

The Book of Judges

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**California Kid's Camp 2007
Teen Workbook**

Preface

This year we are studying the book of Judges. The book of Judges is full of different things to look at. There are many accounts of everyday, faithful people who put their courage and faith in the LORD to do things that they never imagined they could, and to bring God's plans to pass. In the book of Judges, you will see over and over again that when people do things their way instead of God's way, nothing works out in the end. But when we put God first, and follow his commands, He is there to guide our lives and see us through any difficulties that come our way. In this book, we see the goodness and severity of God...we see how much he cares for his people, and shows mercy to them in times of need. And we see that when God is not pleased, disaster is the result! We also see the weakness of man, and how we desperately need God to rule our lives, because we cannot do it alone.

May God grant you wisdom and knowledge as you endeavor to more greatly understand His Word.

Useful Resources:

- The Story of the Bible - Volume 2 (Logos Publications) - pg. 161-252
- The Ways of Providence - (Robert Roberts) - pg. 107-116
- The Testimony Magazine, Special Issue: The Judges of Israel, Vol.75, No. 895, July 2005

Projects (Choose one and bring it completed to Kid's Camp)

MAP PROJECT:

- a) map out where the enemy nations were located [we would provide a list of all the enemy nations mentioned]
- b) map the locations of each of the judges [again we could provide the names and cities]
- c) choose one of the following events and illustrate it on the map
 - Deborah and Barak [provide info regarding places and travel routes, etc...]
 - Gideon [same thing]

Be as creative as you would like with this project - 3D, etc....

CHART PROJECT:

Create a chart listing each:

- judge
- his tribe
- the enemy nation
- number of years of oppression
- number of years of deliverance

Put your findings in a presentable format on a poster board.

CHRONOLOGY PROJECT:

The book of Judges is not actually in chronological order - some of the later chapters happen earlier on in the time of the judges. The story of Ruth also takes place in the time of the judges.

Using different clues, resources, etc., try to arrange the events in chronological order after Joshua's death. Include the story of Ruth in the chronology, and back up your findings with verses and quotes from other sources you may have used.

JUDGES 1-2

WAR ON CANAAN

THE CANAANITES

In v.1 we learn that the Israelites were to drive the Canaanites out of the promised land. "The Canaanites" is a general term for the nations that lived in the land of Canaan. List the 7 nations of Canaan (see Deuteronomy 7:1) and then place their location on the map that is on the next page.

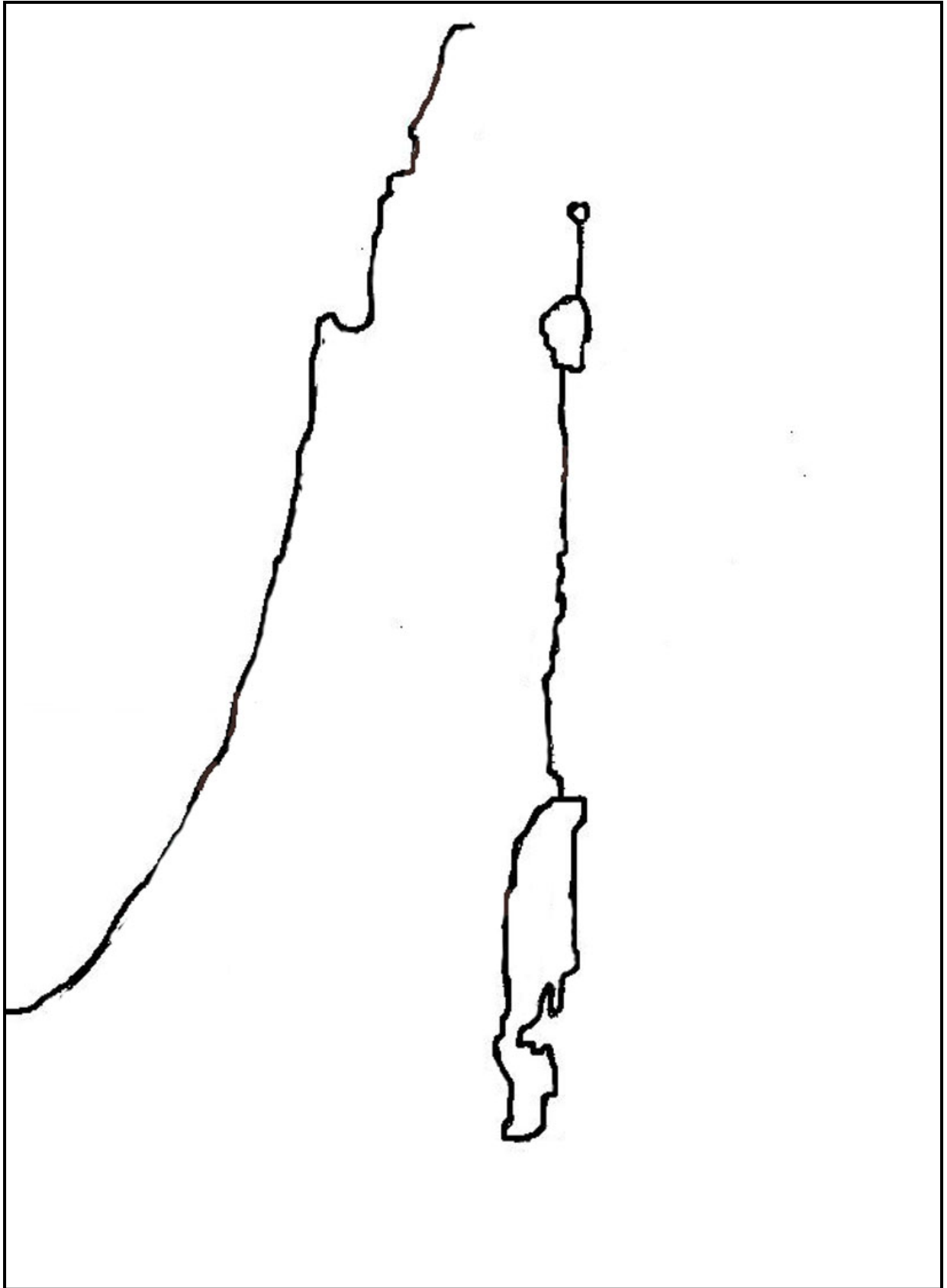
1)	5)
2)	6)
3)	7)
4)	

Thought Question: In Deuteronomy 7:2 God told the Israelites to completely destroy those 7 nations. Why do you think God asked them to "utterly destroy" all the people from these other nations? (Be sure to read all of Deuteronomy 7:1-6)

According to Genesis 10:18,19 what two wicked cities were in the land of Canaan?

In the Bible, Canaan was a representation of sin. Look up Zechariah 14:20,21. Who does it say will not be in the house of the Lord?

Look up the word Canaan (Strong's #3669). What does it mean?



In the New Testament, when were "merchants" cast out of God's house? Provide a Bible reference to this event.

From the verses above we note that Canaan was representative of sin. Therefore when God told Israel to completely remove the Canaanites from the promised land and destroy them, it was like a parable, telling them to remove sin from their lives.

Advanced Question: With the above point in mind, why do you think are we told that Judah went up first to fight the Canaanites? (Hint -- Jesus came from the tribe of Judah)

v. 1-20 ~ THE TRIBE OF JUDAH TAKES ITS INHERITANCE

In v. 3 we see two tribes helping each other to complete the job God had given them.

What were the two tribes who co-operated? _____

Which tribe asked for help? _____ In Numbers 26 we

have listed the number of people in each tribe. How many people were there in the tribe of Judah? _____

How many were in the tribe of Simeon? _____

Thought Question: Why do you think Judah (the largest tribe) asked for help from the smallest tribe in Israel?

Why did the Israelites cut off Adonibezek's thumbs and big toes?

What does the name Adonibezek mean? Strong's # _____

Meaning:

What was Caleb famous for?

Who took up Caleb's challenge and captured the city of Kirjathsepher?

What was another name for Kirjathsepher?

Who is the first Bible character to have lived there?

Why could Judah not drive out the inhabitants of the valley?

After reading Psalm 68:17 explain why Judah should not have had difficulty with the inhabitants of the valley.

Describe a time when you were able to overcome a sin or a temptation with the help of God. (If you cannot recall such a time, describe one that could happen in your life)

vv.21-36 ~ THE REMAINING TRIBES "TAKE" THEIR INHERITANCES

Following the relative success of the tribe of Judah in driving out the Canaanites, note how the other tribes fared.

Benjamin	e.g. - they did not drive out the Jebusites from Jerusalem
Joseph	
Manasseh	
Ephraim	
Zebulun	
Asher	
Naphtali	
Dan	

Notice how several tribes allowed the Canaanites to dwell among them, while one dwelt among the Canaanites. What is the difference?

How can we allow the "world" to be among us? How is this different from living in the world?

Which tribe was the least successful?

JUDGES 2

CYCLE OF SALVATION

Why did God decide to allow the nations to remain among the Israelites as snares?
(v.1-3)

Read verses 21-23 and explain another reason God chose to leave the nations in the land.



How long did the people serve the LORD after they took possession of the land of Canaan under Joshua? (v.6-7)

Describe the spiritual condition of the following generation and the reason for this.

How did God react when he saw how the Israelites were behaving? (v.11-15)

Look up Deuteronomy 13:6-9 and explain as best you can God's attitude towards the worship of other 'gods'?

Will the hand of *God* ever be against us for evil if we follow the same path as Israel? Explain your answer and include a description of the types of things you think *God* would cause to happen in our life. Use an extra sheet of paper if necessary.

Why did the LORD send judges to Israel? Were the judges successful?

What happened when a judge died?

There is a cycle which is repeated again and again in the book of Judges. The nation would sin against *God*. *God* would send an oppressing nation to cause them to suffer. They would repent and pray to *God* for deliverance and *God* would send a judge to save. As a result of the peace that followed their salvation, the people would once again forget the LORD and turn to sin. The cycle can be summarized as in the diagram below:



JUDGES 3

MINOR JUDGES

v. 1-8 ~ THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL STRAY

These verses describe a process which ends in something that seem impossible - forgetting God!! What were the 4 steps which preceded the nation forgetting about God?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. They forgot their God

Those that have left the truth have essentially chosen to forget God. What might be some early signs that a friend in the meeting is headed down this path?

Because of their idolatry God sold Israel into the hand of Chushanrishathaim. Look up his name in Strongs or another concordance and write down what it means.

Strong's #: Meaning:

On occasion God puts us in a difficult situation to test us. Look up 1 Timothy 1:20 where evil doers were delivered unto Satan that "they might learn not to blaspheme". Explain the use of the word satan in that verse.

v.9-11 ~ OTHNIEL

God sent them a deliverer to save them out of the hand of the king of Mesopotamia. Who was the deliverer and what does his name mean?

We are told that the "Spirit of the LORD came upon him". Find and list below 3 other judges who had the Spirit of the LORD come upon them and explain what that meant.

The first judge of Israel is a type of Christ. Look up the verses below, and complete the chart that shows the similarities between Othniel and Jesus. If there is no verse, try to find one, or explain your answer.

Othniel	Jesus
<ul style="list-style-type: none">of the tribe of Judah	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">name means, "the lion of God" (Brown Driver Briggs)	Rev. 5:5
<ul style="list-style-type: none">had the spirit of God	Isaiah 11:1
<ul style="list-style-type: none">a deliverer (savior)	Lk. 2:11
<ul style="list-style-type: none">overcame Chusharishathaim (wickedness)	John 16:33

For how long did the land have rest? (3:11)

What other time periods can you think of that lasted this long?

v.12-30 ~ EHUD

How did Eglon become strong?

What city was the city of palm trees? (use your cross references)

What physical characteristic of Ehud is specifically mentioned?

Ehud was from the tribe of Benjamin. What does the name Benjamin mean?

In those days the right hand was considered to be the strength of a man. It was the favored hand. The phrase “left handed” here in v.15 in the Hebrew, literally means “to be impeded in the right hand”. In other words, God chose a man to deliver them who could not boast in his own strength.

According to Psalm 44:1-3 whose “right hand” delivered the people?

Why is it so important to remember that God is the one who helps us succeed?

Ehud made a dagger with two edges. Find a verse in the NT which speaks of a “two-edged” sword. What does that verse say is sharper than a two edged sword?

Ehud made two trips to see Eglon, the first to take him a present and the second where he claimed to have a secret message for the king. In between these two trips he was on his way back home and turned around at the quarries in Gilgal. Look up the word "quarries" (Strong's #6456) and write down what it refers to.

Read Joshua 4:19-24. What else had been set up in Gilgal by Joshua? What were they meant to teach those that would see them in the future?

Thought Question: How would these contrasting monuments in Gilgal have given Ehud strength to return and kill Eglon?

Describe Eglon, the king of Moab. How did his physical situation contribute to his death?

Describe how Ehud was able to kill Eglon and escape without being caught.

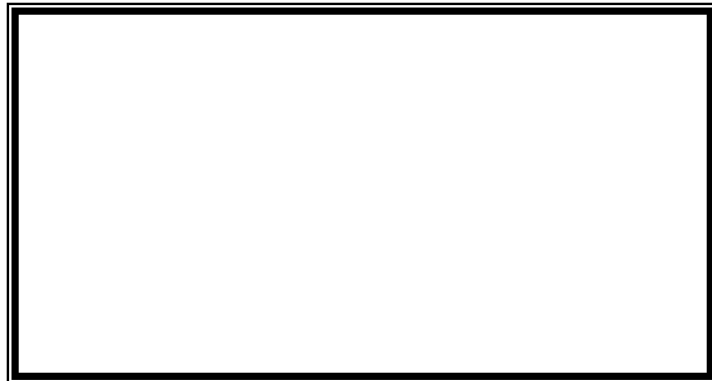
How did Ehud gather the other Israelites to him to fight against the Moabites?

How many Moabites were destroyed that day? (v.29) _____ How many were left? _____

v.31 ~ SHAMGAR

Write down the meaning of the name Shamgar (Strong's #8044).

Not much is recorded about this second judge in Israel. However we are told that he killed 600 Philistines with an ox goad. What was an ox goad? Draw a picture of what it would have looked like.



Read 1 Samuel 13:19-22. These verses suggest the reason that Shamgar used an ox goad as a weapon. What was that reason?

Think about the other judges of Israel and list some other items that were used as weapons to kill the enemy.

JUDGES 4

DEBORAH & BARAK

v.1-9 ~ DEBORAH CALLS BARAK TO ACTION

Barak (#1301, use #1300) - _____

Jael (#3278, use #3277) - _____

As we have seen earlier, during the time of the Judges, the Israelites repeatedly followed four different stages: 1) Sin, 2) Suffering (at the hands of an enemy), 3) Supplication (prayer to God), 4) Salvation (Judge delivers them from the enemy). Identify each of the 4 stages in verses 1-4 and explain what happens in each.

Sin

Suffering

Supplication

Salvation

What had just occurred in v1 to begin the cycle of sin again?

What is the name of the king of Canaan and where did he live?

Who was the captain of his army and where did the commander live?

According to Judges 5:6,7 the Israelites were unable to travel the main roads, but were forced to go through the byways. They were also unsafe in un-walled villages. What does this tell us about the oppression of the Midianites?

Many years earlier Joshua had also fought against a king of Hazor named Jabin. What is the reference (chapter) in Joshua and what happened to the king and to the city?

Use a Strong's concordance and find two earlier references (one in Joshua and one in Judges) to the Canaanites having iron chariots.



What chance did Israel have to rid itself of the cruel rule of the Canaanites without God intervening on their behalf, and why?

How would Deborah have spent much of her time, as Judge in Israel?

Look in Ps 92:12. What does a palm tree symbolize in Scripture?

How did Deborah know to call Barak and instruct him in battle against Israel's enemy?

Look on a map of Israel in the time of the Judges. Where was Barak's hometown and how far was it from Jabin's?

Find Mt. Tabor on a map and the location of the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun. Why do you think Barak was told to take men from these 2 tribes?

What request did Barak make of Deborah and why do you think he asked this?

What does his request reveal about Barak and what does Deborah's response reveal about her?

about Barak -

about Deborah -

v. 10-17 ~ THE BATTLE WITH SISERA

The Kenites were a people connected with the family of Moses. According to Judges 1:16 were they friends or enemies of the Israelites?

Thought Question: Do you think it was it a good or a bad thing that Heber had separated himself from his people? Explain your answer.

In v11-12, who would it appear revealed to Sisera the location of Barak's army?

Sisera, with his chariots and vast army, is extremely confident he will easily defeat Barak and the Israelites. Describe the advantage an army with numerous chariots would have against an army without any chariots.



Look up Mt. Tabor in a Bible dictionary. Its location is known today. How high is it and what is its shape?

Note how it is surrounded by a plain. What chance would Barak and Israel have had to escape by occupying this spot?

How far did Sisera have to travel from his home to the place of battle?

Imagine you are one of the soldiers in Barak's army and you have assembled on Mt. Tabor and below in the plain before you Sisera is parading "all" his chariots and "all" his troops. Describe the thoughts that you might have. See 5:15, what important spiritual characteristic did each of the men in Barak's army bring with him to the battle?

Deborah, at the decisive moment of battle, instructs Barak to leave the spot he has been occupying and march down into battle against Sisera. Why would this require great faith (which Heb 11:32 said he had) on Barak's part?

Where is Barak in relation to his troops as they enter the battle?

Summarize what we now know about Barak's character.

Deborah has greatly helped the development of Barak's faith. What does this teach us about faith and about our relationships with each other? Use an extra sheet of paper if necessary.

During the battle, God introduced a significant event using the weather (cp. 5:4-5). What happened to the River Kishon (5:21) and why was this so devastating to the army of Sisera? (Using a Bible dictionary, look up "Kishon" to help answer this question.)

How thorough was the defeat of Sisera's army by Barak and the men of Israel?

v.18-24 ~ SISERA SLAIN BY A WOMAN

Why did Sisera flee to the tent of Heber and what does this teach us about Heber?

Sisera asked for water and was given milk instead. How would this affect Sisera and his regard/trust towards Jael and why?



Describe what she did to him while he was sleeping.

What does this teach us about Jael's faith, despite her husband's pitiful condition?

What does this teach us about her marriage to Heber? (recall v11)

Two faithful women and a faithful man are revealed in this chapter. Select one of these characters and identify 3 lessons their actions can teach a teenager today.

JUDGES 5

SONG OF DEBORAH & BARAK

The Song of Deborah and Barak provides a fuller account of the events of chapter 4, in several places supplying details of Israel's victory that are not recorded in chapter 4 as it reveals God's mind, insight and view of the events that occurred.



Using a Strong's concordance give the number, Hebrew word and meaning of 'villages' in v7. What happens when there are no leaders to guide people in righteousness?

What do you think the phrase, "a mother in Israel" means in v7?

How many weapons did Barak and his men have when they went into battle?

How does this further reveal the faith of Barak, considering the weapons of Sisera's army?

Both of the men who fought in Israel's army and their leaders shared a common trait regarding their involvement in the battle; what was it? (compare v2 with v9)

In v12, Barak is portrayed as leading "thy captivity captive" or as it is in other versions, "leading your captives away," which describes a host of prisoners/captives being led to freedom.

a) Who were the captives/prisoners in Barak's day? (provide the Strong's number and meaning of the word for "sold them" in 4:2)

b) How did Barak lead them out of captivity to freedom?

c) Where is 5:12 quoted in the book of Psalms? (use your center margin)

d) Where is this verse in Psalms quoted in the New Testament? (use your center mg.) and what freedom (release from captivity) is being described in this NT reference? Who is the one who leads the captives to freedom and who are the captives led to freedom?

e) Based upon this NT reference, the story of Barak's defeat of Sisera is also a parable foreshadowing what greater victory, achieved by what greater captain, over what greater enemy? (Explain your answer)

What 4 tribes are noted for aiding Barak in the battle? (v14-15)

What tribe didn't help Barak? (v15-16) What 2 phrases in these verses reveal this absent tribe gave the matter a great deal of thought but in the end failed to help their brethren?

What 3 other tribes or cities are cited in v17 for having failed to help Barak?

How is the courage of the men of Zebulon and Naphtali described in v18?

How would many of Sisera's army have died (v21)?

Why was the city of Meroz cursed in v23?

Verses 24-27 provide a graphic account of Sisera's death at the hands of Jael.

a) What did Jael give him in addition to a drink of milk and how did she serve it?

b) How would this make Sisera feel towards Jael?

c) In v26, the phrase, "smote off his head" is a poor translation. Using either a Strong's concordance or another version (New King James, RSV) what did Jael actually do to Sisera's head?

d) What is the Hebrew word, Strong's number, and meaning of the word "pierced" in v26?

e) Sisera didn't remain asleep, nor did he die as a result of the initial blow, as v27 reveals. Describe the scene that developed in Jael's tent according to this verse.

Verses 28-30 reveal the thoughts of Sisera's mother and her companions when Sisera failed to return home.

a) What were they used to hearing when Sisera returned from battle?

b) What were they accustomed to Sisera bringing home after a battle?

What does Ps 83:9-10 liken the enemy to who were slain in the battle?

For how long did the peace, brought about by the victory over Jabin and Sisera, last?

In looking back at the Song of Deborah and Barak in this chapter, why do you think they wrote and sang this song?

JUDGES 6

THE CALL OF GIDEON

v.1-10 ~ THE ISRAELITES OPPRESSED BY MIDIAN

Recall the 4 stages that are repeated throughout the book of Judges (Sin, Suffering, Supplication, Salvation). Identify where the 4 stages are described in v1-12 of this chapter.

1)

2)

3)

4)

Because Israel could not defend themselves, how did they adjust their way of life?

How did the Midianites and Amalekites and the children of the east oppress the Israelites?

Look up Midianites in a Bible dictionary. From whom did they descend?

Leviticus 26 records the blessings of obedience and the curses of disobedience, depending upon how Israel regarded God after they entered the Promised Land. What curse is identified in v16 that applies to the oppression of Judges 6? What curse is identified in v17 that applies to the oppression of Judges 6? How severely did God say He would punish Israel for their sins if they did not obey? (v18) For how long did the oppressors of Israel rule over them in Judges 6?

What did the prophet say God had done for Israel?

a) How had Israel responded to what God had done for them?

b) Provide proof from later in this chapter that shows Israel ignored the rebuke of the prophet.

v11-18 ~ GOD CALLS GIDEON

Where was *Gideon* when he was first mentioned and what was he doing? Why is it odd he was there? Why was he there? (Hint: the word "by" in v11 should be "in"). Where would a man normally be that was doing what *Gideon* was doing? (Hint: Ruth 3:2)

What verse shows he was a diligent worker who helped provide for his family?

What verse shows *Gideon* cared deeply about the nation of Israel?

What phrase shows *Gideon* was a humble man?

Gideon was hiding from the enemy, said his family was the poorest (weakest) in his tribe and he was the least in his family, and yet the angel calls him "a mighty man of valour." What did the angel mean?

What do you think the angel meant when he said, "Go in this thy might?" (v14)

What request did *Gideon* make of the visitor?

Who did *Gideon* think he was speaking to? (he doesn't realize it's an angel until v22)



v19-24 ~ GIDEON PREPARES A PRESENT

Describe the present Gideon prepared for the visitor.

How did Gideon know he had been speaking to an angel?

What did Gideon do as a result of his realization that he had been visited by an angel?

v25-27 ~ THE LORD GIVES GIDEON A SPECIAL MISSION

According to the center margin (of a wide margin KJV or the NASB version), how many bulls were actually present and used to pull down the Baal altar?

Look up the word 'grove' (RSV = "Asherah") in a Bible dictionary. What does it mean?

Who had built the altar Gideon was instructed to tear down?

Where was the wood to come from for the sacrifice Gideon was to offer to the Lord?

What two special arrangements did Gideon make to destroy the altar of Baal and why were these necessary?

What does Gideon's (#1439) name mean? (use the root #1438)

- a) #1438 also appears in Deut 12:3. Which word/phrase is it? Read vv1-3 and describe what Israel was being instructed to do in these verses.

w28-32 ~ THE REACTION OF GIDEON'S FAMILY AND THE MEN OF THE CITY

Contrast the response of the men of the city with the response of Joash.

Men of the City:

Joash:

Who did Joash say should be put to death?

Who did Joash say should plead for Baal?

What new name was given to Gideon that day and what does this name mean? (Use a Strong's concordance or your margin)

Thought Question: Gideon helped Joash see how he was wrong to worship Baal. Under what circumstances may a young person help a parent forsake the way of sin and return to the path of righteousness as Gideon did with Joash?

v33-40 ~ GIDEON RALLIES ISRAEL TO FIGHT AND ASKS FOR TWO SIGNS

Gideon successfully converts first his father/immediate family, then the house of Abiezer and finally several tribes to follow him. What verses correspond to each of these successive conversions? What does this teach us about how a massive group of people can be converted from doing what is wrong (in this case worshipping Baal) to deciding to do what is right (worship God).

Find "the valley of Jezreel" on a map. Where is it located in relation to the battle fought by Barak in chapter 4? What river flows through it?

a) Who gathered their troops at the valley of Jezreel?

b) Where did Gideon live? How far was this city from Mt. Tabor?

From which tribes did Gideon rally men to fight in his army and why do you think he called upon these specific tribes to help him?

What 2 signs did Gideon ask of God?

Why did he ask for these signs? (recall v15)

JUDGES 7

THE ENEMY DEFEATED

v1-8 ~ THE LORD REDUCES ISRAEL'S ARMY

How many men were in Israel's army to begin with? How many were in the army of the enemy? (see 8:10) Calculate the ratio - divide the number of the enemy forces by the number of the Israelite forces.

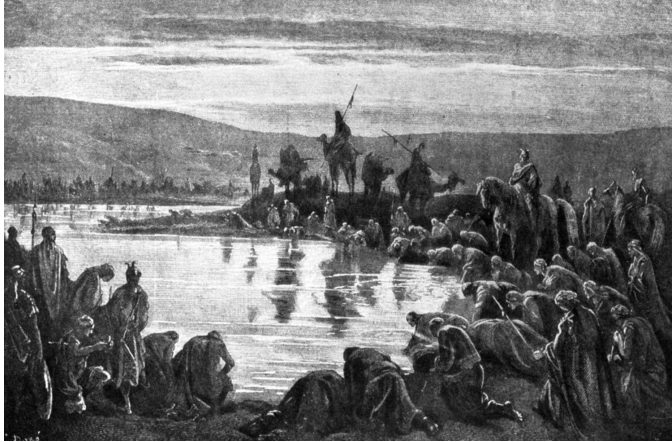
- a) Israel's army at beginning: _____
- b) enemy's army (from ch 8): _____
- c) ratio ('b' divided by 'a'): _____

Read Deut 20:8. What provision did the Law of Moses allow for during a time of war?

- a) Why did God say (when the army was reduced the first time) that He needed to reduce the number of Israel's army and what lesson is being taught to us in this principle?

- b) Find Mount Gilead on a map. About how far was it from the location of Gideon's army? Why do you think Gideon wanted those thousands who were leaving to take such a round about way to return to their homes?

How many men ended up in the army after the second reduction and what behavior had they displayed that qualified them to remain in Gideon's army?



Imagine you are one of those who are permitted to remain in the army to fight the battle. You have just seen the size of your army reduced by 99.7%. What are your thoughts as you prepare to engage the Midianites in battle?

Recalculate the ratio from the question on page 28. How many enemy troops are there for every Israelite?

Why did God want so few soldiers in Gideon's army?

v.9-18 ~ THE LORD STRENGTHENS GIDEON'S HAND

That night God provides Gideon with a special opportunity to visit the camp of the enemy. Considering what had happened that day, why might Gideon have needed the encouragement that came from this stealth visit?

Gideon fears to visit the enemy's camp alone and takes Phurah his servant as God had recommended. What does this teach us about working together in the Truth?

Describe the thoughts likely going through the mind of Gideon as he nears the outpost of the enemy's camp and sees the multitude of soldiers preparing to fight against Israel.

Describe the dream recounted by the soldier and the interpretation provided by the other soldier.

God knew something about the attitude of the enemy soldiers that Gideon didn't know and needed to find out. What did he learn that night as he overheard the conversation between the soldiers?

a) Would the Midianites have known that Gideon's army had been greatly reduced in size?

What is the very first thing Gideon did upon learning this new information and how do you think he would have done this?

What 'weapons' did the men of Israel take into battle and what were the battle instructions Gideon gave to his men?



Why did Gideon tell them to shout, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon"? (Recall the dream)

v19-25 ~ THE ENEMY ROUTED

When did Gideon launch the surprise 'attack' against the enemy? Look in a Bible dictionary and find what time this corresponds to.

Where did the companies of men stand when the 'attack' began? Were they to leave their spot?

How were the enemy soldiers slain if the Israelites had no weapons and never entered the camp of the enemy?

What other tribes joined the battle when they saw the enemy was routed?

What escape route did Gideon ask the tribe of Ephraim to eliminate?

Oreb and Zeeb, during the oppression of Israel, had made what boast in Ps 83:11-12? (note: the word for 'houses' in v12 should be 'pastures'.)

a) Why was it fitting that they die the death they did?

JUDGES 8

GIDEON & HIS MEN: FAINT YET PURSURING

v1-3 ~ THE MEN OF EPHRAIM REBUKE GIDEON

What was the complaint of the men of Ephraim?

How did Gideon quiet their complaint?

v4-21 ~ GIDEON'S ARMY COMPLETES THE VICTORY WHILE SUCCOTH AND PENUEL REFUSE TO HELP

How much sleep had Gideon's men had the previous night?

What request did Gideon make of the Israelites in Succoth?

- a) What was their response and what reason did they give for it?
- b) What was Gideon's response to their response and why do you think he said this?

What happened when Gideon made the same request to the men of Penuel?

Look up the word 'discomfited' in v12 in a Strong's concordance. What is the number, Hebrew word and meaning?

a) How do you think Gideon did this with only 300 men when they had 15,000?

What do you think was the result of Gideon having 'taught' the men of Succoth following his victory?

What did he do at Penuel?

What had Zeba and Zalmunna done at a prior time at Mt. Tabor and how was Gideon connected to that incident?

Why do you think Gideon asked his son Jether to slay these 2 men?

v22-28 ~ ISRAEL SEEKS TO MAKE GIDEON THEIR KING

When Israel offered to make Gideon their king, what did he rightly answer them?

Using today's measurements, how much did the gold earrings weigh that were taken in battle?

What did Gideon do with the gold and how did this impact his family?

a) Why do you think a faithful man like Gideon would do such a thing?

b) What warning is there for us from this incident after the great victory God accomplished through Gideon?

What happened to Gideon following this victory over the Midianites?

In what 2 ways did Israel act after Gideon died that showed they were not genuine in their love for God or for their appreciation for what Gideon had done for them?

JUDGES 9

ABIMELECH

v.1-7 ~ ABIMELECH IS MADE KING BY THE SHECHEMITES

Read Judges 8:29-31. Who was Abimelech's mother? Who was his father? How many other children did Gideon have? What was Gideon's other name?

What city was Abimelech's mother from?

How did Abimelech convince the men of his mother's household to make him their king? (v.1-3) (list 2 arguments he used)

How much money did the men of Shechem give to Abimelech? How much would that be in today's terms? Where did they get the money? What did Abimelech do with it?

In what town did Abimelech kill 69 of his 70 half brothers?

What did he kill them on?

What had previously happened on a stone in that town? (see Judges 6:21-24)

Gideon builds an altar near the stone and calls it Jehovah-shalom, which means "the LORD send peace". How is this ironic?

Was Abimelech such a mighty man that he could kill these men by himself? (see v.24)

Which son of Gideon escaped? How?

Why do you think Abimelech attempted to kill all his half brothers?

Who made Abimelech king?

Look up the name of Abimelech in Strong's concordance? What does it mean?

v.7-21 ~ JOTHAM'S PARABLE

When Jotham is told that Abimelech has been made king where does he go? Where was this in relation to Shechem?

In verses 8-15 Jotham tells a parable about trees. Outline the parable in your own words.

Connect the elements of the parable to what they represented:

Trees
Olive, fig, wine
Bramble

The men of Shechem
Gideon
Abimelech

Why had Gideon refused to be king over the people? (see 8:22,23)

What did Jotham prophesy would happen to the men of Shechem for dealing deceitfully with the house of Gideon? What would happen to Abimelech?

v.22-49 ~ GAAL'S CONSPIRACY

After three years of peaceful reign Abimelech and the men of Shechem started to not get along. Who caused this to happen and why?

How did the men of Shechem try to capture and kill Abimelech? (v.25)

a) What did these men do to occupy themselves while they waited for Abimelech?

Who was the next man to convince the Shechemites that he should be their leader? What reasons did he give to convince them? (v.26-29)

What were the men of Shechem doing when agreed to have a new leader? (v.27)

Up to this point we have learned a lot about the men of Shechem. Describe their character with as many appropriate adjectives as you can.

In verses 30-33 Zebul hears of the rebellious words of Gaal and decides to inform Abimelech of the rebellion. What job did Zebul have in the city? What was his position with Abimelech? (hint - review v.28)

What does Zebul advise Abimelech to do?

In verses 34-38 Abimelech rises up against the city of Shechem with four companies. What phrases in this section show that Gaal was afraid?

If Gaal was so afraid of Abimelech, how was it that he showed so much courage back in verses 27-29?

What did Abimelech do to the city of Shechem?



"See there come people."—*Judges ix. 37.*

Where did the men of the tower of Shechem hide? Earlier in this chapter what had been given to Abimelech from this place?

How was the house of Berith destroyed?

v.50-57 ~ ABIMELECH'S DEATH

Explain how Abimelech died?

Later in the Bible, who used the manner in which Abimelech died as an example of poor military strategy? (Provide a scriptural reference)

List two similarities between the death of Abimelech and the death of Sisera.

Why did Abimelech ask his armourbearer to slay him?

Who else in the Bible asked their amourbearer to slay them? What was he trying to avoid?

Why did God send this evil upon Abimelech?

What was the evil of the men of Shechem that God rendered upon their heads?

Verse 57 tells us that the curse of Jotham was fulfilled. What does this tell us about the way in which the men of Shechem treated Gideon and his household?

JUDGES 17

MICAH

What does the name Micah mean?

What had he taken from his mother? What was his mother's reaction when he told her?

Find out how much money 1,100 shekels of silver is in our terms.

Thought Question: If Micah's mother truly feared God, what do you think her reaction should have been?

What was Micah's mother planning to do with the money?

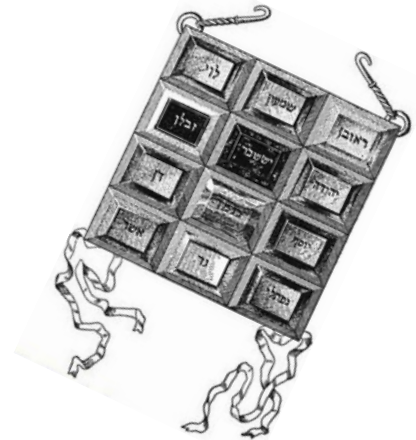
Look up Ex 20:4-5 and Lev 19:4. What do they say?

It is amazing to think that the incident with the golden calf would not have been too much earlier in Israel's history. They had completely forgotten the incident, and the consequences of this incident! Find where this incident is recorded, and note the reference here: _____.

What did Micah do with his idols?

What is an ephod? Provide some verses.

What are teraphim? Provide some verses.



What did Micah do with his son?

How many of the Ten Commandments had Micah and his mother broken already by this point in the story? Provide references to support your answer.

"In those days there was no king in Israel" (v.6) List the other times in Judges where we read the same statement. This seems to be a strange statement, because we know that there was no king in Israel's history until Saul was made king, after this period of the Judges. Look up Judges 3:23 and 1 Sam 8:6-9. Who was their king?

Knowing this now, what do you think it means when it says "in those days there was no king in Israel?"

Who is our King? Psa 5:2; Psa 24:7-10; Psa 29:10,11; Psa 44:4-8; Psa 47; Zech 14:9. How can the same thing happen to us? How can we avoid this?

Who showed up at Micah's house? (v.7-9)

What position did Micah offer to this man? What would his wages be? (v 10)

Advanced Question: We don't find out the name of the Levite until the end of the story. What is his name? _____ son of _____.

Some reference books say that he was actually the grandson of Moses. Using various books and/or magazines, research this possibility and record your findings. Also include whether based on your findings, you feel this is a valid point or not.

What does Micah say in v.13? What do you think of Micah's reasoning? Read 1 Kgs 13:33 - this might help you with your thoughts.

It is interesting to note that Micah and his mother thought that they were worshipping God (v.3,13), but they were doing "that which was right in their own eyes." Read Deut 12:4-14. Based on these verses, what was Micah doing wrong?

It is easy to fall into the trap of serving God in the manner that we find convenient as opposed to following what he has asked us to do. Even King David, a "man after God's own heart" fell into the trap of doing things his way instead of God's. Where is this incident recorded in scripture? What did David do? According to Scripture, what should David have done?

Thought Question: How can we make the same mistake in our lives? How can we avoid making such a fatal mistake?

...in the incidents we are now studying even Yahweh was not viewed as King. He should have been King to the people...but they had rejected His rule, so that complete lawlessness reigned. There was no public rejection of Yahweh, or course, no open and boastful atheism, but something deadlier. The people were religious, but they viewed God only as a sign or symbol. They worshipped Him in outward forms, but paid Him no tribute as King. They did according to their own thoughts, and not according to His will...we can be guilty of the same thing – of rejecting Yahweh as King...we must give Yahweh His rightful honour, and pay Him the tribute due to Him in loving and obedient service....Micah, like so many in Israel at that time, did not understand what God really wanted. They were ignorant of His will, which was, perhaps their greatest sin. [Look up Hosea 4:6]

Story of the Bible, Vol.2, pg. 237

JUDGES 18

THE DANITES

v.1-7 ~ THE DANITES LOOK FOR A NEW PLACE TO LIVE

Why hadn't the Danites received their inheritance? What happened to them? (Judges 1:34)

What didn't the Danites like about the land they did get? (Josh 19:47)

On the map provided on the following page, map out the Danites' journey from their starting point to where they settle, including their stops. (Mount Ephraim is also called Ramathaim-Zophim in 1 Sam. 1:1. You may have to add one or two of the places onto the map). (Judges 18:2,7,8,11-13)

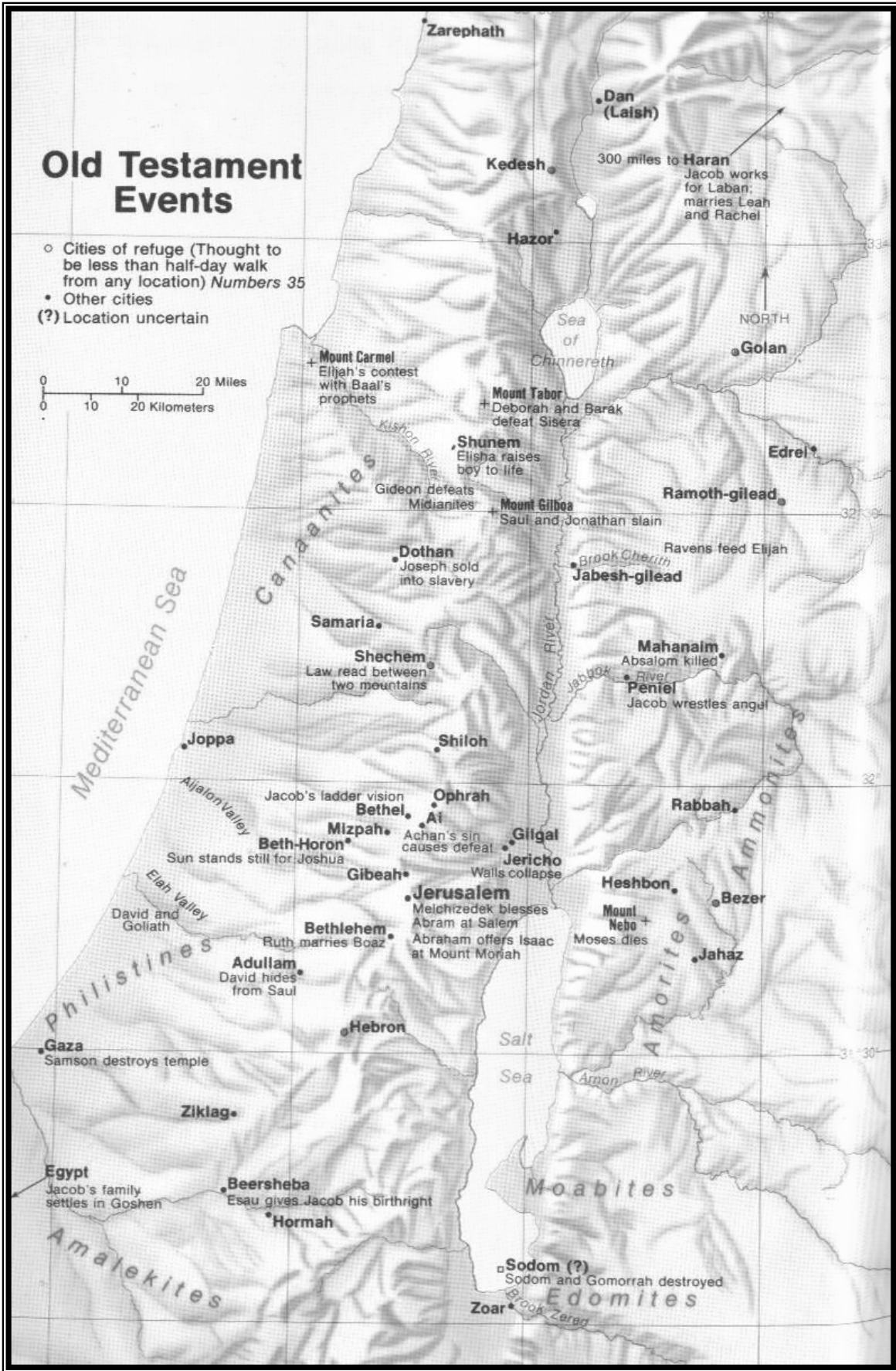
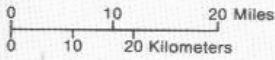
v.7-12 ~ THE CITY OF LAISH

Where did the 5 spies end up? Describe the city. Why would this be appealing?

Read Deut 7:17-24, and Josh 23:4-13. God would help them conquer no matter what. But they were chased off their land!! (Irony compared to Joshua 23:10). Now they came across this land that was very easy to take, and said "God hath given it into your hands". Once again, in these mixed up times, man is twisting the ways of God around. The whole point of conquering the land was to put faith in God and show HIS glory. This type of conquest would make the Danites look strong, but it was in no way a challenge.

Old Testament Events

- Cities of refuge (Thought to be less than half-day walk from any location) Numbers 35
- Other cities
- (?) Location uncertain



How many men came from Dan to take the land? (v.11)

v.13-26 ~ THE DANITES TAKE MICAH'S PRIEST AND HIS GODS

This next section provides quite a funny picture and emphasizes how ridiculous everything was at this time.

Read v.14 without reading the verses after it. What is your first impression of what the Danites were thinking?

Now read v.18-20 and v. 30-31. Some of you may have read v.14 and thought that the Danites felt they should put a stop to this false worship. But what did they do instead?

Describe in your own detailed words the happenings of v.15-26. (Another version may help). Try to picture the whole scene vividly...including the 600 men standing outside Micah's front gate!!!!

v. 27-31 ~ THE DANITES TAKE OVER LAISH

What happened when the Danites got to Laish?

The Levite's words happened to come true. The Danites were prosperous. But think about it...of course they were! There were no obstacles for them. They figured that God was with them since they succeeded and everything was so easy. Why is this a dangerous way of thinking? Do we ever do this same thing in our lives? Is there ever a time that you have decided that something must be God's will because it is going so smoothly? When something like this happens, what are some ways we can try to ensure we are truly doing God's will?

Verse 31 shows us the contrast between the false worship that the Israelites had fallen into, and the True worship that they were supposed to follow. This apostasy happens again in Israel's history (and many times afterwards!!). Read 1 Kings 12:25-33. Make a list of the echoes to Judges 17 and 18.

JUDGES 19

A CERTAIN LEVITE

The final episode of the book of Judges shows the depth to which Israel had sunk within a short time of the conquest of the land. The sordid story of the Levite and his concubine is one of wickedness and callousness, the response of the tribes brings trouble and sorrow through failure to seek God, the whole nation is seen to lack the moral and spiritual leadership it needs, pointing to the necessity for the rule of a righteous man appointed by God.

The Testimony, July 2005, vol. 75, no. 895, page 267

Thought Question: Again we read about a certain Levite sojourning near Mount Ephraim. What do you think is significant about the fact that these accounts involve Levites? What were the Levites supposed to be doing for the people of Israel? Using a concordance, find some verses to support your answer.

In these final chapters of Judges, we see how low Israel had sunk – in chapters 17 and 18 we see their spiritual corruption, and in chapters 19-21, we see their moral corruption. This is the same downward spiral that can happen to any of us. As soon as there is spiritual corruption, moral corruption follows close behind. The only way to keep ourselves from moral corruption is to make sure we are spiritually strong – by constantly feeding ourselves with the Word of God, and surrounding ourselves with those that love God and keep His commandments. (see Romans 12:2)

Does the horrible incident detailed here in Judges 19 remind you of another biblical account? (Hint: in the book of *Genesis*) Where do we find it?

Make a list of the similarities between the two different stories. (In the Judges 19 story, look particularly at v 17-24)

What does the phrase "sons of Belial" (v.22) mean? Use a concordance, other verses, and other versions to help you explain it.

What do verses 24-25 tell us about the spiritual state of the men, and their attitudes towards women? Find some verses that show us what God think of how women should be treated by their husbands.

What is shocking about verse 28?

What the Levite does next shocks the people of Israel into action, realizing that something must be done.

JUDGES 20

REVENGE

What do you notice about the Levite's account of what happened? (v.4,5) (compare his words to what happened in ch 19:25)

Read v.7,10-11. What, or Who is missing in this verse? How do you think this would affect their plans?

What did the Israelites demand of the Benjamites? (v.12-13)

What did they think would happen by killing these 'men of Belial'?

Thought Question: Do you think that evil really would have been put away from Israel as a result of these wicked men being slain? Why or why not? What would have to happen in order for evil to be truly put away?

Instead of turning over the men, what did the Benjamites do?

Finally the men of Israel thought to seek the counsel of *God*. (v.18) But notice, they did not ask if they should go to battle or not -- they had already made up their minds that that was what was necessary. Instead, what did they ask? What was the LORD's response?

What happened at this first battle?

How did the children of Israel react? (v.23)

What happened at the second battle? (v24)

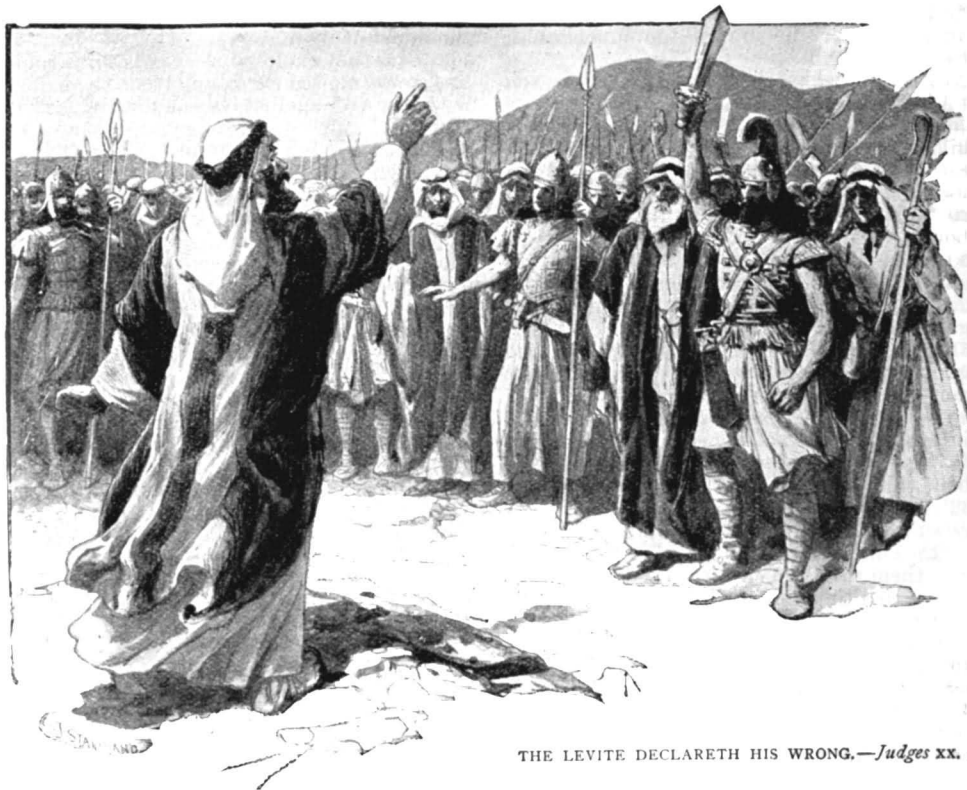
How did the children of Israel react?

Finally it seems that the children of Israel have completely humbled themselves before God, doing what He requires of them instead of doing "what was right in their own eyes"!

What was Israel's new battle plan? Describe how they finally defeated Benjamin.

Whose victory was it? (v.35)

How many men of Benjamin were left at the end of the battle? Where did they escape to? How long did they hide there for?



JUDGES 21

SAVING THE BENJAMITES

What had the Israelites vowed when deciding what to do with the Benjamites?

Why would this be a problem? (See v.7)

What is so ironic/ridiculous about the cry of the Israelites?

What had the Israelites vowed would happen to any tribe that did not join them in their revenge against Gibeah?

What tribe did not go up to battle?

What did the Israelites do as the solution to their problem? What do you think of their solution?

The men of Benjamin were still short 200 wives. What is the solution for this?



THE BENJAMITES AT SHILOH.—*Judges* xxi. 23.

CRYPTOGRAM

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
19	21	13	23	10	7	8	2	22	14	1	25	18	16	6	15	24	12	3	5	26	4	11	9	17	20

10 4 10 12 17
18 19 16
23 22 23
5 2 19 5
11 2 22 13 2

11 19 3
12 22 8 2 5
22 16
2 22 3
6 11 16
10 17 10 3



These are some examples of what the world is preaching today. In modern terms, it is called **HUMANISM**. This is taught in school from primary school through university...everyone is urged by the world to do exactly as this cryptogram says. But to adhere to this new religion is certain death for a follower of Christ, and these types of thinkers will not have a place in the kingdom!

Help Gideon and Phurah find their way to the camp of the Midianites...

