

Judges Chapter 6 Part 1

Tonight we start a new chapter, a new apostasy with a new deliverer.

Many of you probably have heard of Gideon. Maybe you heard of the test he gave God.

Perhaps you remember the process of picking the warriors that Gideon was to take with him to battle.

Perhaps you remember other aspects of Gideon.

Other parts of the Bible itself references back to Gideon and the defeat of Midian. It is apparently an important even in Bible history. The fiber of Scripture. To get a sense of the importance in Scripture, to get a sense that this was not just an ancient story of forgotten lore, we need to look at the fabric of Scripture concerning the fight against the Midianites. I'll explain later who the Midianites are. At that point you may be more motivated to listen to who they are once you see their impact on the story of the sons of Israel.

Read Psalm 83. Yes, we need to get our Bibles out and read this interesting Psalm. We will pay particular attention to verses 9-12.

Psalm 83:9 Deal with them as with Midian, As with Sisera and Jabin at the river of Kishon,

Psalm 83:10 Who were destroyed at En-dor, Who became like dung for the ground.

Psalm 83:11 Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb, And all their leaders like Zebah and Zalmunna,

Psalm 83:12 Who said, "Let's possess for ourselves The pastures of God."

Also see Isaiah 10:24-26

Isaiah 10:24 Therefore this is what the Lord God of armies says: "My people, you who dwell in Zion, do not fear the Assyrian who strikes you with the rod, and lifts up his staff against you the way Egypt did.

Isaiah 10:25 For in a very little while My indignation against you will be ended and My anger will be directed toward their destruction."

Isaiah 10:26 The Lord of armies will wield a whip against him like the defeat of Midian at the rock of Oreb; and His staff will be over the sea, and He will lift it up the way He did in Egypt.

And finally, Isaiah 9:4

Isaiah 9:1 But there will be no more gloom for her who was in anguish. In earlier times He treated the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali with contempt, but later on He will make it glorious, by the way of the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles.

Isaiah 9:2 The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, The light will shine on them.

Isaiah 9:3 You will multiply the nation, You will increase their joy; They will rejoice in Your presence As with the joy of harvest, As people rejoice when they divide the spoils.

Isaiah 9:4 For You will break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders, The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian.

Isaiah 9:5 For every boot of the marching warrior in the roar of battle, And cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire.

Isaiah 9:6 For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of armies will accomplish this.

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OK, so the battle of Midian had lasting consequences. It was important. It is important to study.

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Outline of Judges (based upon Thomas Constable & Robert Dean):

- Judges 1:1 – 3:6 The reason for Israel's apostasy
Judges 3:7 – 16:31 The record of Israel's apostasy
Judges 17:1 – 21:25 The results of Israel's apostasy

This week we start with the fourth apostasy. As an overview of the second section here is outline of the section based upon a combination of Thomas Constable, J. Vernon McGee and Robert Chisholm.

- A. The first apostasy 3:7-11 [judge: Othniel] 3:7 “The sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord,…”
- B. The second apostasy 3:12-31 [judge: Ehud] 3:12 “Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.”
- C. The third apostasy chapters 4—5 [judge: Deborah and Barak] 4:1 “Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord…”
- D. The fourth apostasy 6:1—10:5 [judge: Gideon] 6:1 “Then the sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.”**
- E. The fifth apostasy 10:6—12:15 [judge: Jephthah] 10:6 “Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord,…”
- F. The sixth apostasy chapters 13—16 [judge: Samson] 13:1 “Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord,…”

Note that both Judges 3:7-11 and Judges 6:1-10:5 do not have “again.” Small point, but worth mentioning.

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Judges	Offense	Enemy
3:7	The sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth.	Served King of Mesopotamia Delivered by Othniel
3:12	Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.	Served King of Moab Delivered by Ehud
4:1	Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord after Ehud died.	Lord sold them into the hand of King of Canaan. Delivered by Deborah / Barak
6:1	Then the sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord;	Gave them into the hands of Midian. Delivered by Gideon
10:1	Now after Abimelech died, Tola, the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar arose to save Israel	
10:3	After him, Jair the Gileadite arose and judged Israel twenty-two years	
10:6	Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, served the Baals and the Ashraroath, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the sons of Ammon and the gods of the Philistines; thus they forsook the Lord and did not serve Him	Lord sold them into the hands of the Philistines and into the hands of the sons of Ammon. Delivered by Jephthah
12:8	Now Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel after him	
12:11	Now Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel after him;	
12:13	Now Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel after him	
13:1	Now the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, so that the Lord gave them into the hands of the Philistines forty years.	The Lord gave them into the hands of the Philistines forty years. Delivered by Samson

Each of the major stories in section two start with “the sons of Israel did Evil.” We saw that above. But there are two slightly different versions of that wording. The wording in Judges 6:1 is closest to that in Judges 3:7

Judges 3:7 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.

Indeed, even though Judges 6:1 does not mention the Baals and the Asheroth, we might assume that worshiping other gods is implied. Indeed, the text of this chapter shows beyond any doubt that this is exactly what happened. See...

Judges 6:25 Now on the same night the Lord said to him (Gideon), “Take your father’s bull and a second bull seven years old, and tear down the altar of Baal which belongs to your father, and cut down the Asherah that is beside it;

Judges 6:26 and build an altar to the Lord your God on the top of this stronghold in an orderly way, and take a second bull and offer a burnt offering with the wood of the Asherah which you shall cut down.”

Judges 6:27 Then Gideon took ten men from his servants and did as the Lord had spoken to him; and because he was too afraid of his

father's household and the men of the city to do it by day, he did it by night.

Let's start with verse 1:

Judges 6:1 Then the sons of Israel did what was (the) evil in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord handed them over to Midian for seven years.

Did what was evil. Literally the Hebrew is, "And did the sons of Israel the evil..." An obvious question is what is "the" evil?

First, is it not defined in Judges 3:7?

Judges 3:7 So the sons of Israel did what was (the) evil in the sight of the Lord, and they forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth.

Second, Judges 6:25-27 says essentially the same thing as we read.

If we were Hebrews or even modern day Jews we would already be alerted in our minds to what this is referring to: The 1st Commandment:

Exodus 20:1 Then God spoke all these words, saying,

Exodus 20:2 "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. (Note the reminder about Egypt; this kind of reminder keeps recurring in the book of judges. God is saying "Remember what I did already.")

Exodus 20:3 “You shall have no other gods before Me.

Exodus 20:4 “You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth.

Exodus 20:5 You shall not worship them nor serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, inflicting the punishment of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me,

Exodus 20:6 but showing favor to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

Do you love God? Do you know how?

So it would appear that “**the**” evil is a violation of the first commandment.

OK, who was Midian?

Looking on the Internet, it is apparent that some forget that Abraham had children by Keturah, his wife after Sarah died. One of those children was Midian.

Genesis 25:1 Now Abraham took another wife, whose name was Keturah.

Genesis 25:2 She bore to him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

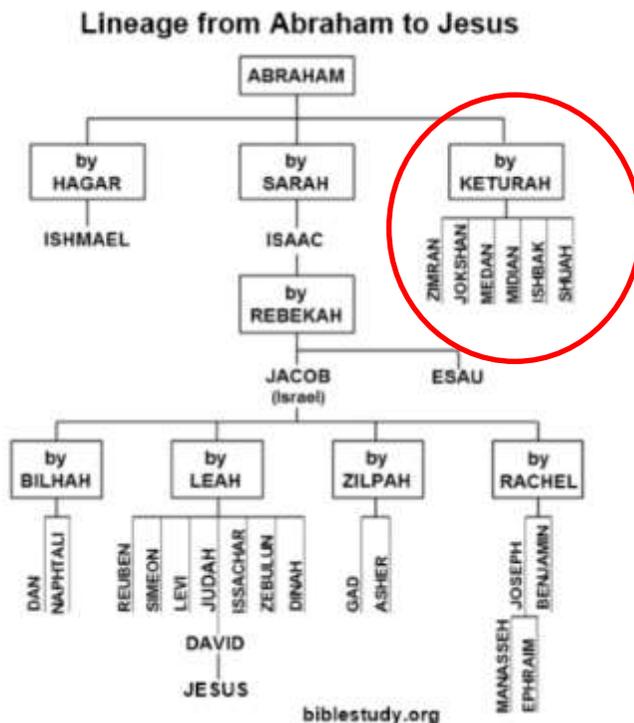
Genesis 25:3 Jokshan fathered Sheba and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim.

Genesis 25:4 The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All of these were the sons of Keturah.

Genesis 25:5 Now Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac;

Genesis 25:6 but to the sons of his concubines, Abraham gave gifts while he was still living, and sent them away from his son Isaac eastward, to the land of the east.

Here is a chart giving an overview of Abraham's sons from BibleStudy.org.



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While we are on the topic of genealogies, which tribe does Gideon come from? Gideon was an Abiezrite, in other words of the family of Abiezer who was a son of Manasseh, a son of Joseph:

Joshua 17:1 Now this was the lot for the tribe of Manasseh, for he was the firstborn of Joseph. To Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead, were allotted Gilead and Bashan, because he was a man of war.

Joshua 17:2 So the lot was made for the rest of the sons of Manasseh according to their families: for the sons of Abiezer, the sons of Helek, the sons of Asriel, the sons of Shechem, the sons of Hephher, and the sons of Shemida; these were the male descendants of Manasseh the son of Joseph according to their families.

I don't want to make too much out of it, but there were seven bad years under Joseph after seven good years. Let's read that story. We are westerners with little understanding of Hebrew culture and history. Read Exodus chapter 41.