

Gideon - Part 1
Judges 6
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ISRAEL'S LEADERSHIP ARC				
THE PATRIARCHS	MOSES	JOSHUA	 THE JUDGES	THE KING BOOKS
Abraham	Egypt	The Desert	Dark ages	Saul
Isaac	The Desert	The Promised Land	Godless liberty	David
Jacob	Testing	Dividing the land	Defeat	Solomon
Joseph	Tabernacle	Taking the land	Forsaking God	1 & 2 Samuel
	Exodus	Joy	Earthly/Unbelief	1 & 2 Kings
	Leviticus	Progress	Servitude	1 & 2 Chronicles
	Numbers	Faith	14 Judges	19 Kings in North
	Deuteronomy	Freedom		20 Kings in South

Period of the Judges

- 350 years (from death of Joshua to King Saul)
- String of stories...with a pattern:
 1. **People turn away from God**
 - Surrounded by pagan culture; episodically accommodated/embraced it
 - Active disobedience or gradual spiritual decline/neglect
 2. **God mobilizes an enemy**
 - Uses pagan nations
 3. **Cry for help/mercy**
 - Always late and as a last resort
 4. **God sends a rescuer ("Judge")**
 - To people who do not deserve it
 - To people who often don't appreciate it afterwards
 - Poor role models (except Deborah & Othniel)
 - People experience spiritual highs & lows

Historical Setting

- Book title, "Judges" – means "saviors" or "deliverers"
- Book of Judges = about possessing the land (but following up, nailing down/settling their assigned territories.
 - Dark Ages - "Israel did what was right in its own eyes"--evil
 - Godless liberty

No King—God raised up people to rescue: 14 leading characters (Judges):

- | | |
|-----------------|------------|
| ▪ Othniel | ▪ Jephthah |
| ▪ Deborah | ▪ Ibzan |
| ▪ Gideon | ▪ Samson |
| ▪ Tola | ▪ (others) |
| ▪ Jair | |

Came along, not consecutively, but when the time required it.

Judges 6

3 Enemy groups:

1. Midianites

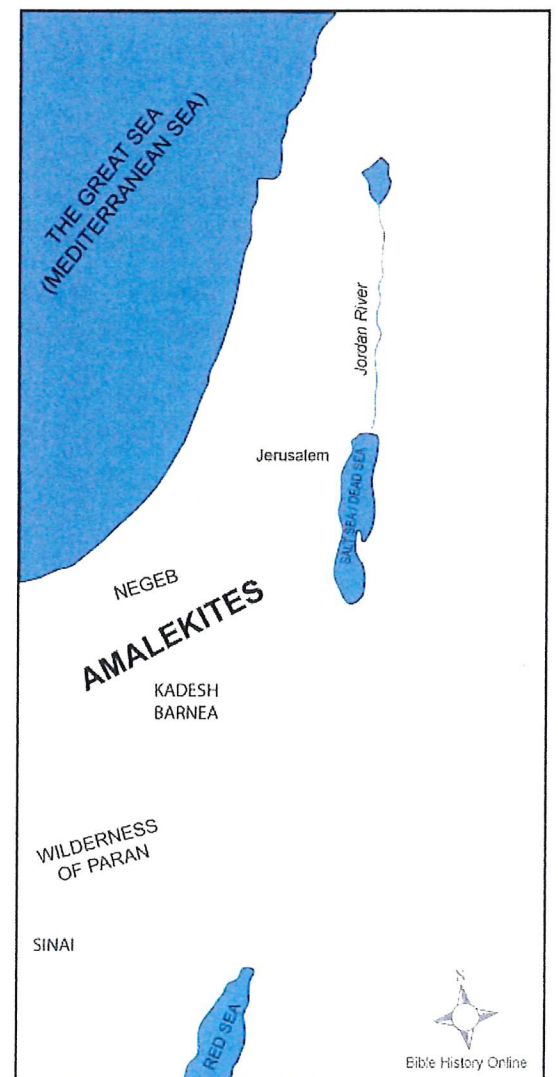
- Midian was a descendant of Abraham; from 2nd wife Keturah)
- Moses flees Egypt and stays in Midian 40 years
- Moses marries Zipporah in Midian
- Moses' father-in-law, Jethro was a priest of Midian
- God appeared to Moses in the burning bush in Midian
- Midianites turned against God; became Israel's enemy
 - Baal worshipers; immoral;
 - Israelite men couldn't stay away from their women and were spiritually infected—brought low. (Num 25)
 - Never eliminated the Midianites as God commanded
 - Now, years later, the Midianites dominate Israel

2. Amalekites

- South of Judah; connected to the Edomites.
- Nomadic
- Not descendants of Abraham
- Attacked Israelites on Exodus journey
- Long-lasting feud w/Israel
- God directed them destroyed forever
- King Saul would later spare them
- Harassed Israel for multiple generations
- Finally destroyed by Persian King Xerxes (Esther 9)

3. People of the East

- General term for Arabs east of the Jordan river all the way east to the Euphrates river .
- Often called Bedouins: means "desert dwellers".
- See **Moab (Moabites)** on map
- See **Ammon (Ammonites)** on map



Different kind of enemies than ever before:

- Not interested in political control
- Economic exploitation
 - Simply waited until harvest time
 - Swooped in at harvest seasons and plundered the land for the crops
 - Avoided the hard work of preparing soil, planting, cultivating
 - Season after season, year after year.
- Combined forces overwhelmed the land. Absolute devastation; rapacious hordes
- Secret weapon: camels (mobile, long range)
 - Enormous military advantage (swift attacks vs Israel's foot soldiers)
- Israel's only defense: hide food supplies in mountain dens and caves.

Midian Oppresses Israel

6 The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD gave them into the hand of Midian seven years. ²And the hand of Midian overpowered Israel, and because of Midian the people of Israel made for themselves the dens that are in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds. ³For whenever the Israelites planted crops, the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them. ⁴They would encamp against them and devour the produce of the land, as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel and no sheep or ox or donkey. ⁵For they would come up with their livestock and their tents; they would come like locusts in number—both they and their camels could not be counted—so that they laid waste the land as they came in. ⁶And Israel was brought very low because of Midian. And the people of Israel cried out for help to the LORD.

⁷When the people of Israel cried out to the LORD on account of the Midianites, ⁸the LORD sent a prophet to the people of Israel. And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt and brought you out of the house of slavery. ⁹And I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you and gave you their land. ¹⁰And I said to you, 'I am the LORD your God; you shall not fear the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.' But you have not obeyed my voice."

**What was in the prophet's message that was so important?
What do we notice about God?**

Principle:

The Israelites needed to know WHY they needed rescuing. They were crying out for the wrong things:

- ✓ Physical rescue -- instead of a heart rescue
- ✓ Wanting their lives back – instead of wanting their God back

“If you are continually falling into the same spiritual pit, and your falls are not decreasing in numbers or intensity, then you may be responding in regret rather than repentance. In other words, you may be simply regretful for the troubles of your sin, but unwilling to identify and reject the idol under the sin which is still attractive to you.”

*Dr. Timothy Keller
Judges for You*

**“You are present with us even in the deepest darkness;
yet we would rather take comfort in our circumstances
than in Your presence.”**

Recent PCPC corporate confession

Principle

Getting comfort from this life and our circumstances is our temptation too. Erroneously, we think Jesus Christ isn't quite enough.

To counter that thinking, we come to church and study God's Word to be corrected...to be reminded why Jesus really is enough to give us comfort

He can satisfy our deep needs for:

1. Security (being loved, being safe)
2. Significance (being important...a somebody)