

Sabbath Brothers

Judges: The Seventh Book of Scripture

The seventh book of Judges shows the deteriorating nation of Israel as each man rationalizes truth "in his own mind."

The Book of Judges covered a time period of 3-4 centuries.

This is the age after Joshua's death (representing the church age after the death of Jesus) and before the reign of the King (the millennial kingdom).

The book of Judges (showing the continuing downfall of man) and the book of Ruth (the establishment of the royal line) were (and still are in Judaism) considered one single book.

The author of the book of Judges is unknown, and some speculate that Judges was written by Samuel

The Judges were not "judicial," but instead, they were revolutionary leaders.

The title comes from the Hebrew "shophetim" (שֹׁפְטִים) which meant "to settle a dispute."



Fourteen Judges					
	Tribe	Judge	Meaning	Enemy	Years of Rule
1.	Judah	Othniel	"Lion of God"	King of Jericho	40 years
2.	Benjamin	Ehud	"Union/United"	King of Moab	80 years
3.	Naphtali	Shamgar	"He is called a stranger"	Ammonites	Unknown
4.	Ephraim	Deborah/Barak	"Bee" or "Lightning"	Amalekites	40 years
5.	Manasseh	Gideon	"Cutter down/Feller"	Philistines	40 years
6.	Issachar	Tola	"A scarlet worm"	King of Hazor	23 years
7.	Manasseh	Jair	"Enlightener"	Midianites	22 years
8.	Manasseh	Jephthah	"Whom God sets free"	Amalekites	6 years
9.	Zebulun	Ibzan	"Illustrious"	Philistines	7 years
10.	Zebulun	Elon	"Oak/Strong"	Ammonites	10 years
11.	Ephraim	Abdon	"Servile/Servant"	Ammonites	8 years
12.	Dan	Samson	"Of the sun"	Philistines	20 years
13.	Levi	Eli	"To Ascend"/"Uplifted"	Philistines	40 years
14.	Levi	Samuel	"Heard of God"	Philistines	~12 years
Possible Additional Judge					
15	Manasseh	Abimelech	"The King is my Father"	Israel	3 years

Unlike the other "religious" books of the world, the Bible depicts B.C. history ("His Story") detailing seven times that the nation of Israel fell then was redeemed.

"In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."
Judges 21:25

Othniel was the first Judge to be named (Judges 3:7-11), and “the Spirit of the Lord came on him.”

Othniel: The First Judge (Judges 1:9-15)

⁹ Afterward, the sons of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites living in the hill country, and in the Negev, and in the lowland.

¹⁰ So Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (the name of Hebron was previously Kiriath-arba); and they struck Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi.

¹¹ Then from there he went against the inhabitants of Debir (the name of Debir *was* previously Kiriath-sepher).

¹² And Caleb said, “Whoever attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give him my daughter Achsah as a wife.”

¹³ Now Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother, captured it; so he gave him his daughter Achsah as a wife.

¹⁴ Then it happened that when she came to *him*, she incited him to ask her father for a field. Then *later*, she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you want?”

¹⁵ She said to him, “Give me a blessing: since you have given me the land of the Negev, give me springs of water also.” So Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.



The story of Othniel is documented twice as he conquered Kiriath-sepher to win the hand of Othniel’s daughter Achsah (Joshua 15:15-19).

The significance of this retold account is that it is symbolic of taking (i.e. grasping) hold of the truth of God’s Word.

God would often change the names of individuals (Abraham, Sarah, Jacob), and Israel would change the names of conquered cities. Naming equates to authority over & responsibility for...

Kiriath-sepher (“the city of the book”) became Debir (“oracle; the living word of God”) just as one’s intellectual knowledge becomes experienced truth through faith.

Othniel (“seasonable speaking of God”) seems likely to be the one gaining Achsah (the testimony).

Caleb was the brother-in-law of Achsah

Achsah (the testimony) wanted a field (unbelievers) to harvest (Mt 9:37-38; John 4:34-36).

Achsah (the testimony) desires a blessing and running (live) water resulting in fruitfulness. The water can represent the Spirit (Jn 7:37-39) and God’s Word (Eph 5:25-26)

The Old (upper) and New Testament (lower)

The “Negev” represented the southern-most (desert) part of Israel, but the term also references the “south” direction.

“Arba” is the Hebrew term for the number “4.” Jews refer to “Arba” as the “city of the four” because they claim four forefathers were buried in Arba (although Adam’s burial site cannot be proven): Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Genesis 23:2; 35:27)

The one who secures Debir (understanding the Bible) will gain Achsah (“an anklet; to jingle”) which speaks to the testimony as one walks in this world.

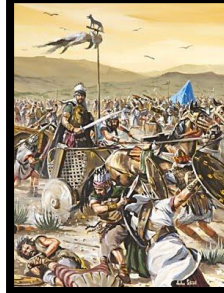
Othniel is the son of Kenaz (“the nest sprinkled”) which infers spiritual birth then flight.

While the donkey represents the old rebellious nature, and ridden donkey reflects the nature that is under control (moral restraint).

New Believers should eliminate all sources of sin

Failure to Eradicate Enemies (Judges 1:27-35)

²⁷ But **Manasseh did not take possession** of Beth-shean and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; so the Canaanites persisted in living in this land.



²⁸ And it came about, **when Israel became strong, that they put the Canaanites to forced labor; but they did not drive them out completely.**

²⁹ And **Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites** who were living in Gezer; so the Canaanites lived in Gezer among them.

³⁰ **Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants** of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol; so the Canaanites lived among them and **became subject to forced labor.**

³¹ **Asher did not drive out the inhabitants** of Acco, or the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Ahlab, or of Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, or of Rehob.

³² So the Asherites lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for **they did not drive them out.**

³³ **Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants** of Beth-shemesh, or the inhabitants of Beth-anath, but **lived among the Canaanites**, the inhabitants of the land; and the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath **became forced labor for them.**

³⁴ Then **the Amorites forced the sons of Dan into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the valley;**

³⁵ yet **the Amorites persisted** in living on Mount Heres, in Aijalon and Shaalbim; but **when the power of the house of Joseph grew strong, they became forced labor.**

³⁶ The border of the Amorites *ran* from the ascent of Akkrabbim, from Sela and upward.

Of the 9 ½ Tribes on the west side of the Jordan River, only one was victorious in the valley.

	<u>Tribe</u>	<u>Failure</u>
1.	Judah	Judges 1:19
2.	Simeon	Judges 1:17
3.	Benjamin	Judges 1:21
4.	Manasseh	Judges 1:27
5.	Ephraim	Judges 1:29
6.	Zebulun	Judges 1:30
7.	Asher	Judges 1:31
8.	Naphtali	Judges 1:33
9.	Dan	Judges 1:34

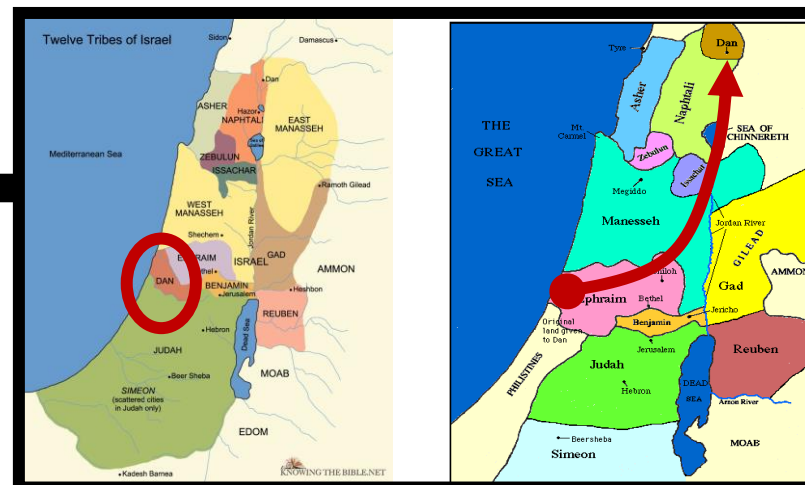
The nation of Israel was as strong as iron in themselves (Deut 4:20)

Issachar Victory in the Valley Judges 4:3 → 5:15

Instead of eliminating the enemy, Israel tended to subjugate them.



Deborah



Dan was the only Tribe to reject their land allotment & move to the North of Palestine.

The Jordan means “out of Dan” while the Danube is the 2nd longest European river.

"Bochim" is only referenced here & may be another name for "Bethel"

The Death of Joshua (Judges 2:1-10)

1 Now the angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you,

2 and as for you, you shall not make a covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed Me; what is this *thing that you have done?*

3 Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out from you; but they will become *like thorns* in your sides, and their gods will be a snare to you.'"

4 Now when the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, the people raised their voices and wept.

5 So they named that place Bochim; and there they sacrificed to the LORD.

6 When Joshua had dismissed the people, the sons of Israel went, each one to his inheritance, to take possession of the land.

7 The people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the LORD which He had done for Israel.

8 Then Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110.

9 And they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.

10 All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and another generation rose up after them who did not know the LORD, nor even the work which He had done for Israel.



The "servant of the Lord" (Moses - Deuteronomy 34:5; Joshua 1:1)

The Angel of Lord is a Christophany as God had led Egypt through the exile and had made a covenant with them.



Israelites broke the covenant with God by leaving the wicked Canaanites and their false altars intact.

Scripturally, "thorns" represent the consequences of sin (Genesis 3:18)

Since God's people failed to obey Him, God allowed the Canaanites to remain continuously bring pain & peril.

***"Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; One who guards himself will be far from them."* (Proverbs 22:5)**

Bochim means "the weepers" because Israel wept at the message of the Angel.

There is a difference between sorrow and repentance.

Israel was upset because of the judgment, but Israel was not ready to repent.



The book of Judges is a continuation of the book of Joshua which followed the leadership of Moses in the Torah.

Israel experienced powerful, spiritual leadership under Moses and Joshua, but now there would be a leadership vacuum except for the Judges from time-to-time.

Failure to teach their children (Ex 12:26-27; Dt 4:9-10, 6:7, 11:19, 32:46)

The new Pharaoh of Egypt had not known Joseph (Exodus 1:8) resulting in the slavery of Israel.

The Cycle of Sin (Judges 2:11-23)

11 Then **the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals**,
 12 and **they abandoned the LORD** the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and **they followed other gods from the gods of the peoples who were around them**, and bowed down to them; so **they provoked the LORD to anger**.
 13 **They abandoned the LORD and served Baal and the Ashtaroth**.
 14 Then the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and **He handed them over to plunderers**, and they plundered them; and **He sold them into the hands of their enemies around them**, so that they could no longer stand against their enemies.
 15 **Wherever they went, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil**, as the LORD had spoken and just as the LORD had sworn to them, so that they were severely distressed.
 16 Then **the LORD raised up judges who saved them** from the hands of those who plundered them.
 17 Yet **they did not listen to their judges, for they committed infidelity with other gods and bowed down to them**. They turned aside quickly from the way in which their fathers had walked in obeying the commandments of the LORD; they did not do the same *as their fathers*.
 18 And when the LORD raised up judges for them, **the LORD was with the judge and saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge**; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who tormented and oppressed them.
 19 But it came about, **when the judge died, that they would turn back and act more corruptly than their fathers**, in following other gods to serve them and bow down to them, **they did not abandon their practices or their obstinate ways**.
 20 So the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and He said, "Because this nation has violated My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and has not listened to My voice,
 21 **I in turn will no longer drive out from them any of the nations** which Joshua left when he died,
 22 in order to test Israel by them, whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk in it as their fathers did, or not."
 23 **So the LORD allowed those nations to remain, not driving them out quickly**; and He did not hand them over to Joshua.

The false gods of the Canaanites reflected both genders: Baal was the male and the Ashtoreth symbolized Astarte/Isis (the Canaanite goddess of fertility).

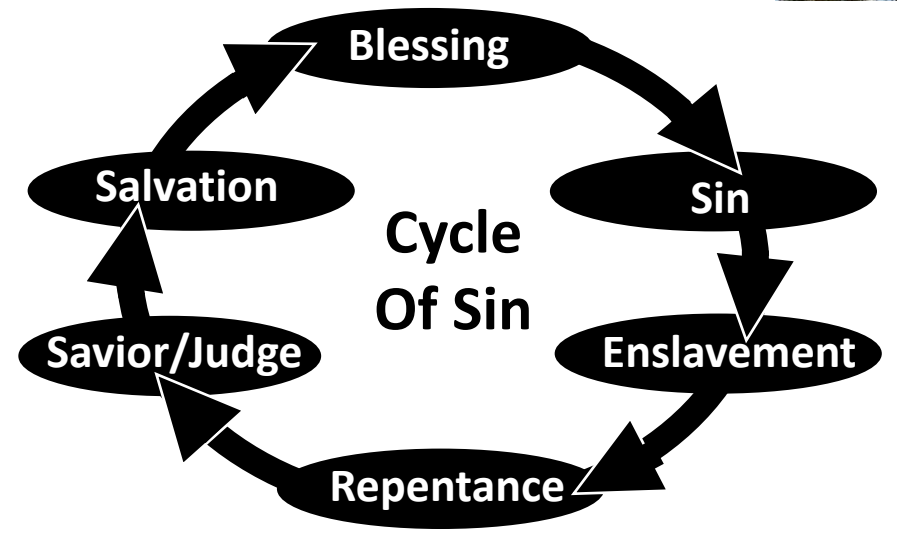
An attraction to the local worship of Baal may have been the sexual practices of worship. (Deuteronomy 4:25; 9:18; 17:2; 22:19; Judges. 3:7, 12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1)



Baal: Boulder



Ashtaroath: Tree



The sinful people were "faithful" to their sin & obstinately grasped and sacrificed for their iniquity

God's people forsook Him (No worship; service; prayer)

God Gave Them Over to the World

God sold His people as slaves to the world (Judges 3:8; 4:2,9; 10:7; 1 Samuel 12:9)

God would also "redeem" His people and "buy them back."

Othniel: The First Judge (Judges 3:1-14)

¹ Now these are the nations that the LORD left, to test Israel by them (*that is, all the Israelites who had not experienced any of the wars of Canaan;*

² only in order that the generations of the sons of Israel might be taught war, those who had not experienced it previously).

³ These nations are: the five governors of the Philistines and all the Canaanites and the Sidonians, and the Hivites who lived on Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon as far as Lebo-hamath.

⁴ They were left to test Israel by them, to find out if they would obey the commandments of the LORD, which He had commanded their fathers through Moses.

⁵ The sons of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites;

⁶ and they took their daughters for themselves as wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods.

⁷ So the sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and they forgot the LORD their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth.

⁸ Then the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, so that He sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim, king of Mesopotamia; and the sons of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim for eight years.

⁹ But the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD, and the LORD raised up a deliverer for the sons of Israel to set them free, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.

¹⁰ And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel. When he went to war, the LORD handed over to him Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia, so that he prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

¹¹ Then the land was at rest for forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

¹² Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD. So the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of the LORD.

¹³ And he gathered to himself the sons of Ammon and Amalek; and he went and defeated Israel, and they took possession of the city of the palm trees.

¹⁴ And the sons of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab for eighteen years.



Israel was "married" to the world

Othniel married Achsah (the testimony) instead of the world

God could have plagued the Canaanites to eradicate them, but instead, God developed and strengthened His people.

Spiritual war allows believers to become overcomers (Ephesians 6:12; Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 21:7).

The enemies of Israel were primarily on the coast of the Mediterranean with the Philistines in the southeast and northward to Sidon in Lebanon.

5 Philistine Princes:

- Gaza
- Ashkelon
- Ashdod
- Ekron
- Gath



Idolatry

Ba'al was represented by an uplifted stone boulder

Ashtoreth was symbolized by either a live tree or a carved wooden pole

Worship of fertility gods involved public acts of sex

The phrase "*the Spirit of the Lord came upon him*" is repeated as the power of the Judge came from the Lord (Judges 6:34; 11:29; 14:6, 19; 15:14; 1 Samuel 16:13).

The Lord also strengthened Israel's enemies against them as judgment for their rebellious sin

The phrase "city of palms" refers to Jericho (Deuteronomy 34:3)

The name "Othniel" means "seasonable speaking of God"

Ehud: The Second Judge (Judges 3:15-25)

¹⁵ But when the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for them, Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed man. And the sons of Israel sent tribute by him to Eglon the king of Moab.

¹⁶ Now Ehud made himself a sword which had two edges, a cubit in length, and he strapped it on his right thigh under his cloak.

¹⁷ Then he presented the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man.

¹⁸ And it came about, when he had finished presenting the tribute, that Ehud sent away the people who had carried the tribute.

¹⁹ But he himself turned back from the idols which were at Gilgal, and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king." And the king said, "Silence!" And all who were attending him left him.

²⁰ Then Ehud came to him while he was sitting in his cool roof chamber alone. And Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." And he got up from his seat.

²¹ Then Ehud reached out with his left hand and took the sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly.

²² The hilt of the sword also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade because he did not pull the sword out of his belly; and the refuse came out.

²³ Then Ehud went out into the vestibule, and shut the doors of the roof chamber behind him, and locked them.

²⁴ When he had left, the king's servants came and looked, and behold, the doors of the roof chamber were locked; and they said, "Undoubtedly he is relieving himself in the cool room."

²⁵ So they waited until it would have been shameful to wait longer; but behold, he did not open the doors of the roof chamber. So they took the key and opened them, and behold, their master had fallen to the floor dead.

Ehud means "He that Praises"

It is ironic that from the tribe of Benjamin (meaning "Son of my Right Hand") came these Left-Handed Warriors

A cubit is 18 inches long, so there was an inch for every year of slavery by God's people.

It is symbolic that Ehud turned away from the idols; the Gilgal quarries possibly where false idols were made

Ehud claimed to have a "word of God" for Eglah before using sword.

"The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Ephesians 6:17)

The knife uncovered the refuse within Eglon.

The servants may have smelled the refuse and assumed Eglon was relieving himself.

"For the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, even penetrating as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow." (Hebrews 4:12)



Eglon's obvious sin was consumption.

The blade pierced Eglon's defining characteristic – his stomach.

Clothing symbolizes righteousness (Revelation 19:8). The sword hidden under clothing represents the Word of God hidden in inside a believer. (Psalm 119:11)

That the knife was bound to Ehud's right thigh (Revelation 19:16) symbolizes the strength and walk of life under the government of God's Word.

The knife pierced Eglon so deeply that Eglon's stomach covered the blade.



Shamgar: The Third Judge (Judges 3:31)

³¹ Now after him came Shamgar the son of Anath, who struck and killed six hundred Philistines with an ox goad; and he also saved Israel.

The name "Shamgar" means "He is here, a Stranger"

The name Anath means "Testifying"



"Anath" was the name of a Canaanite war goddess; a city of Galilee was named Beth-Anath.



This was the first conflict with Philistines as troublesome neighbors since the days of Abraham (Genesis 26:1-18).

History of the Philistines

The Philistines (descended from Ham) were seafaring tradespeople from the Aegean Islands who attempted to migrate down to Egypt.

Egypt repelled the Philistines who settled in the southwest corner of Canaan around 1200BC (the beginning of the iron age).

Shamgar killed 600 Philistines; the number "6" symbolizes "insufficient" and is regarded as the "number of man" (Revelation 13:18)

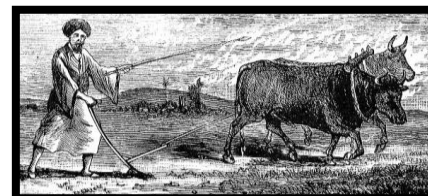
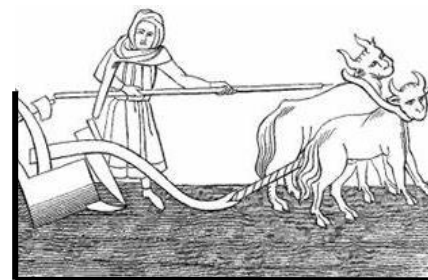
During the days of Saul, Philistine control of Israel was such that Israel was forbidden to possess any weapons while agricultural tools had to be taken to the Philistines for sharpening (1 Samuel 13:21)

Ox Goad

A pole 8 to 10 feet long that has a pointed metal spike at one end and a flat blade at the other.

The spike is used to prod the oxen to move a certain direction and speed.

The flat blade is used to scrape accumulated earth from the plowshare.



Spiritual Purpose of Goad

To prod the reluctant workers to activity while scraping away the earthly things that would impede the work of God. (Eccl 12:11 – Acts 9:5)

Deborah: The Fourth Judge (Judges 4:1-10)

¹ Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, after Ehud died.

² So the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; and the commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-hagoyim.

³ The sons of Israel cried out to the LORD; for he had nine hundred iron chariots, and he oppressed the sons of Israel severely for twenty years.

⁴ Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time.

⁵ She used to sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the sons of Israel went up to her for judgment.

⁶ Now she sent word and summoned Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-naphtali, and said to him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, has indeed commanded, 'Go and march to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men from the sons of Naphtali and from the sons of Zebulun.'

⁷ I will draw out to you Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his many troops to the river Kishon, and I will hand him over to you.'"

⁸ Then Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go."

⁹ She said, "I will certainly go with you; however, the fame shall not be yours on the journey that you are about to take, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." Then Deborah got up and went with Barak to Kedesh.

¹⁰ Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh, and ten thousand men went up with him; Deborah also went up with him.



Barak was from the Tribe of Naphtali (Judges 4:6)

Once Ehud died, Israel fell away from God. Shamgar may have been another Judge in a separate part of Israel (Southwest) during the same time as Ehud (Transjordan).



Jabin means "one who is intelligent/discerning", and scholars believe that this struggle represents the battle against intellectualism.

Deborah ("a bee") is called a prophetess (Hebrew "Nebiyah") while the term prophet is "Nabiy".

Deborah was married to Lappidoth ("lamp").

Deborah filled three distinguishing roles: prophet, wife, and judge.

Deborah sat between Ramah ("height") and Bethel ("house of God") while Israelites sought her judgment on matters.

Barak depended on the presence of Deborah instead of the presence of the Lord; however, Barak (not Deborah) would be remembered in the "Hall of Faith" (Hebrews 11:32).

Deborah (a woman) took a leadership position when Barak "lightning" (a man) wouldn't. At that time a woman's honor corresponded to submission, not rule, (1 Peter 3:5-6).

God punished Israel with "... children are their oppressors, and women rule over them." (Isaiah 3:12)

Mt. Tabor is southwest of the Sea of Galilee in the Tribal Land of Issachar while Zebulun and Naphtali are west and northwest of the Sea of Galilee.



Men's names in the Bible outnumber female names about 17 to 1, but when a man cannot be found to lead in God's will, the women are utilized as leaders.

Jael Kills Sisera (Judges 4:11-21)

¹¹ Now Heber the Kenite had separated himself from the Kenites, from the sons of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent as far away as the oak in Zaanannim, which is near Kedesh.

¹² Then they told Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor.

¹³ Sisera summoned all his chariots, nine hundred iron chariots, and all the people who *were* with him, from Harosheth-hagoyim to **the river Kishon**

¹⁴ Then Deborah said to Barak, "Arise! For this is the day on which the LORD has handed Sisera over to you; behold, the LORD has gone out before you."

So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him.

¹⁵ And the LORD routed Sisera and all *his* chariots and all *his* army with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera got down from *his* chariot and fled on foot.

¹⁶ But Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Harosheth-hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not even one was left.

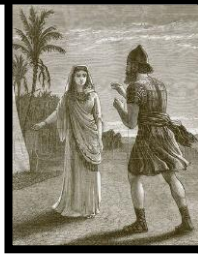
¹⁷ Now Sisera fled on foot to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite, because *there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.*

¹⁸ And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, "Turn aside, my master, turn aside to me! Do not be afraid." So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug.

¹⁹ And he said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened a leather bottle of milk and gave him a drink; then she covered him.

²⁰ And he said to her, "Stand in the doorway of the tent, and it shall be if anyone comes and inquires of you, and says, 'Is there anyone here?' that you shall say, 'No.'"

²¹ But Jael, Heber's wife, took a tent peg and a hammer in her hand, and went secretly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it went through into the ground; for he was sound asleep and exhausted. So he died.



Heber ("associate/one that passes by") separated from Israel which positioned his wife, Jael, to win the battle (Judges 4:17).

Often, the believer must separate (sanctify) themselves (from the world) before God uses them.

Sisera (meaning "sees a swallow" or "sees a horse") was Commander of the Canaanite army under King Jabin of Hazor.

Sisera's military was based on 900 iron chariots that he would use to attack Barak on the plains bordering the River Kishon.

The Lord went out before Barak & continues to go out before His people enter spiritual battles

Sisera abandoned his source of strength (the chariot).

The strength (that Sisera mistook for being an advantage) became a disadvantage.

Because Heber had separated and moved away from the other Kenites descended from Moses' father-in-law (Judges 4:11), Jael was in the perfect place to receive Sisera in flight.

Jael "wild goat" (wife of Heber the Kenite – Midianite descendants of Jethro) drove a peg through Sisera's temple (symbolizing the brain/intellect)

The tent is generally recognized as the symbol of the pilgrim life.

"The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd." (Ecclesiastes 12:11)

Jeremiah 23:29 interprets the symbol of the hammer as the Word of God

Deborah's Song (Judges 5:12-27)

¹² "Awake, awake, Deborah; Awake, awake, sing a song! Arise, Barak, and lead away your captives, son of Abinoam.

¹³ Then survivors came down to the nobles;

The people of the LORD came down to me as warriors.

¹⁴ From Ephraim those whose root is in Amalek *came down*, Following you, Benjamin, with your peoples; From Machir commanders came down, And from Zebulun those who wield the staff of office.

¹⁵ And **the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; As was Issachar, so was Barak**; Into the valley they rushed at his heels; Among the divisions of Reuben *There were* great determinations of heart.

¹⁶ **Why did you sit among the sheepfolds, To hear the piping for the flocks?**

Among the divisions of Reuben *There were* great "searchings" of heart.

¹⁷ Gilead remained across the Jordan; And **why did Dan stay on ships?**

Asher sat at the seashore, And remained by its landings.

¹⁸ Zebulun *was* a people who risked their lives, And Naphtali *too*, on the high places of the field.

¹⁹ "The kings came **and fought**; Then the kings of Canaan fought at Taanach near the waters of Megiddo; They took no plunder in silver.

²⁰ **The stars fought from heaven, From their paths they fought against Sisera.**

²¹ **The torrent of Kishon swept them away, The ancient torrent, the torrent Kishon. My soul, march on with strength!**

²² Then the horses' hoofs beat From the galloping, the galloping of his mighty stallions.

²³ 'Curse Meroz,' said the angel of the LORD, 'Utterly curse its inhabitants, Because they did not come to the help of the LORD, To the help of the LORD against the warriors.'

²⁴ "Most blessed of women is Jael, The wife of Heber the Kenite; Most blessed is she of women in the tent.



Some "considered" the battle without engaging...

Repeatedly throughout Scripture, God calls His people to awake – get up – and go!

Victory at The Kishon ("sore") River

David referenced the victory (Psalm 83:9)

Elijah killed 400 false prophets at the Brook of Kishon (1 Kings 18:40)

"LORD, when You went out from Seir, When You marched from the field of Edom, The earth quaked, the heavens also dripped, The clouds also dripped water."

Judges 5:4

The Kishon River 43 mile-long stream through the Jezreel Valley from the Gilboa mountains in central Israel to the Mediterranean Sea.

Jerusalem receives approximately the same amount of rainfall as London, England each year; however, it only rains 5 months in Israel, so the rainfall is torrential.

The river trench is 20 feet deep that fills up quickly in the rain season when the banks turn to mud.

God sent heavy rain which rendered Sisera's 900 iron chariots useless in the mud.



The rain and the overflowing river both speak of the Word of God being used, not sparingly but liberally.



Baal was the God of thunder and rain, so it is ironic that God uses rain to defeat the iron chariots of Sisera.

GIDEON

Gideon: The Fifth Judge (Judges 6:11-21)

¹¹ Now the Angel of the LORD came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, which *belonged* to Joash the Abiezrite, while his son Gideon threshed wheat in the winepress, in order to hide *it* from the Midianites.

¹² And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, “The LORD *is* with you, you mighty man of valor!”



¹³ Gideon said to Him, “O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where *are* all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the LORD has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.”

¹⁴ Then the LORD turned to him and said, “Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?”

¹⁵ So he said to Him, “O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan *is* the weakest in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father’s house.”

¹⁶ And the LORD said to him, “Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man.”



¹⁷ Then he said to Him, “If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who talk with me.

¹⁸ Do not depart from here, I pray, until I come to You and bring out my offering and set *it* before You.” And He said, “I will wait until you come back.”

¹⁹ So Gideon went in and prepared a young goat, and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour. The meat he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot; and he brought *them* out to Him under the terebinth tree and presented *them*.

²⁰ The Angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay *them* on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And he did so.

²¹ Then the Angel of the LORD put out the end of the staff that was in His hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and fire rose out of the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. And the Angel of the LORD departed out of his sight.



Ophrah means “dustiness” (disobedience brings death, as our disobedience brought Christ “into the dust of death” - Psalm 22:15)

The Angel of the Lord (Christophany) saw Gideon as he could and should be instead of who he was – a weak, frightened man.



“The Lord is with you” may reference the Angel’s immediate presence (Immanuel) or the broader truth that Gideon is a mighty, valiant warrior only because the Lord is with him.

Gideon had heard testimonies about the Exodus from Egypt, and he didn’t understand why the Lord was judging them.

God tells Gideon that the source of his strength would be God. Midian would be struck down as if by one man because it would be God who destroyed them.

Even Gideon’s faith is weak as he requests a sign from the Angel. Gideon desired a sign that the Angel was indeed interacting with him. Gideon may have thought that this was a dream/vision.

The goat is utilized for sin offerings while the oak represents strength.

Worship before service; “Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock” → what God can do with a sacrificed and pure (no leaven) life when they are placed upon “the rock” of Jesus



The staff is generally recognized as a type of the Word of God (end of the staff = fulfillment); fire is one of the Scriptural symbols of the Holy Spirit

Gideon's Altar (Judges 6:22-32)

²² Now Gideon perceived that He *was* the Angel of the LORD. So Gideon said, "Alas, O Lord God! For I have seen the Angel of the LORD face to face."

²³ Then the LORD said to him, "Peace *be* with you; do not fear, you shall not die."

²⁴ So Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and called it **The-LORD-Is-Peace**. To this day it *is* still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

²⁵ Now it came to pass the same night that the LORD said to him, "Take your father's young bull, the second bull of seven years old, and **tear down the altar of Baal that your father has, and cut down the wooden image that *is* beside it;**

²⁶ and build an altar to the LORD your God on top of this rock in the proper arrangement, and take the second bull and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the image which you shall cut down."



²⁷ So Gideon took ten men from among his servants and did as the LORD had said to him. **But because he feared his father's household and the men of the city too much to do *it* by day, he did *it* by night.**

²⁸ And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, there was the altar of Baal, torn down; and the wooden image that *was* beside it was cut down, and the second bull was being offered on the altar *which had been* built.



²⁹ So they said to one another, "Who has done this thing?" And when they had inquired and asked, they said, "Gideon the son of Joash has done this thing."

³⁰ Then the men of the city said to Joash, "Bring out your son, that he may die, because he has torn down the altar of Baal, and because he has cut down the wooden image that *was* beside it."

BAAL
MEANS
"LORD"

³¹ But Joash said to all who stood against him, "Would you plead for Baal? Would you save him? Let the one who would plead for him be put to death by morning! If he *is* a god, let him plead for himself, because his altar has been torn down!"



³² Therefore on that day he called him Jerubbaal, saying, "Let Baal plead against him, because he has torn down his altar."

Gideon is fearful because no one can see the Lord and live (Ex 33:20); however, to see the Lord face-to-face means that the Lord talking directly and plainly (Ex 33:11; Num 12:8). Samson's father would later show the same fear (Judges 13:22).

The Lord urged Gideon to have peace and not fear. Gideon constructed an altar and named it "The Lord is my peace."

Canaanites considered seven, the Biblical number of perfection or completeness, to be an unlucky number, while the Israelites held it to be virtually sacred, so offering the second bull of seven years old to Yahweh was a deliberate denial of the power of Baal.

An Asherah pole is a sacred tree or pole that stood near Canaanite religious locations to honor the mother-goddess Asherah (Asherim were "groves"). This was the name of a sensual Canaanite goddess Astarte, the feminine of the Assyrian Ishtar.



The worship of Baal was to be replaced with the worship of Jehovah

Morning often brings light and vision to those in Scripture. The false gods of Baal and Asherah were thought to have powers over nature's fertility; Canaanites believed that when these false gods had sexual intercourse, rains and harvest would occur.

Joash (meaning "God's fire") asked the reason that their false god needed to be protected and threatened that anyone who defended Baal should die that day.

Gideon's father, Joash, changed Gideon's name to "Jerubbaal" meaning "Baal will be contended against"

Gideon's Fleece (Judges 6:33-40)

³³ Then all the Midianites and Amalekites, the people of the East, gathered together; and they crossed over and encamped in the Valley of Jezreel.



³⁴ **But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon; then he blew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites gathered behind him.**



³⁵ **And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, who also gathered behind him. He also sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.**

³⁶ **So Gideon said to God, "If You will save Israel by my hand as You have said—**



³⁷ **look, I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said."**



³⁸ **And it was so. When he rose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece together, he wrung the dew out of the fleece, a bowlful of water.**

³⁹ **Then Gideon said to God, "Do not be angry with me, but let me speak just once more: Let me test, I pray, just once more with the fleece; let it now be dry only on the fleece, but on all the ground let there be dew."**



⁴⁰ **And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, but there was dew on all the ground.**



Gideon was no longer under his own power as the Spirit of God fell on him. Gideon's response to the Spirit was to call God's people together. The Abiezrites were Gideon's family (Judges 6:11). The name "Abiezrite" means "encouragement and prayer in a time of panic."

Gideon uses the threshing floor overnight (instead of the wine vat – Judges 6:11) to test if God would wet the fleece with dew while keeping the surrounding ground dry.

The Spirit of God fell on Him, and Gideon blew the Ram's horn. Gideon sent out a call to His Tribe (Manasseh) and others (Asher, Zebulun, Naphtali)

After Gideon summoned his brothers in faith, he tested God to determine if God would deliver Israel by Gideon's hand

The name "Jezreel" means "God will scatter." The "valley of Jezreel" is associated with "the valley of Megiddo" which will be the staging site for Armageddon.

The enemies moved to the Valley of Jezreel; a valley often symbolizes a difficult time in Scripture

The fleece was not partially wet, but instead, the fleece was drenched with water.

Gideon had already requested a sign (Judges 6:17), so his faith was markedly lacking.

God mercifully answered Gideon's test with a dry fleece the next morning and dew surrounding the ground.

Gideon understands that his lack of faith might anger God.

The sheep are represented by the fleece as the Jewish Nation. The first test resulted in a fleece covered with dew while all around was dry. This may represent the Jewish nation favored by God with the Law and the Prophets (God's chosen people). The second test of a dry fleece may reflect the Jewish nation cast off for rejecting Christ. The surrounding water all around be speak of the gospel of Christ preached to the Gentiles.

Gideon's Smaller Army (Judges 7:1-8)

¹ Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and everyone who with him, got up early and camped beside the **spring of Harod**. The camp of Midian was north of them, below the hill of Moreh, in the valley.



² The LORD said to Gideon, **“You have too many people for Me to hand the Midianites over to you, or else Israel might brag: ‘I did it myself.’”**



³ Now announce in the presence of the people: **“Whoever is fearful and trembling may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.”**

So **22,000** of the people turned back, but **10,000** remained.

⁴ Then the LORD said to Gideon, **“There are still too many people. Take them down to the water, and I will test them for you there. If I say to you, ‘This one can go with you,’ he can go. But if I say about anyone, ‘This one cannot go with you,’ he cannot go.”**



⁵ So he brought the people down to the water, and the LORD said to Gideon, **“Separate everyone who laps water with his tongue like a dog. Do the same with everyone who kneels to drink.”**

⁶ The number of those who lapped with their hands to their mouths was **300** men, and all the rest of the people knelt to drink water.



⁷ The LORD said to Gideon, **“I will deliver you with the 300 men who lapped and hand the Midianites over to you. But everyone else is to go home.”**

⁸ So Gideon sent all the Israelites to their tents but kept the **300**, who took the people’s provisions and their trumpets. The camp of Midian was below him in the valley.



As on the day of Joshua’s battle with Jericho (Joshua 6:12-15), Gideon and everyone with him, awoke early. **“Harod”** means **“army ruler/leader”**, and the spring of Harod would be used to determine who was to remain in the army (Judges 7:5-6).

The first test to determine readiness of a man to fight God’s battle was whether he has fear or faith. This was also a test in the days of Moses (Dt 20:1-4) because fear is contagious among brothers (Dt 20:8)

The Lord is more concerned about the outcome of the character of His people than the outcome of the battle; the Lord did not want His people to have pride.

God told Gideon to take the troops to the living (running) water to test if they should remain. The water can represent the Spirit (John 7:37-39) and God’s Word (Ephesians 5:25-26)

God told Gideon to separate the army into two camps – those who knelt with their mouth in the water would be released while those who scooped the water with their hands (and lapped it like a dog) would remain. Gentiles were periodically referred to as **“dogs”** in Scripture (Matthew 15:23-28; Exodus 11:7; Psalm 22:16); although some Israelites were also referenced as **“dogs”** (Isaiah 56:10).

Three percent of the **10,000** warriors remained. The number **“3”** in Scripture often represents revelation.

The Lord emphasized that He would deliver Gideon and not the size of the army.

The trumpet is the symbol of testimony; contention and strife which Midian represents, still camps in the valley

God Encourages Gideon (Judges 7:9-15)

⁹ That night the LORD said to him, “Get up and go into the camp, for I have given it into your hand.



¹⁰ But if you are afraid to go to the camp, go with Purah your servant.

¹¹ Listen to what they say, and then you will be strengthened to go to the camp.” So he went with Purah his servant to the outpost of the troops who were in the camp.

¹² Now the Midianites, Amalekites, and all the Qedemites had settled down in the valley like a swarm of locusts, and their camels were as innumerable as the sand on the seashore.



¹³ When Gideon arrived, there was a man telling his friend about a dream. He said, “Listen, I had a dream: a loaf of barley bread came tumbling into the Midianite camp, struck a tent, and it fell. The loaf turned the tent upside down so that it collapsed.”



¹⁴ His friend answered: “This is nothing less than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, the Israelite. God has handed the entire Midianite camp over to him.”



¹⁵ When Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation, he bowed in worship. He returned to Israel’s camp and said, “Get up, for the LORD has handed the Midianite camp over to you.”

Before the actual defeat, God had given the victory to Gideon (Joshua 6:2)

God provided Gideon with a friend, Purah meaning “Fruitful Branch”, when he was afraid.

God told Gideon to be attentive & listen; what he would hear would give him courage.

Scripture periodically uses “the sands of the seashore” to represent a large number from a worldly perspective. Swarms of locusts are rapacious & destroy everything.

Gideon overheard a dream which revealed the remarkable strength of a barley loaf. Barley was Israel’s first crop which was harvested at the time of Passover, in April.

The Midianites friend likened Gideon’s army to the loaf of Barley bread. The Midianite enemy realized that God would control the battle.

Gideon bowed in worship to God before even leaving the enemy camp and upon returning to his army, he awoke everyone convinced of the victory.

450 Midianites for every 1 Israelite

Gideon Defeats the Midianites (Judges 7:16-23)

¹⁶ Then he divided the 300 men into three companies and gave each of the men a trumpet in one hand and an empty pitcher with a torch inside it in the other.



¹⁷ “Watch me,” he said, “and do the same. When I come to the outpost of the camp, do as I do.

¹⁸ When I and everyone with me blow our trumpets, you are also to blow your trumpets all around the camp. Then you will say, ‘**For Yahweh and for Gideon!**’”



¹⁹ Gideon and the 100 men who were with him went to the outpost of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch after the sentries had been stationed. They blew their trumpets and broke the pitchers that were in their hands.



²⁰ **The three companies blew their trumpets and shattered their pitchers.** They held their torches in their left hands, their trumpets in their right hands, and shouted,

“A sword for Yahweh and for Gideon!”

²¹ Each Israelite took his position around the camp, and the entire Midianite army fled, and cried out as they ran.

²² When Gideon’s men blew their 300 trumpets, the LORD set the swords of each man in the army against each other. They fled to Beth-shittah in the direction of Zererah as far as the border of Abel-meholah near Tabbath.

²³ Then the men of Israel were called from Naphtali, Asher, and Manasseh, and they pursued the Midianites.



Scripture often refers to a man’s life as a clay jar. (Is 64:8; Job 10:9; Rom 9:21) or a national character (Jeremiah 18:6; Daniel 2:43). The flame within may represent the workings of the Spirit (Acts 2:3). As a believer’s life is broken, the Spirit can shine through.

Gideon tells the warriors with him to follow his example. (1 Corinthians 4:16, 11:1; Philippians 3:17)

Trumpets often signify testimony (a call to action – Numbers 10:2), and Gideon’s confidence can be seen growing as he calls on those fighting to yell, “*For Yahweh and for Gideon!*”

Each of Gideon’s warriors played his role and took his position around the Midianites. God incited Gideon’s enemies to use their swords against each other (Psalm 64:3)

The men of Zebulun were not called to assist, but the others (Manasseh, Zebulun, Naphtali) who had joined when Gideon first blew the trumpet (Judges 6:35) assisted to rout the enemy.

The surprise would come in the middle of the night (Matthew 25:6). Instead of nighttime hours, Jews divided the night into military watches representing the period that guards and watchmen remained on duty.

In the Old Testament, the Jewish division of the night was three watches of four hours each – from sunset until 10pm – from 10pm until 2am – from 2am until sunrise (Ex 14:24; 1 Sam 11:11; Ps 63:6; 90:4; 119:148; 130:6; Lam 2:19).

In the New Testament under the Romans, Jews adopted the Roman division of four watches of three hours each – from 6pm to 9pm – from 9pm to midnight – from midnight to 3am – from 3am to 6am (Mt 14:25; Mk 13:35).

The Legacy of Gideon (Judges 8:22-35)

²² Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, “Rule over us, both you and your son, your son’s son as well, for you have saved us from the hand of Midian!”

²³ But Gideon said to them, “I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the LORD shall rule over you.”

²⁴ Yet Gideon said to them, “I would request of you, that each of you give me an earring from his plunder.” (For they had gold earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)

²⁵ And they said, “We will certainly give *them to you*.” So they spread out a garment, and every one of them tossed an earring there from his plunder.

²⁶ The weight of the gold earrings that he requested was 1,700 *shekels* of gold, apart from the crescent amulets, the ear pendants, and the purple robes which were on the kings of Midian, and apart from the neck chains that were on their camels’ necks.

²⁷ Gideon made it into an ephod, and placed it in his city, Ophrah; but all Israel committed infidelity with it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and his household.

²⁸ So Midian was subdued before the sons of Israel, and they did not lift up their heads anymore. And the land was undisturbed for forty years in the days of Gideon.

²⁹ Then Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and lived in his own house.

³⁰ Now Gideon had seventy sons who were his direct descendants, for he had many wives.

³¹ And his concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, and he named him Abimelech.

³² And Gideon the son of Joash died at a good old age and was buried in the tomb of his father Joash, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

³³ Then it came about, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the sons of Israel again committed infidelity with the Baals, and made Baal-berith their god.

³⁴ So the sons of Israel did not remember the LORD their God, who had saved them from the hands of all their enemies on every side;

³⁵ nor did they show kindness to the household of Jerubbaal (*that is*, Gideon) in accordance with all the good that he had done for Israel.

“And the Lord said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people regarding all that they say to you, because they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being King over them.” (1 Samuel 8:7, 12:12).

The northern tribes requested Gideon to be their (tangible) king (along with his lineage); however, Gideon declined because God was Israel’s king.

In spite of declining the responsibility as king, Gideon did accumulate wealth from Israel.

Crescent ornaments (now the symbol of Islam) represented the moon goddess Isis/Astarte/Artemis/Diana (Isaiah 3:18).

The “ephod” was a sacred vest worn by the high priest that enabled him to inquire of the Lord (1 Samuel 23:6)

Idolatry is correlated to “spiritual infidelity” & unfaithfulness

Gideon erroneously made a “replica ephod” from the golden jewelry and purple cloth of the defeated Midianites to put on display in his hometown of Ophrah (“fawn”).

Gideon would be remembered in the “Hall of Faith” (Hebrews 11:32).

Gideon collected 43 pounds of gold tribute as well as purple garments & crescent moons from the camels.

Ephod

ΤΙΘΙΣ



Baal-Berith
“Baal (god) of the Covenant”

The Crescent Shape

Judges 8:26

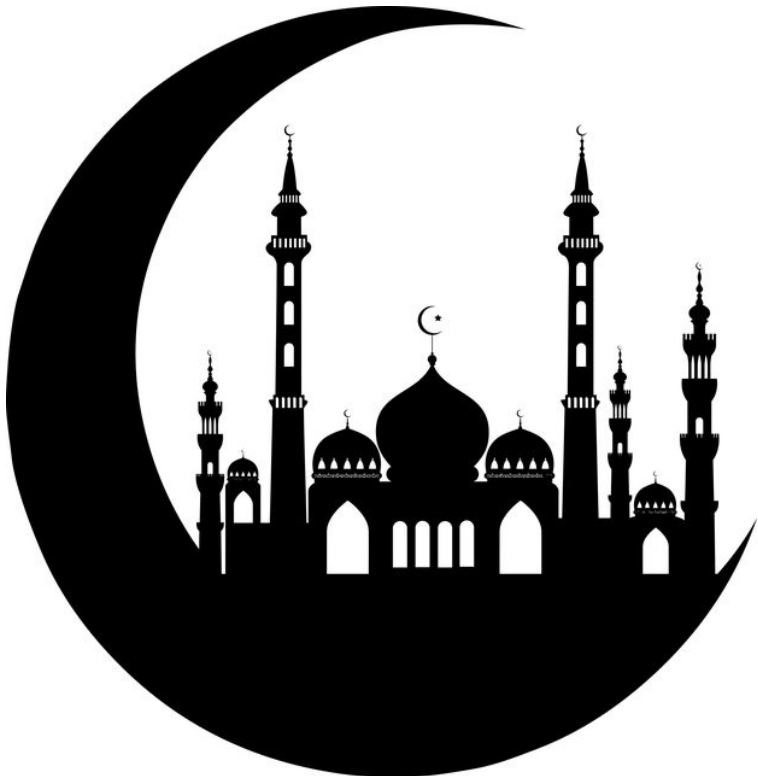


Crescent shaped jewelry was collected from the Israelites immorally for Gideon to manufacture an idolatrous ephod (Judges 8:26). The crescent shape is also mentioned another time in Scripture - Isaiah 3:18 *"In that day the Lord will take away the beauty of their anklets, the headbands, the crescent necklaces."*

Both times that "crescent" is used in Scripture, it has a negative connotation. In Ephesus stands the remains of Artemis/Diana's Temple (Acts 19:24-41). The crescent is a symbol of Artemis/Diana since she is the pagan goddess of hunting (the shape of the bow) and childbirth (the shape of female anatomy)

Another historical city, Byzantium (Constantinople/Istanbul) adopted the crescent moon as their symbol to honor Artemis/Diana. Islam was not affiliated with the crescent moon until the time of the Ottoman Empire when the Turks conquered Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1453; it was then that the Muslims adopted the city's existing flag as their symbol.

So the crescent moon predates Islam by thousands of years and was usually associated with nature and possibly the worship of nature (aka astrology). This is the reason that many Muslims reject the crescent as any kind of symbol today because it was traditionally simply an ancient icon linked to a female pagan goddess.



Abimelech means
"my father is king"

The Murder of Gideon's Sons (Judges 9:1-6)

¹ Now Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem, to his mother's relatives, and spoke to them and to the entire family of the household of his mother's father, saying,

² "Speak, now, in the hearing of all the leaders of Shechem, 'Which is better for you: for seventy men, all the sons of Jerubbaal, to rule over you, or for one man to rule over you?' Also, remember that I am your bone and your flesh."

³ So his mother's relatives spoke all these words on his behalf in the hearing of all the leaders of Shechem; and they were inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, "He is our relative."

⁴ And they gave him seventy *pieces* of silver from the house of Baal-berith, with which Abimelech hired worthless and reckless men, and they followed him.

⁵ Then he went to his father's house in Ophrah and killed his brothers the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, on one stone. But Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left, because he hid himself.

⁶ All the leaders of Shechem and all Beth-millo assembled together, and they went and made Abimelech king, by the oak of the memorial stone which was in Shechem.

Shechem ("shoulder") in Samaria stood in the narrow-sheltered valley between Ebal ("stony") on the north and Gerizim ("rocky") on the south, these mountains at their base being only some 500 yards apart.

Shechem was the location of the first altar of Abraham (Genesis 12:6) and also the location the Jacob's daughter Dinah was raped (Genesis 34).

Ultimately, Shechem will be the location where Israel will be divided into two kingdoms (1 Kings 12).

The funding for Abimelech's wicked scheme came from Baal's temple offerings.

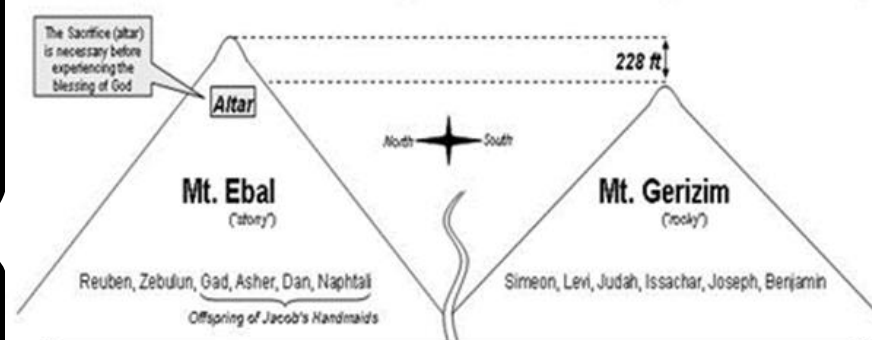


Beth-millo (meaning "house of millo" / Millo means "who resembles God") was a leading family in the area.

The Oak in Shechem was the location where:

- Abraham constructed his first altar upon entering Canaan (Gen 12:6-7)
- Jacob buried Rachel's household idols
- Joshua established a memorial stone (Joshua 24:25-26).

Ebal (Sin/Sacrifice) to Gerizim (Blessing)



A great road between the two mountains as the quickest means of communication between the East of the Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea.

Abimelech's mother was the concubine of Gideon who lived in Shechem

The concubine's family supported Abimelech's murderous self-seeking ambition.

The murderers were paid one piece of silver for each son of Gideon that they were to kill (Matthew 26:14-15).

"Baal-berith" means "Baal of the Covenant"

Abimelech made a "sacrificial slaughter" of his brothers (1 Sam 14:33, 35), but the Lord protected a remnant (Jotham) for himself.

The son of Gideon's concubine (Abimelech) would wickedly become the first king in Israel (Judges 9:6) by slaughtering all seventy of his half-brothers.

The sixth time that Israel
"did evil in the Lord's sight"

The Nazirite Samson (Judges 13:1-14)

1 The Israelites again did what was evil in the LORD's sight, "40" SYMBOLIZES TESTS / TRIALS so the LORD handed them over to the Philistines 40 years.



2 There was a certain man from Zorah, from the family of Dan, whose name was Manoah; his wife was unable to conceive and had no children.

3 The Angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "It is true that you are unable to conceive and have no children, but you will conceive and give birth to a son.

4 Now please be careful not to drink wine or beer, or to eat anything unclean;

5 for indeed, you will conceive and give birth to a son. You must never cut his hair, because the boy will be a Nazirite to God from birth, and he will begin to save Israel from the power of the Philistines."



6 Then the woman went and told her husband, "A man of God came to me. He looked like the awe-inspiring Angel of God. I didn't ask Him where He came from, and He didn't tell me His name.

7 He said to me, 'You will conceive and give birth to a son. Therefore, do not drink wine or beer, and do not eat anything unclean, because the boy will be a Nazirite to God from birth until the day of his death.'"

8 Manoah prayed to the LORD and said, "Please Lord, let the man of God you sent come again to us and teach us what we should do for the boy who will be born."

9 God listened to Manoah, and the Angel of God came again to the woman.

She was sitting in the field, and her husband Manoah was not with her.

10 The woman ran quickly to her husband and told him,

"The man who came to me today has just come back!"

11 So Manoah got up and followed his wife. When he came to the man, he asked, "Are You the man who spoke to my wife? "I am," He said.



12 Then Manoah asked, "When Your words come true, YAHWEH AS "I AM." what will the boy's responsibilities and mission be?" (EXODUS 3:14)

13 The Angel of the LORD answered Manoah, "Your wife needs to do everything I told her.

14 She must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine or drink wine or beer. And she must not eat anything unclean. Your wife must do everything I have commanded her."

Seven Women Blessed with Miraculous Births

1.	Sarah	Gn 16:1	Isaac
2.	Rebecca	Gn 25:1	Jacob & Esau
3.	Rachel	Gn 30:1	Joseph & Benjamin
4.	Samson's Mother	Judges 13:2	Samson
5.	Hannah	1 Sam 1:2	Samuel
6.	Elizabeth	Lk 1:7	John the Baptist
7.	Mary	Lk 1:27	Jesus

THE
MIRACULOUS
OFFSPRING
OF THE
BARREN

Barren women of the Old Testament (e.g. Sarah, Hannah, etc.) foretell the miraculous birth of the Lord Jesus by Mary.

The Angel of the Lord (Christophany) confirmed that Manoah's wife was barren, but foretells her bearing a son.

The barren wife recognized the Angel of God immediately, but Manoah only recognized much later after the altar (13:16, 21).

Samson was to be a Nazirite from birth to death, and in many ways, was born to die (Judges 16:30).

God ignored Manoah's questioning of His will while the Angel of the Lord emphasized obedience.

Samson's mother must keep the Nazirite vows during her pregnancy.

Samson was to adhere to the three requirements of the Nazirite Vow.

Samson violated each of them.

(Judges 13:4-5 / Numbers 6:1-8)

	Interpretation	Guideline	Broken Law
1.	Worldly Pleasures	No Wine	Judges 14:10
2.	Unclean Things	Touch Nothing Unclean	Judges 14:6-9
3.	Submission	No Hair Cuts	Judges 16:19

Samson was blessed with the Spirit of God

Sacrifice To The Angel of the Lord (Judges 13:15-25)

¹⁵ "Please stay here," Manoah told Him, "and we will prepare a young goat for You."

¹⁶ The Angel of the LORD said to him, "If I stay, I won't eat your food. But if you want to prepare a burnt offering, offer it to the LORD." For Manoah did not know He was the Angel of the LORD.

¹⁷ Then Manoah said to Him, "What is Your name, so that we may honor You when Your words come true?"

¹⁸ "Why do you ask My name," the Angel of the LORD asked him, "since it is wonderful."

¹⁹ Manoah took a young goat and a grain offering and offered them on a rock to the LORD, and He did a wonderful thing while Manoah and his wife were watching.

²⁰ When the flame went up from the altar to the sky, the Angel of the LORD went up in its flame. When Manoah and his wife saw this, they fell facedown on the ground.

²¹ The Angel of the LORD did not appear again to Manoah and his wife. Then Manoah realized that it was the Angel of the LORD.

²² "We're going to die," he said to his wife, "because we have seen God!"

²³ But his wife said to him, "If the LORD had intended to kill us, He wouldn't have accepted the burnt offering and the grain offering from us, and He would not have shown us all these things or spoken to us now like this."

²⁴ So the woman gave birth to a son and named him Samson. The boy grew, and the LORD blessed him.

²⁵ Then the Spirit of the LORD began to direct him in the Camp of Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.



Samson was buried between Zorah ("hornet") and Eshtaol ("to ask/entreat") (Judges 16:31).

The Angel of the Lord would not eat with Manoah, but would stay for a burnt offering (representing a total dedication to the Lord).

Manoah promised to honor the name of the Angel of the Lord, but the Name is Wonderful in its own right (Isaiah 9:6).

"Jacob asked Him, 'Please tell me Your name.' But He answered, 'Why do you ask My name?' And He blessed him there." (Genesis 32:29)

God's name is literally "too good for words" (2 Corinthians 12:4)

The One whose name is "Wonderful" did something "wonderful" with the offering.

As the Angel of the Lord went upward in the flame of the burnt offering, Manoah and his wife fell to the ground.

Manoah recognized the identity of the Angel of the Lord after the altar experience. The Angel of the Lord did not appear again which substantiated His identity.

Manoah was fearful because no one can see the Lord and live (Ex 33:20); however, to see the Lord face-to-face means the Lord talking directly and plainly (Ex 33:11; Num 12:8). Gideon had earlier shown the same fear (Judges 6:22).



God's approval is reflected by His acceptance of the offering.

Samson ("his sun/his service") was blessed by the Lord, and the Spirit of the Lord resulted in Samson's power.

Honey From The Lion's Carcass (Judges 14:1-9)

1 Samson went down to Timnah and saw a young Philistine woman there.

2 He went back and told his father and his mother: "I have seen a young Philistine woman in Timnah. Now get her for me as a wife."

3 But his father and mother said to him, "Can't you find a young woman among your relatives or among any of our people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines for a wife?" But Samson told his father, "Get her for me, because I want her."

4 Now his father and mother did not know this was from the LORD, who was seeking an occasion against the Philistines.

At that time, the Philistines were ruling over Israel.

5 Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother and came to the vineyards of Timnah. Suddenly a young lion came roaring at him,

6 the Spirit of the LORD took control of him, and he tore the lion apart with his bare hands as he might have torn a young goat. But he did not tell his father or mother what he had done.

7 Then he went and spoke to the woman, because Samson wanted her.

8 After some time, when he returned to get her, he left the road to see the lion's carcass, and there was a swarm of bees with honey in the carcass.

9 He scooped some honey into his hands and ate it as he went along. When he returned to his father and mother, he gave some to them and they ate it. But he did not tell them that he had scooped the honey from the lion's carcass.

TIMNAH (תִּמְנָה)
MEANS "TERRITORY"



Timnath (meaning "to restrain or divide") was land in southeast Israel near the land of the Philistines that originally belonged to the tribe of Judah (Joshua 15:57), but later was given up to the tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:43).

Although Samson was following his own sinful desires instead of walking in submission to the Lord, God used Samson's failures for His ultimate purpose against the Philistines.

The Spirit of the Lord enabled Samson to tear the lion apart.

The woman was "right" in Samson's eyes just as "everyone did what was right in his own eyes." (Judges 17:6, 21:25). God's people are not to live by sight (Numbers 15:39; 2 Corinthians 5:7)

Samson's first recorded words in Scripture are "*I have seen a young Philistine woman...*" Samson will struggle with his eyes as well as women.

Samson's parents initially corrected Samson and told him that he should find a wife among the Israelites although it seems that they eventually conceded.

In ancient times, during the engagement period, the groom would leave his fiancé for a time to prepare their dwelling place.



Samson's parents thought that he was giving them a nice gift, but he was offering them honey from a carcass.

Samson's Riddle (Judges 14:10-20)

Samson was pestered until he shared his secret

RIDDLE
ME
THIS

¹⁰ His father went to visit the woman, and Samson prepared a feast there, as young men were accustomed to do.
¹¹ When the Philistines saw him, they brought 30 men to accompany him.
¹² "Let me tell you a riddle," Samson said to them. "If you can explain it to me during the seven days of the feast and figure it out, I will give you 30 linen garments and 30 changes of clothes.
¹³ But if you can't explain it to me, you must give me 30 linen garments and 30 changes of clothes." "Tell us your riddle," they replied. "Let's hear it."
¹⁴ So he said to them: Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet. After three days, they were unable to explain the riddle.
¹⁵ On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, "Persuade your husband to explain the riddle to us, or we will burn you and your father's household to death. Did you invite us here to rob us?"
¹⁶ So Samson's wife came to him, weeping, and said, "You hate me and don't love me! You told my people the riddle, but haven't explained it to me." "Look," he said, "I haven't even explained it to my father or mother, so why should I explain it to you?"
¹⁷ She wept the whole seven days of the feast, and at last, on the seventh day, he explained it to her, because she had nagged him so much. Then she explained it to her people.
¹⁸ On the seventh day, before sunset, the men of the city said to him: What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion? So he said to them: If you hadn't plowed with my young cow, you wouldn't know my riddle now!
¹⁹ The Spirit of the LORD took control of him, and he went down to Ashkelon and killed 30 of their men. He stripped them and gave their clothes to those who had explained the riddle. In a rage, Samson returned to his father's house,
²⁰ and his wife was given to one of the men who had accompanied him.



Ashkelon was the oldest Canaanite seaport

Samson's wedding feast was to last 7 days (Revelation 19:7-9)


"Three" is often the number of revelations in Scripture. The Philistines felt it necessary for Samson to have 30 men surveilling him.

Samson instigates the challenge as His parable would seem difficult to explain. The mystery of the gospel will also be explained through His bride (the church).

Samson may not have appreciated having an entourage of 30 Philistine men at his wedding, so he believed these Philistines would need to pay with 30 garments, and they complied.

The number three often represents "revelation/resurrection", and these Philistines had no revelation of the parable.

This threat of the bride and father being burned to death was a foretelling of actual events, so the bride's fear of these worldly Philistines drove her to their judgment (Judges 15:6)

Samson as a Type of Jesus		
 Situation	Interpretation	Reference
Lion Killed by Samson	The Lion of the Tribe of Judah (Jesus) crucified, so that pleasing life sustenance is given from His broken body	Judges 14:6
Those who understand "mystery" will receive Samson's coverings	Those who understand God's truth will be covered with the righteousness of Jesus	Judges 14:12
Those who don't understand the mystery will lose their own garments	Those who do not understand the gospel will lose even their self-righteousness	Judges 14:13
Those who gained insight from others will receive the garments of others	Those whose head knowledge came from others will bear the coverings of others.	Judges 14:19

Two by two bringing judgment on Philistines

Samson's Fox Tail Revenge (Judges 15:1-8)

¹ Later on, during the wheat harvest, Samson took a young goat as a gift and visited his wife. "I want to go to my wife in her room," he said. But her father would not let him enter.

² "I was sure you hated her," her father said, "so I gave her to one of the men who accompanied you. Isn't her younger sister more beautiful than she is? Why not take her instead?"



³ Samson said to them, "This time I won't be responsible when I harm the Philistines."

⁴ So he went out and caught 300 foxes. He took torches, turned the foxes tail-to-tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails.



⁵ Then he ignited the torches and released the foxes into the standing grain of the Philistines. He burned up the piles of grain and the standing grain as well as the vineyards and olive groves.

⁶ Then the Philistines asked, "Who did this?" They were told, "It was Samson, the Timnite's son-in-law, because he has taken Samson's wife and given her to another man." So the Philistines went to her and her father and burned them to death.

⁷ Then Samson told them, "Because you did this, I swear that I won't rest until I have taken vengeance on you."

⁸ He tore them limb from limb with a great slaughter, and he went down and stayed in the cave at the rock of Etam.



As the Barley harvest represents the Passover, the wheat harvest represents the Pentecost while the Olive/Grape harvest represents the Feast of Tabernacles.

A goat offering typically represents the sin offering. Although Samson had done nothing wrong, his Philistine bride had, so the groom was providing the sin sacrifice for his bride.

The bride's father had given the Philistine woman to another Philistine.

Although Samson may have indeed been responsible for his violence towards the Philistines, this time Samson was appropriately judging them.

Samson may have taken cord tied to a torch and released the foxes 150 times; Scripture does not say whether this was during a day or over a period of time.

Fiery tails Scripturally represent false prophets (Isaiah 9:15)

The Philistines cruelly burned the Philistine woman and her father just as they had threatened to do. (Judges 14:15)

Just the Philistines did what was right in their eyes, Samson would take revenge as was right in his eyes. Both the Philistines and Samson felt wronged.

Etam (meaning "bird/covering/hawk ground") was later mentioned in the vicinity of Bethlehem and Tekoah of the Tribe of Judah (2 Chronicles 11:6).

Samson's Jewish Brothers Turn Him Over to The Gentiles

Israel Gives Samson to the Philistines (Judges 15:9-20)

⁹ The Philistines went up, camped in Judah, and raided Lehi.

¹⁰ So the men of Judah said, "Why have you attacked us?" They replied, "We have come to arrest Samson and pay him back for what he did to us."

¹¹ Then 3,000 men of Judah went to the cave at the rock of Etam, and they asked Samson, "Don't you realize that the Philistines rule over us? What have you done to us?" "I have done to them what they did to me," he answered.

¹² They said to him, "We've come to arrest you and hand you over to the Philistines." Then Samson told them, "Swear to me that you yourselves won't kill me."

¹³ "No," they said, "we won't kill you, but we will tie you up securely and hand you over to them." So they tied him up with two new ropes and led him away from the rock.

¹⁴ When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came to meet him shouting. The Spirit of the LORD took control of him, and the ropes that were on his arms became like burnt flax and his bonds fell off his wrists.

¹⁵ He found a fresh jawbone of a donkey, reached out his hand, took it, and killed 1,000 men with it.

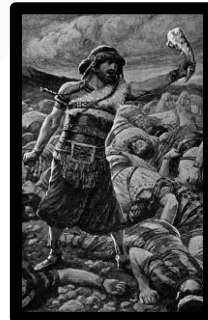
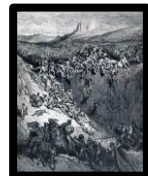
¹⁶ Then Samson said: With the jawbone of a donkey I have piled them in a heap. With the jawbone of a donkey I have killed 1,000 men.

¹⁷ When he finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone and named that place Ramath-lehi.

¹⁸ He became very thirsty and called out to the LORD: "You have accomplished this great victory through Your servant. Must I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?"

¹⁹ So God split a hollow place in the ground at Lehi, and water came out of it. After Samson drank, his strength returned, and he revived. That is why he named it En-hakkore, which is in Lehi to this day.

²⁰ And he judged Israel 20 years in the days of the Philistines.



The Philistines were located on the Mediterranean coastal lowlands, so they would always "go up" into Israel. Lehi means "jawbone."

In Christ's time, the Jews believed that the Romans ruled over them, and many today believe that the world rules over them.

3,000 Jews which equates to the number of Philistines that Samson will kill at his death (Judges 16:27)

The Spirit of the Lord gave Samson his unworldly strength.

Just as others had a victory song, so did Samson in Judges 15:16 (Moses-Ex15, Miriam-Ex 15, Deborah-Judges 5).

Ramath-lehi means "Jawbone Hill." Samson named the location of his victory in Lehi where the battle took place (Judges 15:14)

Samson gives credit for the victory to the Lord, but also complains of his thirst just as Jesus is thirsty on the cross (John 19:28)

En-hakkore means "Fountain of him that called/prayed." Water came out of the ground for Samson just as God had provided water in the wilderness from stone for His people at Massah/Meribah (Ex 17:5-7) and Kadesh (Num 20:10-12).

The Israelites did not argue as to whether Samson was right, they just planned to arrest him to assuage the Philistines who they feared.

Samson Desired
Three Women

Delilah means
"Amorous/Delight/Tempress"

Samson's Lust & Love (Judges 16:1-10)

1 Samson went to Gaza, where he saw a prostitute and went to bed with her.

2 When the Gazites heard that Samson was there, they surrounded the place and waited in ambush for him all that night at the city gate. While they were waiting quietly, they said, "Let us wait until dawn; then we will kill him."

3 But Samson stayed in bed until midnight when he got up, took hold of the doors of the city gate along with the two gateposts, and pulled them out, bar and all. He put them on his shoulders and took them to the top of the mountain overlooking Hebron.



4 Some time later, he fell in love with a woman named Delilah, who lived in the Sorek Valley.

5 The Philistine leaders went to her and said, "Persuade him to tell you where his great strength comes from, so we can overpower him, tie him up, and make him helpless. Each of us will then give you 1,100 pieces of silver."

6 So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me, where does your great strength come from? How could someone tie you up and make you helpless?"

7 Samson told her, "If they tie me up with seven fresh bowstrings that have not been dried, I will become weak and be like any other man."

8 The Philistine leaders brought her seven fresh bowstrings that had not been dried, and she tied him up with them.



9 While the men in ambush were waiting in her room, she called out to him, "Samson, the Philistines are here!" But he snapped the bowstrings as a strand of yarn snaps when it touches fire. The secret of his strength remained unknown.



10 Then Delilah said to Samson, "You have mocked me and told me lies! Won't you please tell me how you can be tied up?"

Samson should not have gone to the Philistine town of Gaza, he shouldn't have looked at the prostitute with lust, and he should not have had sex with her. Samson should have filtered where he went, what he saw, and what he did.

Samson tore the gates from the entrance of the city leaving it unprotected. Some believe that this was the reason that Samson was there – to spy out Gaza and tear away their defenses. The town of Hebron was 20 miles from Gaza.

Sorek (meaning "vine") was located near the brook Eshcol where the twelve Israelite spies initially viewed the Promised Land with the abundant grape vines (Num 13:23).

Sorek would have unquestionably had vineyards and wines which would be very tempting for one under the Nazirite Vow who should not drink wine.

Delilah played the victim when in fact, she was desiring to make Samson the actual victim.

Samson was already "blind" to the obvious danger of Dalilah.

The offer reveals that the Philistine lords understood that Samson did not have this force in himself, but that there was another origin. Samson should have credited the Lord with his strength instead of his hair.

"A river cuts through a rock, not because of its power, but because of its persistence."

Delilah Betrays Samson (Judges 16:11-20)

11 He told her, "If they tie me up with new ropes that have never been used, I will become weak and be like any other man."

12 Delilah took new ropes, tied him up with them, and shouted, "Samson, the Philistines are here!" But while the men in ambush were waiting in her room, he snapped the ropes off his arms like a thread.

13 Then Delilah said to Samson, "You have mocked me all along and told me lies! Tell me how you can be tied up." He told her, "If you weave the seven braids on my head with the web of a loom—"

14 She fastened the braids with a pin and called to him, "Samson, the Philistines are here!" He awoke from his sleep and pulled out the pin, with the loom and the web.

15 "How can you say, 'I love you,'" she told him, "when your heart is not with me? This is the third time you have mocked me and not told me what makes your strength so great!"

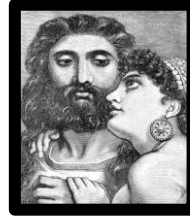
16 Because she nagged him day after day and pleaded with him until she wore him out,

17 he told her the whole truth and said to her, "My hair has never been cut, because I am a Nazirite to God from birth. If I am shaved, my strength will leave me, and I will become weak and be like any other man."

18 When Delilah realized that he had told her the whole truth, she sent this message to the Philistine leaders: "Come one more time, for he has told me the whole truth." **The Philistine leaders came to her and brought the money with them.**

19 Then she let him fall asleep on her lap and called a man to shave off the seven braids on his head. In this way, she made him helpless, and **his strength left him.**

20 Then she cried, "Samson, the Philistines are here!" When he awoke from his sleep, he said, "I will escape as I did before and shake myself free." But he did not know that **the LORD had left him.**



Samson continues to say "weak, like any other man" as if to say that all men are weak. In fact, Samson was morally and mentally weak as men have a tendency to become with seductresses.

Samson gets ever closer to the truth as he now has included his hair in the answer to Delilah.

The lords of the Philippines had stopped coming; the weave is the first test that men are not mentioned as hiding in her room, but Delilah was diligent & dedicated to the reward

Delilah questions Samson's love which is a strategy frequently used (even in modern times) to force an unwilling person to do something.

While 1,000 men could not wear Samson out (Judges 15:15-16), the repeated nagging of a woman successfully wore him out.

One reason for Samson's deep sleep may have been intoxication. Samson literally rested on Delilah instead of God

Believers might practice repeated sin with false repentance, but God will ultimately leave them alone to face the repercussions of their sin.

Samson was the third prison inmate in Scripture after Joseph (Genesis 39:20) and Simeon (Genesis 42:19-24).

Judgment on Samson & the Philistines (Judges 16:21-31)

21 The Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes. They brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles, and he was forced to grind grain in the prison.

22 But his hair began to grow back after it had been shaved.

23 Now the Philistine leaders gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon. They rejoiced and said: Our god has handed over our enemy Samson to us.

24 When the people saw him, they praised their god and said: Our god has handed over to us our enemy who destroyed our land and who multiplied our dead.

25 When they were drunk, they said, "Bring Samson here to entertain us." So they brought Samson from prison, and he entertained them. They had him stand between the pillars.

26 Samson said to the young man who was leading him by the hand, "Lead me where I can feel the pillars supporting the temple, so I can lean against them."

27 The temple was full of men and women; all the leaders of the Philistines were there, and about 3,000 men and women were on the roof watching Samson entertain them.

28 He called out to the LORD: "Lord GOD, please remember me. Strengthen me, God, just once more. With one act of vengeance, let me pay back the Philistines for my two eyes."

29 Samson took hold of the two middle pillars supporting the temple and leaned against them, one on his right hand and the other on his left.

30 Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines." He pushed with all his might, and the temple fell on the leaders and all the people in it. And the dead he killed at his death were more than those he had killed in his life.

31 Then his brothers and his father's family came down, carried him back, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. So he judged Israel 20 years.



The Philistines blinded and bound Samson because that is the effect of all sin – sin binds and bounds those who engage with it. Samson had long struggled with his eyes as he lusted from one woman to another; as now he was blind, he could once again look for the Lord.

The Philistines mistakenly claimed their false god Dagon was greater than Samson's God because Samson had personally failed. Dagon was another false god of fertility. Dagon was considered the fish god with the tail of a fish and the head of a human. Some considered him to be the father of the false god,

Samson's second prayer was for God to remember him and strengthen him once more to avenge the loss of his two eyes.

The two pillars would become a witness to the one true God. The number two is often associated with witness.

Samson was killing the Philistines who were praising their false god, Dagon (Judges 16:23-25).

Micah means "who is like Jehovah"

The Personal Religion of Micah (Judges 17:1-13)

¹ Now there was a man of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Micah.

² And he said to his mother, "The 1,100 pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse and also spoke it in my hearing, behold, the silver is with me; I took it." And his mother said, "Blessed be my son by the LORD."

³ He then returned the 1,100 pieces of silver to his mother, and his mother said, "I wholly consecrate the silver from my hand to the LORD for my son to make a carved image and a cast metal image; so now I will return them to you."

⁴ So when he returned the silver to his mother, his mother took two hundred pieces of silver and gave them to the silversmith, who made them into a carved image and a cast metal image, and they were in the house of Micah.

⁵ And the man Micah had a shrine and he made an ephod and household idols, and consecrated one of his sons, so that he might become his priest.

~~⁶ In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.~~

⁷ Now there was a young man from Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah, who was a Levite; and he was staying there.

⁸ Then the man left the city, Bethlehem in Judah, to stay wherever he would find a place; and as he made his journey, he came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah.

⁹ Micah said to him, "Where do you come from?" And he said to him, "I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to stay wherever I may find a place."

¹⁰ Micah then said to him, "Stay with me and be a father and a priest to me, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, a supply of clothing, and your sustenance." So the Levite went in.

¹¹ The Levite agreed to live with the man, and the young man became to him like one of his sons.

¹² So Micah consecrated the Levite, and the young man became his priest and lived in the house of Micah.

¹³ Then Micah said, "Now I know that the LORD will prosper me, because I have a Levite as a priest."



48 Levitical cities designated for Levites (Joshua 21; Lev 25:32; 35:2-3; Num 35:4-6)

God's people are not to live by sight (Numbers 15:39; 2 Corinthians 5:7)

Micah makes his son a "priest" before making the priest his "son"

- 1 Micah steals silver.
- 2 Mother curses whoever stole silver
- 3 Micah admits to stealing from mother.
- 4 Mother praises Micah's integrity.
- 5 Mother makes idolatrous image for Micah.
- 6 Micah makes his son his priest.
- 7 Levite does not reside in Levitical city. (Joshua 21)
- 8 Ambitious Levite searches for better "situation"
- 9 Micah hires materialistic Levite to be personal priest
- 10 "Now the Lord will bless me..."

- Micah (& Israel) did not understand that curses accompanied their immoral ways.
- The mother (symbolizing Jewish leaders) pronounced a pseudo-blessing upon Micah (corrupt people) instead of condemning sin.
- An inconsistent Church may denounce the sins of the world while tolerating the same sins of donating members.
- Thinking that she was pleasing the Lord, she made a false image/icon to worship. Tangible idols are more easily trusted than spiritual (John 4:23-24).
- Micah's motive may have been to save him the trouble of going to Shiloh (Tabernacle).
- Man often makes God's Word subservient to man's personal opinion and convenience.
- The Levi was a self-made man who did not follow God's will, but instead sought a better situation.
- Ministry became a business arrangement.
- Micah attempted to make this Levite into his own image as his "son."

The Tribe of Dan (Judges 18:16-31)

¹⁶ Meanwhile, the six hundred men armed with their weapons of war, who were of the sons of Dan, were positioned at the entrance of the gate.

¹⁷ Now the five men who went to spy out the land went up *and* entered there; they took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the cast metal image, while the priest was standing at the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men armed with weapons of war.

¹⁸ When these *men* entered Micah's house and took the carved image, the ephod, household idols, and the cast metal image, the priest said to them, "What are you doing?"

¹⁹ And they said to him, "Be silent, put your hand over your mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for you to be a priest to the house of one man, or to be priest to a tribe and a family in Israel?"

²⁰ The priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, the household idols, and the carved image, and went among the people.

²¹ Then they turned and left, and put the children, the livestock, and the valuables in front of them.

²² When they had distanced themselves from Micah's house, the men who were in the houses near Micah's house assembled by command and overtook the sons of Dan.

²³ Then they called out to the sons of Dan, who turned around and said to Micah, "What is *the matter* with you, that you have assembled together?"

²⁴ And he said, "You have taken my gods which I made, and the priest, and have gone away; what more do I have? So how can you say to me, 'What is *the matter* with you?'"

²⁵ Then the sons of Dan said to him, "Do not let your voice be heard among us, or else fierce men will attack you, and you will lose your life and the lives of your household."

²⁶ So the sons of Dan went on their way; and when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his house.

²⁷ Then they took what Micah had made and the priest who had belonged to him, and came to Laish, to a people quiet and unsuspecting, and struck them with the edge of the sword; and they burned the city with fire.

²⁸ And there was no one to save *them*, because it was far from Sidon and they had no dealings with anyone, and it was in the valley which is near Beth-rehob. So they rebuilt the city and lived in it.

Dan went "their way"



As Micah admitted stealing from his mother (Judges 17:2), the thieves of Dan also stole religious icons.

Micah claims "my gods"



The ambitious, hired priest desired the bigger "congregation" regardless of integrity or intent

"In those days there was no king of Israel; and in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance for themselves to live in..." (Judges 18:1)

600 armed men at a home is imposing; the number "6" symbolizes "insufficient" and is regarded as the "number of man" (Revelation 13:18)

The Danite spies appreciated the spectacle of Micah's religion.

The cowards of the Tribe of Dan could not eliminate the Canaanites (Judges 1:34), so they bullied their Israelite brothers.

When the Danites were challenged, they seemed to respond with to the challenger to "be silent."

The Danites did not reason and were not open for correction (Judges 18:25).

The greedy Danites appealed to the ambitious desires of the Levite and asked if it was not better to have a larger congregation.

Laish had enjoyed the benefits of being far enough from Sidon to be ruled over; however, because they had no one to rule over them, they also had no one to protect them

The rear guard shows that the Tribe of Dan understood the wrong that they had done.

Dan pillaged Micah before destroying the quiet community of Laish.

Laish means "A Lion"

The Levite's Concubine (Judges 19:1-14)

Elkanah/Hannah
Hills of Ephraim
 Micah (Judges 17:1)
 Levite (Judges 19:1)

Naomi/Boaz
Bethlehem
 Levite (Judges 17:8)
 Concubine (Judges 19:1)

¹ Now it came about in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite staying in the remote part of the hill country of Ephraim, who took a concubine for himself from Bethlehem in Judah.

² But his concubine found him repugnant, and she left him *and went* to her father's house in Bethlehem in Judah, and remained there for a period of **four months**.



³ Then her husband set out and went after her to speak gently to her in order to bring her back, taking with him his servant and a pair of donkeys. And she brought him into her father's house, and when the girl's father saw him, he was glad to meet him.

⁴ His father-in-law, the girl's father, prevailed upon him, and he remained with him for three days. So they ate and drank and stayed there.

⁵ Now on the fourth day they got up early in the morning, and he prepared to go; but the girl's father said to his son-in-law, "Strengthen yourself with a piece of bread, and afterward you may go."

⁶ So both of them sat down and ate and drank together; and the girl's father said to the man, "Please be so kind as to spend the night, and let your heart be cheerful."

⁷ However, the man got up to go; but his father-in-law urged him, and he spent the night there again.

⁸ Now on the fifth day he got up to go early in the morning, but the girl's father said, "Please strengthen yourself, and wait until late afternoon"; so both of them ate.



⁹ When the man got up to go, along with his concubine and servant, his father-in-law, the girl's father, said to him, "Behold now, the day has drawn to a close; please spend the night. Behold, the day is coming to an end; spend the night here so that your heart may be cheerful. Then tomorrow you may arise early for your journey and go home."

¹⁰ But the man was unwilling to spend the night, so he got up and left, and came to a place opposite **Jebus (that is, Jerusalem)**. And with him was a pair of saddled donkeys; his concubine also was with him.

¹¹ When they were near Jebus, the day was almost gone; and the servant said to his master, "Please come, and let's turn aside into this city of the Jebusites and spend the night in it."

¹² However, his master said to him, "We will not turn aside into a city of foreigners who are not of the sons of Israel; instead, we will go on as far as Gibeah."

¹³ And he said to his servant, "Come, and let's approach one of these places; and we will spend the night in Gibeah or Ramah."

¹⁴ So they passed along and went their way, and the sun set on them near Gibeah which belongs to Benjamin.

¹⁵ They turned aside there to enter and spend the night in Gibeah. When they entered, they sat down in the public square of the city, for no one took them into his house to spend the night.

Did the Levite set up his concubine to be murdered?

Levite not residing in Levitical City. 1

Levite has a Concubine 2

Concubine finds Levite "repugnant" 3

Concubine leaves Levite four months 4

Levite drinks with father-in-law 5

Levite persuaded to postpone return 6

Levite leaves late in the day 7

Levite unwilling to stay with foreigners 8

No One Offered the Levite Shelter 9

48 Levitical cities designated for Levites (Joshua 21; Lev 25:32; 35:2-3; Num 35:4-6)

The unfaithful concubine was scripturally deserving of death (Leviticus 20:10). Israel is later compared to an unfaithful harlot (Hosea 1:2).

As the Levite's concubine, she was as a "second wife" might be; however, the Levite had no plans to finalize a marriage with this licentious woman

The father of this undisciplined concubine was pleased with her status & position.

Although the father-in-law seduced the Levite with only bread, they also drank together which may have impaired the Levite for travel. (Judges 19:4, 6)

The Levite rejects the advice of the unnamed servant (type of Holy Spirit) possibly because of bigotry

The Rape & Dismemberment of the Concubine (Judges 19:20-30)

²⁰ Then the old man said, "Peace to you. Only let me *take care of* all your needs; however, do not spend the night in the public square."



²¹ So he took him into his house and fed the donkeys, and they washed their feet and ate and drank.

²² While they were celebrating, behold, the men of the city, certain worthless men, surrounded the house, pushing one another at the door; and they spoke to the owner of the house, the old man, saying, "Bring out the man who entered your house that we may have relations with him."

²³ Then the man, the owner of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brothers, please do not act so wickedly. Since this man has come into my house, do not commit this vile sin.

²⁴ Here is my virgin daughter and the man's concubine. Please let me bring them out, then rape them and do to them whatever you wish. But do not commit this act of vile sin against this man."

²⁵ But the men would not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine and brought her outside to them; and they raped her and abused her all night until morning, then let her go at the approach of dawn.

²⁶ As the day began to dawn, the woman came and fell down at the doorway of the man's house where her master was, until full daylight.

²⁷ When her master got up in the morning and opened the doors of the house and went out to go on his way, then behold, his concubine was lying at the doorway of the house with her hands on the threshold.

²⁸ And he said to her, "Get up and let's go," but there was no answer. Then he put her on the donkey; and the man set out and went to his home.

²⁹ When he entered his house, he took a knife and seized his concubine, and cut her in twelve pieces, limb by limb. Then he sent her throughout the territory of Israel.

³⁰ All who saw it said, "Nothing like this has ever happened or been seen from the day when the sons of Israel came up from the land of Egypt to this day. Consider it, make a plan, and speak up!"

The flesh of the believer is the same flesh as when he was an unbeliever.



The death of the concubine is not defined

The elder offered provisions with the requirement that the travelers would enter his house with him.



The elder washed the feet of the travelers

1 Worthless men threaten the Levite

2 The Old Man offers his virgin daughter

3 The mob would not stop or repent

4 The Levite violently provides the concubine

5 The mob rapes and abuses the concubine

6 The Levite cuts & divides the concubine's corpse

7 The Levite sends body parts to the 12 Tribes of Israel

The term "worthless fellows" is literally "sons of Belial" בְּלִיַּעַל (Deuteronomy 13:13; 1 Sam. 2:12). which would become a title for Satan (2 Corinthians 6:15).

Sadly, the old man offered to make peace with the wicked men by sacrificing his virgin daughter. The concubine was molested by the mob through the night.

The concubine had been close to being a wife to the Levite, but instead she died as a concubine.

She did not make it inside the door, but died with her hand on the threshold.

The wicked men of Gibeah became a proverb for evil. (Hosea 9:9; 10:9)

The Levite seems to have awoken and risen from his sleep without much concern towards his concubine.

King Saul (a Benjamite) also carved an ox to summon Israel's tribes (1 Samuel 11:7)

The Destruction of the Tribe of Benjamin (Judges 20:36-48)

36 So the sons of Benjamin saw that they were defeated. When the men of Israel gave ground to Benjamin because they relied on the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah, **37 the men in ambush hurried and rushed against Gibeah; the men in ambush also deployed and struck all the city with the edge of the sword.**



38 Now the agreed sign between the men of Israel and the men in ambush was that they would make a great cloud of smoke rise from the city.

39 Then the men of Israel turned in the battle, and Benjamin began to strike and kill about thirty men of Israel, for they said, "Undoubtedly they are defeated before us, as in the first battle."

40 But when the cloud began to rise from the city in a column of smoke, Benjamin looked behind them; and behold, the entire city was going up in smoke to heaven.

41 Then the men of Israel turned, and the men of Benjamin were terrified; for they saw that disaster was close to them.

42 Therefore, they turned their backs before the men of Israel to flee in the direction of the wilderness, but the battle overtook them while those who attacked from the cities were annihilating them in the midst of them.

43 They surrounded Benjamin, pursued them without rest, and trampled them down opposite Gibeah toward the east.

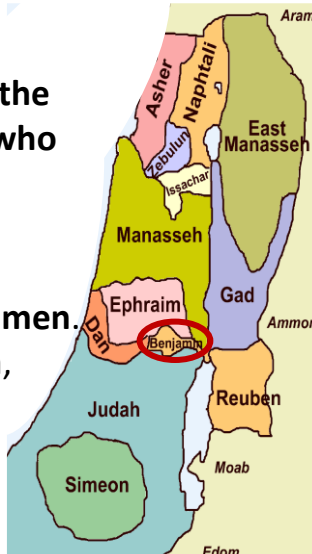
44 So eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell; all of these were valiant men.

45 The rest turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, but they caught five thousand of them on the roads and overtook them at Gidom, and killed two thousand of them.

46 So all those of Benjamin who fell that day were twenty-five thousand men who drew the sword; all of these were valiant men.

47 But six hundred men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon; and they remained at the rock of Rimmon for four months.

48 The men of Israel then turned back against the sons of Benjamin and struck them with the edge of the sword, both the entire city with the cattle and all that they found; they also set on fire all the cities which they found.



1 Judges 20:18-21

Israel asked God who should attack first. God told Israel that Judah should go first. Israel was defeated.

Israel did not ask if they should attack.

This may have been God's judgment on the Tribe of Judah

2 Judges 20:22-25

Israel asked if they should attack again & God affirmed that Israel should attack, but they were defeated.

3 Judges 20:26-48

Israel fasted & prayed while offering sacrifices; the High Priest sought God & God gave the victory.

Benjamin had begun with 26,000 warriors (Judges 20:21) and had lost only 300 men during the first two assaults leaving 25,700 men to fight this third day.

During this third battle, Benjamin lost 25,100 men leaving only 600 from the Tribe of Benjamin.

The Lord defeated the Tribe of Benjamin on the third day.

The "Rock" could symbolize Jesus as the refuge for His people to flee (Revelation 6:15).



Rimmon means "Exalted"

The Rock of Rimmon is 4 miles west of Bethel

The Benjamites hid four months which is the same amount of time that the Levites concubine had stayed away from her Levite husband (Judges 19:2).

The number 4 is often used as the cycle of nature and 4 extrapolated out (i.e., 4 months or 40 days) can symbolize a time of testing/trial.

The Slaughter of Jabesh-Gilead (Judges 21:6-14)

⁶ And the sons of Israel were sorry for their brother Benjamin, and said, "Today one tribe is cut off from Israel!"
⁷ What are we to do for wives for those who are left, since we have sworn by the LORD not to give them any of our daughters as wives?"
⁸ And they said, "What one is there of the tribes of Israel that did not go up to the LORD at Mizpah?" And behold, no one had come to the camp from Jabesh-gilead to the assembly.
⁹ For when the people were counted, behold, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead was there.
¹⁰ And the congregation sent twelve thousand of the valiant warriors there, and commanded them, saying, "Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, along with the women and the children."
¹¹ And this is the thing that you shall do: you shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman who has slept with a male."
¹² And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins who had not known a man by sleeping with him; and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.
¹³ Then the whole congregation sent word and spoke to the sons of Benjamin who were at the rock of Rimmon, and proclaimed peace to them.
¹⁴ And the tribe of Benjamin returned at that time, and they gave them the women whom they had allowed to live from the women of Jabesh-gilead; but they were not enough for them.

1 Israel vows to not allow daughters to marry Benjamites

2 Israel slaughters the Tribe of Benjamin

3 Israel regrets annihilating Benjamin

4 Israel annihilates Jabesh-gilead

5 Israel kidnaps Jabesh-gilead virgins for Benjamin survivors



Manmade plans and schemes fail to satisfy man's needs (Judges 20:47).

Israel pardoned 600 Benjamites; the number "6" symbolizes "insufficient" and is regarded as the "number of man" (Revelation 13:18)

The Tribes of Israel had responded to the message of the Levite by having a national meeting at Mizpah (Judges 20:1)



Jabesh-Gilead ("dry" – "hill of testimony") was a town east of the Jordan River in the half-tribe of Manasseh (1 Sam 11:1, 31:11-13; 2 Sam 2:4-6).

Jabesh-gilead only produced 400 virgins to wed; the number "4" symbolizes "trial/testing"

King Saul may have come from one of these women as he was a Benjamite with a special affinity for Jadesh-Gilead.

Saul's first act as King was to defeat Nahash the Ammonite in defense of Jadesh-Gilead (1 Samuel 11:4-11)

After Saul was killed by the Philistines and hung his corpse to the wall of Beth-shan, the men of Jadesh-Gilead retrieved his body as well as the bodies of his sons (1 Samuel 31:8-13)



The Kidnapping of the Worshippers of Shiloh (Judges 21:15-25)

¹⁵ And the people were sorry for Benjamin, because the LORD had created a gap in the tribes of Israel.

¹⁶ Then the elders of the congregation said, "What are we to do for wives for those who are left, since the women have been eliminated from Benjamin?"

¹⁷ And they said, "***There must be an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, so that a tribe will not be wiped out from Israel.***

¹⁸ But we cannot give them wives from our daughters." For the sons of Israel had sworn, saying, "Cursed is he who gives a wife to Benjamin!"

¹⁹ So they said, "Behold, there is a feast of the LORD from year to year in Shiloh, which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the road that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south side of Lebonah."

²⁰ And they commanded the sons of Benjamin, saying, "Go and lie in wait in the vineyards,

²¹ and watch; and behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to take part in the dances, then you shall come out of the vineyards, and each of you shall seize his wife from the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin.

²² And when their fathers or their brothers come to complain to us, we shall say to them, 'Give them to us voluntarily, because we did not take for each man of Benjamin a wife in battle, nor did you give them to them, otherwise you would now be guilty.'

²³ The sons of Benjamin did so, and took wives according to their number from those who danced, whom they seized. And they went and returned to their inheritance, and rebuilt the cities and lived in them.

²⁴ And the sons of Israel departed from there at that time, every man to his tribe and family, and each one departed from there to his inheritance.

²⁵ In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.



The annual Feast of the Lord in Shiloh ("peace giver")

The first (400) wives (2/3 necessary) were collected at a judgment (slaughter) while the latter (200) wives (1/3 remaining) were collected at the feast.

The act that started the entire war was that Benjamite men had taken the Levite's concubine.

Now the broader Israel is planning and encouraging forcefully taking several hundred women.

"You shall not do at all what we are doing here today, everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes" (Deuteronomy 12:8)

"Listen to the voice of the Lord your God, keeping all His commandments which I am commanding you today, and doing what is right in the sight of the Lord your God." (Deuteronomy 13:18)

"You shall do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:18)

"For we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7)

"Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight!" (Isaiah 5:21)

"I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts." (Isaiah 65:2)

"It shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the Lord, so that you will do them and not follow your own heart and your own eyes, which led you to prostitute yourselves" (Numbers 15:39)

In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Every man did what was right in his own eyes (Judges 19-21)

Ref.	Sin	Sinner
1. 19:1-2	Levite couples with concubine who commits adultery	Levite & Concubine
2. 19:3	Levite travels to retrieve concubine	Levite
3. 19:4	Concubine's father delays Levite returning home	Concubine's Father
4. 19:15	Gibeah did not host, protect and honor the Levite	Benjamites in Gibeah
5. 19:22	Perverted Benjamites demanded Sodomy w/ Levite	Benjamites in Gibeah
6. 19:24	House owner offers his daughter and concubine	House Owner
7. 19:25	Levite gives concubine to perverted Benjamites	Levite
8. 19:25	Benjamites in Gibeah rape and torture concubine	Benjamites in Gibeah
9. 20:13	Benjamites protect perverted men of Gibeah	Tribe of Benjamin
10. 20:46	Israel destroys Tribe of Benjamin except for 600 men	Israel
11. 21:1	Israel makes futile oath to keep daughters from Tribe of Benjamin	Israel
12. 21:10	Israel destroys Jabesh-gilead except for 400 virgins	Israel
13. 21:21	Israel directs Benjamites to kidnap brides from Shiloh	Israel & Benjamin

Man's efforts to correct the consequences of sin caused more problems