

# Judges 6

Jesus

## I. Midianites Oppress Israel

1 Then the children of Israel did **evil in the sight of the Lord.**

- 20 years of oppression/40 years of rest...**complacency leading to evil**

**2 Samuel 11:1** It happened in the spring of the year, at the time when kings go out to battle...

- **7 x in Judges alone...** Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord
- **Evil:** Before flood...

**Genesis 6:5** [Days of Noah before flood] ...the Lord saw that the **wickedness of man** was great in the earth, and that **every intent** of the thoughts of his heart was **only evil continually**. 6 And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.

- **Evil:** Before final Judgment...

**Matthew 24:37** But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

**Jude 1:14** ...Enoch...prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, 15 to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are **ungodly** among them of all their **ungodly deeds** which they have committed in an **ungodly way**, and of all the harsh things which **ungodly sinners** have spoken against Him."

**Fleshly sinful Adamic nature:** Bent toward evil

Human condition; i.e. the propensity to gravitate toward evil is just weird

- **Begins promise of freedom**      Exciting/invigorating/independent/free-spirit?
- **Ends in reality of bondage**      Trapped/confined/beat down/dependent others

**Evil:** Illogical/Irrational/Counter-Intuitive if we think it through

**Proverbs 6:12** There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

**Everything was going swimmingly for 40 years...**

...then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord?

- **Everything was going just great...**
  1. ...then I decided to follow that **shiny thing**
- **NOTE:** Lucifer does not mean "monster". Lit. light-bearer/Morning star/Shining One
  2. ... then I decided to **experiment**
  3. ... then I decided he/she was **not enough me**. I want/deserve more. I, I, I

**Proverbs 16:18** Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit **before a fall.**

The only thing that overcomes our flesh/pride/evil bent is the **Spirit of God**

- **Non-believers can't do good;** moral compass points south

**Romans 8:6** ...to be carnally minded [led by feelings] **is death**, but to be spiritually minded is **life and peace**. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity [war] against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, **nor indeed can be**. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Getting upset with a non-Christian for not acting like a Christian is ludicrous/absurd  
Like punching a blind man for bumping into us...**he simply cannot see**

- **We who have the Spirit thus we have no excuse...**

**Romans 13:13** Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

### **Mankind continually shooting itself in the foot**

Human condition; i.e. the propensity to gravitate to evil is just weird...**but very real**

- Tired of misery/bondage/lack peace? **Get saved...continually filled**
- How do we cease "doing evil in the sight of the Lord"?

**Galatians 5:16** ... Walk in the Spirit, and you **shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh ...**

40 Years of Peace...Complacency/Taking God for Granted leading to Evil  
Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord

**1b... So the Lord delivered** them into the **hand of Midian** for seven years, 2 and the hand of **Midian prevailed** against Israel.

- **God Delivered His people to Midianites...**
  1. Abraham's wife/concubine Keturah **bore Midian** so...
  2. Midian is distantly related to Israelites. [Relationship deteriorates...]
  3. Midianites bought Joseph/Sold him to Egypt
  4. Moses wife Zipporah was a Midianite
  5. Midianites hired Balaam to curse Israel
  6. **Here...Midianites looting Israelites to the point of starvation...**

### **Midian means "Strife"**

### **Midian causing strife on Israel 7 long years...**

[God allowing Israel to be oppressed is...] an example of God's grace and mercy to Israel because the oppression would make them turn back to God. It would have been worse if God had just left them alone. [Guzik]

**2b...** Because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made for themselves the **dens, the caves, and the strongholds** which are in the mountains.

- God's people made dens, caves and strongholds to hide from enemy

### **Better to humble ourselves now before having to be humiliated later**

- No reason for God's people to live in humiliation/defeat

**James 4:6** God resists the proud, But gives **grace to the humble.**

**James 4:10** Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and **He will lift you up.**

**1 Peter 5:6** ... humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that **He may exalt you in due time**

- **Humility or Humiliation?** Our choice but one is coming.

**They thought they could live well apart from God. How's that working?**

3 So it was, whenever Israel had sown, Midianites would come up; also Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them. 4 Then they would encamp against them and destroy the produce of the earth **as far as Gaza**, and leave **no sustenance for Israel**, neither sheep nor ox nor donkey. 5 For they would come up with their livestock and their tents, coming in as **numerous as locusts**; both they and their camels were without number; and they would enter the land to destroy it.

- Israelites would meander down from mountains caves/holes to sow seed
- Meander back up to mountains to hide in caves/holes...**meanwhile**

Enemy leisurely strolls into land on camels, sets up camp, destroys crops and leaves  
**Seven years this has gone on**

- The whole land from Jordan in east to Gaza in west
- Leaving no sustenance. **All their hard work was in vain...**

Israel's sin made all their hard work profitless. All their produce and livestock were stolen after they worked hard to bring it to fruition. **Sin does this**; it robs us of what we work hard to gain. There are many accomplished men who lose everything in life because they won't stop their sin. All is lost in order to gain what, in retrospect, seems like nothing. [Guzik]

6 So Israel was **greatly impoverished** because of the Midianites, and the **children of Israel cried out to the Lord.**

- **Impoverished:** To hang, brought low, dried up...

7 And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried out to the Lord because of the Midianites, 8 that the **Lord sent a prophet** to the children of Israel

- Oh, good a Prophet? Maybe.

**8b...** [The prophet] said to them, "Thus says the Lord God of Israel: '**I brought you up from Egypt and brought you out of the house of bondage**; 9 and I **delivered you out** of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you and gave you their land. 10 Also I said to you, "I am the Lord your God; do not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell." **But you have not obeyed My voice.**' "

- **I bought you:** Everyone has an owner; God or Satan.

### Who owns you?

**1 Corinthians 6:19** ... you were **bought at a price**; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

- What was the price paid for us?

**1 Peter 1:18** ... you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, [or] from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the **precious blood of Christ**

- God paid for us with **His blood...**

**Acts 20:28** ... shepherd the church of God which **He purchased with His own blood.**

**I brought you out of bondage. I own you and I can sell you back**

- **Israel expected quick action:** "Sorry Charlie ...you should have obeyed My voice"

**Poor planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on Mine  
Israel failed to realize...they caused their own misery**

- **God's people Acting/Behaving like people without God...**

1. Blaming
2. Judging
3. Making excuses for their actions instead of...

Taking responsibility for our decisions and consequences of not doing what God says is right...

**I told you...but you did not obey My voice**

- **Instead you followed** Dictates of your own heart; i.e. Idolatry
- **Instead you followed** New gods... thus you were left unprotected

I told you what's right...now do what you want  
I'm gonna let you sit and stew in this for a while...

**SUMMARY Midianites Oppress Israel**

## II. Gideon

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.

- **Enter Gideon...**

1. **Lit. Feller/Hewer** To chop/cut in two
2. **Threshing wheat** While hiding inside a winepress
3. **Pit carved into rock** Where grapes crushed

**Hiding from the enemy...Not a good look for a believer  
Everyone was hiding. Pathetic**

- **NOTE:** Once again in the midst of insurmountable trouble Jesus is... Sitting

**Angel of the Lord:** Jesus sitting under Terebinth Tree

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

- **What Words from the Living God could be more encouraging?**
  1. I am with you Gideon
  2. You are a 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."**

**If God is for us...Why is this happening?**

- Whining/Taking no responsibility for "doing evil in sight of Lord"
- Blaming God for the predicament we got ourselves into...

**Why do we blame God for the bad and commend ourselves for the good?**

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?"**

**God's grace/mercy to Gideon is beyond what words can describe**

Instead of throwing him down which he deserves...**God stoops down to make him great**

- Completely ignores Gideon's whining /complaining...for now.
- **NOTE:** Descriptive not Prescriptive; i.e. don't tempt God with whining/complaining
- Sees beyond Gideon's weakness. See what Gideon can be once God gets a hold of him

**Go in this might of yours! I see what you don't...**

**Romans 4:17b...**God ...gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did...

**God sees in us what we can't see, what others can't see...our full potential in Him**

- **Only God can tell us who we are...**

I am not who I think I am. I am not who you think I am. I am [*I become*] **who I think you think I am.** [If you think I'm bad, act bad...if you think I'm ugly...I feel ugly] yah...no

- **Q.** Am I becoming what I believe others believe about me?
- **Q.** Is my inability to change a result of believing a cruel/demeaning remark from past?

Q. So, If I'm not who I think I am/not who others think I am/not who I think others think I am...then who am I?

**A. I am exactly who God says I am. No more/no less**

- If Apostle Paul decided to believe he was who others said he was/who devil said was
- **He might think of himself as...**
  1. A murderer who should not even be allowed to live
  2. A villain too bad to be saved related to hide in shadows/hole/cave
  3. A scoundrel that should never experience joy and never laugh again
  4. A loser/rascal/scallywag who could never be a blessing to anyone...ever

**Yet God used Paul to pen much of New Testament Books of Peace, Joy, Salvation... helping millions of people**

- **Paul knew that it was all God.** He knew who he was and who he was not
- He also knew that whatever he was...**was because of God's grace**

**Ephesians 3:8** To me, who am less than the **least of all the saints**, this **grace** was given, that I should preach...

**1 Corinthians 15:9** ...I am the **least of the apostles**, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 **But by the grace of God** I am what I am

**1 Timothy 1:15** This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of **whom I am chief.**

- **Paul believed he was who God said he was:** Who does God say we are in Christ?
  1. Sinners saved by Grace
  2. Created in His image
  3. New Creation
  4. One who God thinks about us continually...

**Psalms 139:17** How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! 18 If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand...

5. Loved by Him
6. Conquerors in Him
7. Of Great Worth to Him; i.e. His Treasure/Pearl of Great Price

We are those He is transforming from **Glory to Glory**

**2 Corinthians 3:18** ...we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are **being transformed** into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

- Don't ingest our own press good/bad...

**Proverbs 27:21** The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, And **a man is valued [tested] by what others say of him.**

- **Only thing that matters is what God says about us...**

Worth is determined by what someone is willing to pay; e.g. I believe my car worth million  
God was willing to buy you from sin/death with the Blood of His only begotten Son

- We don't need self-esteem when **we have God's esteem**

**Gideon like some of us still does not know who he is**

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."

**Matthew 17:17** Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? **How long shall I bear with you?**"

### How can I?

- **God already told Gideon...**

1. I am with you
2. You are a mighty man of valor

**Again...** My Tribe is the worst/my family is a mess/I'm the weakest of my brothers

**Q.** How can I make a difference? **A.** You can't but God can do amazing thing through you

- **Moses said the same...**How can I / Who am I?

**Exodus 3:11** [God told Moses go to Egypt] "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?"

**Exodus 4:10** [God said go!] "O my Lord, I am **not eloquent**, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." 11 So the Lord said to him, "**Who has made man's mouth?** Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the Lord? 12 Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say."

- Moses finally went with a little help from brother Aaron
- **God said go to young Jeremiah...**

**Jeremiah 1:4** ...the word of the Lord came to me, saying:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations." **[God said go!]** Then said I: "Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth." 7 But the Lord said to me: "**Do not say, 'I am a youth,'** For you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak. 8 Do not be afraid of their faces, For **I am with you to deliver you,**" says the Lord.

- **Newsflash: Don't say "I can't" if God says "You can".** Really saying "I won't"

How many of us are stuck in *who we think we are* rather than *who God sees we can be*? [NJC]

How many of us will enter heaven not having completely lived who we could have been...Not fully doing what we could have done if we really believed what God said He could do in us? [NJC]

- **What does God say about us?**

1. We can do all things through Christ who strengthens me
2. We are more than a conqueror in Christ

**Q.** How can I? **A.** You can't **but He can**

16 And the Lord said to [Gideon], **"Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man."**

**God is the Pursuer, the Initiator, the Encourager: Stoops down to make us great**

God's assurance to Gideon was not to build up his self-confidence, but to assure him that God was indeed with him. Gideon did not need more self-confidence; he needed more God-confidence. [Guzik]

**As do we**

17 Then [Gideon], **"If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who talk with me."**

A sign is for someone who lacks faith to simply listen to God/do what He says  
**God has been the Initiator, Pursuer, the Encourager**

- Show me a sign that You are actually the Lord...

18 **Do not depart from here, I pray, until I come to You and bring out my offering and set it before You."**

- **Our response? See you later Gideon...** Find someone else that's not so much work
- **Q.** What if God gave up on us...
  1. After our first crisis of faith?
  2. After our first blubbering failure?
  3. After our 10,000<sup>th</sup> slipup?

**18b...And [Jesus] said, "I will wait until you come back."**

- **God's response:** Descriptive not Prescriptive; i.e. **don't ask the Lord to wait.**

19 So Gideon went in and prepared a young goat, and unleavened bread from an ephah [20 lbs.] 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.

- **Jesus waits for Gideon...**
  1. Brings our plate of Meat/Bread as offering
  2. Jesus: Lay it on the Rock
  3. Touches w/staff/ fire shoots from rock/Bread/Meat consumed. Panini sandwich

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."**



## **Gideon:** I have seen God face to face

**Exodus 33:20** [God to Moses] "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live."

- **God's face;** i.e. His fullness.
- Gideon afraid he will also be consumed...

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.

- Gideon saw something of God but **His not fullness**  
**"Peace be with you; do not fear, you shall not die."**
- Built an altar to the True God: **The Lord is Peace**

... if he has given you peace you must now prepare for war...our Lord came to give us peace that he might send us out to war?" [Spurgeon]

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."

- **We are called to tear down false-religion our parents...** come to Jesus alone
  1. Baal/Ashtoreth
  2. Latter Day Saints/Mormonism
  3. Catholicism
  4. Seventh Day Adventism
  5. JW/Watchtower Society...tear **it** down and come to **Him**

**If I leave, I feel like I am betraying my parents.**

Would you rather betray the Lord? Are you willing to go to hell for sentimentality?

- Tear down fake religion/build up relationship with Living God

**I am the way the truth and the life.**

No religion can show you the way, tell you the truth of give your life! Only Me.

- **Pharisees:** Picture of man-made religion. Not going to heaven.

**Matthew 5:20** ... unless your righteousness **exceeds the righteousness** of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by **no means enter the kingdom of heaven.**

- Religious believe that Scripture knowledge is Salvation

**John 5:39** You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; these are they which testify of Me. 40 But **you are not willing to come** to Me that you may have

life.

- **Jesus saves...**
  1. Not our rituals for Him
  2. Not knowledge about Him...only Jesus
- **God tells Gideon to get rid of the dead wood!**
  1. Use your father's cow and tear down the altar to his false god
  2. Use wood from what tear down as kindling to offer second cow to Me

**Oh, the Efficiency of God**

**Burn the altar of the devil for a sacrifice to the True God. Waste not want not**

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.**

- **Faith is building:** Did what God at night...but he did what God said

### **III. Chop-Chop Dead Weight of Religion**

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."

- Israelites willing to kill Gideon for the sake of idol? Real bad shape.

31 But Joash [Gideon's father] 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."

**If Baal is a god can't he take care of himself?**

He looks mad...smoldering over there

- **Joash names Gideon Jerubbaal**
  1. **Jerubbaal:** Lit. Let Baal fight for himself
  2. **Gideon's nickname:** Continuous reminder of weakness of idols

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.**

- When we choose to obey God...opposition is guaranteed

**2 Samuel 5:17** ... when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to search for David.

**2 Timothy 3:12** Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

- Enemies ready to stroll in/steal crops as have for the **last seven years...**

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.

**Isaiah 59:19** When the enemy comes in like a flood, The Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.

- **Enemy floods in but...**Spirit of God came upon Gideon and a leader was revealed
  1. Gideon blew trumpet/God works in hearts of His people
  2. 32,000 Men of war flock to Gideon [c.f. Judges 7]

**SUMMARY Gideon Destroys the Altar of Baal.** Spirit come upon him. Men gather to him. Freed the dead weight of his father's religion to serve the Living God

#### **IV. Fleece?**

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."

- **God if you are really going to keep Your Word...**
  1. I will throw this wool fleece on the dry ground
  2. If wet in morning/ground is dry...**I will believe You**

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.

- **God if You are really going to keep you Word...**
  1. I will throw this wool fleece on the ground
  2. If it is dry in the morning/ ground is wet...**I will believe you?**

**V 16** "Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat the Midianites as one man."

- **John the Baptists father Zachariah:** Asked for a sign/made mute for awhile
- God's Word should be enough/Gideon will grow in faith [Hall of Faith Heb. 11:32]

**SUMMARY Fleece** Descriptive not Prescriptive. Dump fleece/ Listen to God/Do what He says.