from a funeral. You could never be sure evil spirits were not following you from the funeral site. The salt would scare them away and prevent them from entering your home.

In Europe it was common in many places to put salt in the coffin of the deceased to prevent the devil taking possession of the departed.

It was believed to be a really bad omen should you run out of salt. Always keep salt in your home. Many say "Short of salt, short of money". It is equally bad luck to lend someone salt. Never return salt that has been given to you or both the giver and receiver will have bad luck.

Never pass salt to someone at the table. There are a couple old sayings about this matter; "Pass the salt, pass the sorrow" and "Help me to salt, help me to sorrow". If someone at the table needs the salt, be sure to set the salt down and let the other person pick it up for himself.

There are also superstitions about salt and fishermen. If one were to throw some salt on a fisherman it would certainly bring him luck.

In Ancient Rome, it was believed salt would protect newborns from evil demons and on the eighth day after birth the child would be rubbed with salt.

As late as the 19th century it was believed salt could protect newborn children in Britain. A small bundle of salt wrapped up in cloth could be placed in the cradle to protect a child who was not yet baptized. Equally a little salt was placed in the pocket of the baby's clothes for protection the first time the infant left the house.

To this day many people around the globe still believe in the magic powers of salt. Some people in Asia still insist to have a small bag of salt in their car to ensure a safe journey.

Verse 46-49, The massacre at the tower of Shechem:

⁴⁶ And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard that, they entered into an hold of the house of the god Berith.

Not thinking themselves safe enough in the tower, they went to the temple of Baalberith their god, see Judges 9:4 which was a strong fortified place, as temples often were.

These that **the house of the god Berith** are here distinguished from the ordinary citizens who had perished in the fields. These persons included the priests of Baal, the lords of Shechem, the "de facto" rulers of the city, people who might be called today, "The Establishment." These were they

who "financed" Abimelech's efforts to become king, and who also were behind the insurrection led by Gaal. They, far more than the helpless workers in the fields, deserved the awful fate that befell their city.

Verse 47

⁴⁷ And it was told Abimelech, that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together.

Abimelech, who had his spies about, to observe the motions of the men in this tower.

Verse 48

⁴⁸ And Abimelech gat him up to mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with him; and Abimelech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid it on his shoulder, and said unto the people that were with him, What ye have seen me do, make haste, and do as I have done.

Mount Zalmon was a heavily wooded area very near Shechem. Abimelech had to be strong physically. He cuts a tree and puts it on his shoulder to carry to this place where the tower is. He tells all of his men to do the same thing.

Verse 49

⁴⁹ And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put them to the hold, and set the hold on fire upon them; so that all the men of the tower of Shechem died also, about a thousand men and women.

With this, Abimelech massacred the last survivors of the city of Shechem, killing about a thousand men and women.

and set the hold on fire upon them... This graphically fulfilled the warning of Jotham earlier in the chapter (Judges 9:20). V-20: "But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and **let fire come out from the men of Shechem**, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech."

Verses 50-55, God's judgment on Abimelech:

⁵⁰ Then went Abimelech to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it.

The men of Thebez (modern Tubas) had, no doubt, joined the Shechemites in their rebellion against Abimelech and Abimelech comes here to conquer Thebez.

Verse 51

⁵¹ But there was a strong tower within the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city, and shut it to them, and gat them up to the top of the tower.

It seems not to have held out long, being deserted by its inhabitants, who fled to the tower, as follows:

Verse 52

⁵² And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it, and went hard unto the door of the tower to burn it with fire.

After his brutal victory at the tower of Shechem, Abimelech probably thought he was an expert at attacking towers. He went to Thebez and attacked the city and the tower there.

Verse 53

⁵³ And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull.

An unknown woman on the tower, seeing Abimelech not far below her, (the tower would not be very high), took her missile, which was a substantial upper-millstone, one used in her mill to grind the corn, and hurled it down with all her strength on Abimelech. And her aim was good, and it smashed into his head and broke his skull.



a millstone upon Abimelech's head... There is possibly some kind of justice recognized by the writer in what happened to Abimelech. He who had slain his brothers on a stone, was slain by a mill-stone. And stoning was the sentence exacted on those in Israel on whom the death penalty was passed.

Verse 54

⁵⁴ Then he called hastily unto the young man his armourbearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and slay me, that men say not of me, A women slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died.

Recognizing that his end was near he ordered his own armourbearer, a young man, to draw his sword and kill him. And the young man, recognizing his predicament, for he knew that for a soldier to die at a woman's hand would be to be disgraced, did as he was told.

Verse 55

⁵⁵ And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place.

They stayed not to take the tower, and to revenge Abimelech's death, but haply were glad they were rid of such a tyrant.

Once Abimelech was dead there was little point in fighting on. The point at issue was decided. It would be up to Abimelech's heirs whether they wished to press claims to princehood in Israel and the kingship of Shechem.

Verses 56-57, Summation: The certainty of God's judgments:

⁵⁶ Thus God rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren:

We can be certain that God will repay wickedness, either in this life or the life to come. Often God finds a way to do it both in this life and the life to come.

Verse 57

⁵⁷ And all the evil of the men of Shechem did God render upon their heads: and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

God had warned the men of Shechem through Jotham. Yet they rejected the warning of God, and therefore came to ruin.

We should each consider if God is warning us about something in the present time. The story of Abimelech, the men of Shechem, and Jotham shows us that there is a real and terrible price to pay for rejecting God's warnings.

Pastor Hank's Notes on: The Book of Judges



Chapter Ten Outline: Two “minor” Judges: Tola & Jair, Verses 1-5. Israel’s Apostasy, Servitude and Sore Distressed, Verses 7-9. Israel calls to the Lord; God’s response to Israel, Verses 10-14. Repentance from Israel, mercy from God, Verses 15-16. Israel gathers, but without a leader Preparations for a battle, Verses 17-18.

Chapter Ten Overview: This chapter gives an account of two judges of Israel, in whose days their parts of Israel enjoyed peace, after which, by sinning against God, Israel came into further trouble, and were oppressed by their enemies eighteen years, and were invaded by an army of the Ammonites. When they cried to Jehovah for deliverance, confessing their sins, He at first refused to grant it, although on their confession of sin and repentance, He had compassion on them, and the chapter concludes with the preparations made by both armies for battle.

Two “minor” Judges: Tola & Jair, Verses 1-5.

Judges 10, Verse 1:

1 And after Abimelech there arose to defend Israel Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in mount Ephraim.

And after Abimelech there arose to defend Israel Tola... Raised not of himself, but raised by God, as the other Judges were.

to defend Israel Tola... To save. He thrust not himself into the office, as Abimelech, that usurper, had done; but was raised up by God, and accordingly qualified.

Verse 2

² And he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.

Tola continued twenty-three years a judge of Israel after the troubles of Abimelech's reign, it is likely that the land had rest, and that the enemies of the Israelites had made no hostile attacks into the land during his presidency and that of Jair (verse 3); which, together continued forty-five years.

We are not told much else about the career of the judge Tola; only that his service as a judge lasted a relatively long time (twenty-three years).

Thus to this point we have had five judges, Othniel of Judah, Ehud of Benjamin, Shamgar, Deborah with Barak of Naphtali, Gideon of Manasseh and this, Tola of Issachar, is the sixth. He will be followed by Jair of Gilead, Jephthah of Gilead, Ibzan of Bethlehem (in Zebulun - Joshua 19:15), Elon of Zebulun, Abdon the Pirathonite, and Samson the Danite. Thus making twelve in all, the number of the tribes in the covenant.

Verse 3

³ And after him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years.

We also know little about Jair's service as a leader of Israel. We do know that he served for about the same number of years as Tola before him (twenty-two years).

Verse 4

⁴ And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havothjair unto this day, which are in the land of Gilead.

This is a characteristic trait of Eastern manners in those early times; and the grant of a village to each of his thirty sons was a striking proof of his extensive possessions.

Note: Jair had thirty sons. We were told earlier that Gideon had many wives, but not mentioned here. The two common explanations are that Jail was a polygamous man (had many wives) or having as many children by successive wives by death or divorce...

Verse 5

⁵ And Jair died, and was buried in Camon.

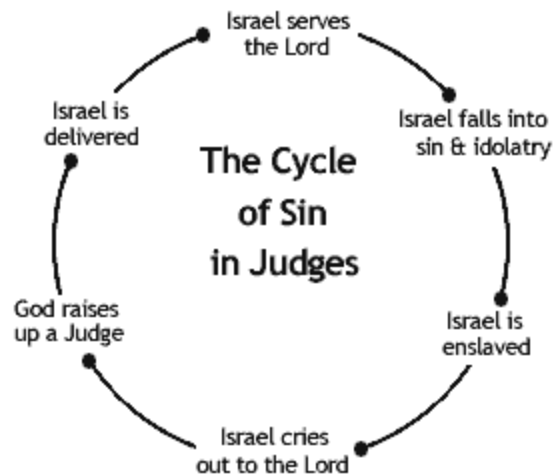
He died...

Hebrews 9:27

²⁷ And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Israel's Apostasy, Servitude and Sore Distressed, Verses 7-9, Verse 6:

⁶ And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him.



And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD... This phrase is repeated seven times in the Book of Judges. It shows that the evil of Israel was even worse because they did it before the eyes of God. We could say that it is bad to commit adultery, but it is far more offensive to commit adultery before the eyes of your spouse.

and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the LORD, and served not him... The essence of Israel's sin was that they served other gods.

Here, seven different ethnic and national gods are mentioned that Israel went after in idolatry.

The children of Israel were so intent on worshipping false gods it seemed not to matter who the false gods were, they worshipped them. Of course, the most infamous of the false gods and goddesses were Baal and Ashtaroth. This is spiritual adultery. God counted Israel His wife.

Verse 7

⁷And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon.

The only times Israel was blessed was when they were worshipping the LORD. When they went to false gods, God took his blessings off of them and empowered their enemies. Over and over, God used their enemies to chastise Israel. This time he empowers the Philistines and the Ammonites to punish Israel for Him.

and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon... If Israel wanted to serve the gods of the Philistines and the Amorites, God would allow them to do so. He allowed them in the fullest sense, by selling them into servitude to the Philistines and Amorites *and* their false gods.

Verse 8

⁸And that year they vexed and oppressed the children of Israel: eighteen years, all the children of Israel that were on the other side Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead.

And that year they vexed and oppressed the children of Israel: eighteen years... The very year the children of Israel started the worship of false gods, they were **vexed and oppressed** by the Philistines and the Ammonites. This lasted 18 years in Gilead, on the east side of the Jordan River.

Verse 9

⁹Moreover the children of Ammon passed over Jordan to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed.

This indicates the power of this king of Ammon. He was strong enough not only to afflict the tribes east of the Jordan but also to attack and fight west of the Jordan, and attack the larger tribes of the children of Israel there.

Israel calls to the Lord; God's response to Israel, Verses 10-14, Verse 10:

¹⁰And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim.

Once again oppression brought the children of Israel to their senses. But this time they were to find out that God's attitude had hardened. Those who go on sinning in the face of His mercy find

eventually that the way back is harder. The mention of the Baalim shows that this was still their central sin, common to them all.

We have sinned against thee... The words of this cry seem fine, but God's response in the next verse seems to indicate that He saw something lacking in Israel's repentance. One may cry out to the Lord, yet really just wish things were different. Crying out to God with the voice is not necessarily the same as crying out to Him with our heart.

Verses 11& 12

¹¹ And the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines?

¹² The Zidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, did oppress you; and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand.

Reference is here made to no less than seven nations from whose power the Lord had delivered Israel. These are: (1) The Egyptians; (2) the Amorites; (3) the Ammonites; (4) the Philistines; (5) the Sidonians; (6) the Amalekites; and (7) The Maonites who is here a reference to the Midianites.

Note: These references to former deliverances of Israel are of great historical value ... They show the existence of a real history in the background of that which has been preserved in the Bible.

Verse 13

¹³ Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more.

God was harsh with Israel because they had to be genuinely sick of their sin before they would genuinely turn to God. God allowed Israel to experience the sickness of their sin.

wherefore I will deliver you no more... "For the first time it is recorded that He refused to save them, reminding them of how repeatedly they He had delivered them, and yet they had turned back to their evil courses. In the message of His anger there was clearly evident a purpose of love." – Bible Scholar George Campbell Morgan

Verse 14

¹⁴ Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

Go and cry unto the gods... A bitter and taunting irony which could not help them.

which you have chosen.. Notice **FREE WILL**. They have not been forced to worship these gods by your oppressors and tyrants; but they have freely chosen these gods before Jehovah.

Repentance from Israel, mercy from God, Verses 15-16, Verse 15:

¹⁵ And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day.

do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day... Now their repentance becomes deeper and profounder. The Children of Israel asked God to chastise them with HIS own judgment instead of being hurt by the other gods. They accepted God's will, mercy and chastisement that "**seemeth good unto thee**".

The children of Israel remembered Jehovah's promises to Abraham, and were confident that HE would show mercy on them. Confession of Sin and Repentance is always a good place to start when we seek God. So they admitted their sins and sought HIM for deliverance, telling HIM that HE could punish them as He wished if only He would deliver them.

Verse 16

¹⁶ And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the LORD: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.

And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the LORD ... To show their loyalty to God, they put away these false gods. They began again to worship the LORD, and Him alone.



and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel... God looked upon disobedient Israel with compassion, not hatred. It was “difficult” for God to allow Israel to stay in their **misery**, though it was best for them. Like the perfect loving parent, God hated to see Israel suffer, even when it was good for them. He longed to rescue them but would not do it until it was good for them.

The repentance of Israel reported in these verses was no merely token maneuver. It was genuine. (1) They confessed their sins to the Lord (Judges 10:10, 15). (2) They bared their backs for punishment (Judges 10:15). (3) They put away the idols representing foreign gods (Judges 10:16). (4) They served the Lord (Judges 10:16).

Israel gathers, but without a leader, Preparations for a battle, Verses 17-18:

¹⁷ Then the children of Ammon were gathered together, and encamped in Gilead. And the children of Israel assembled themselves together, and encamped in Mizpeh.

In response to the Ammonite threat, Israel gathered together for defense.

Verse 18

¹⁸ And the people and princes of Gilead said one to another, What man is he that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? he shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

Israel gathered, but had no leader. God's pattern for doing great works among His people is to raise up a man. He could do the work all by Himself; He could send angels to do the work for Him; Yet God's normal means of operating is to raise up a man, and through that man to do a great work. God uses leaders.