

Episode #521 Judges 6 Part 1 – The Oppression of Midian

I. In the book of Judges, we have a brief record of the early history (the first centuries) of the history of the land of Israel. We see the leaders God chose, judges, who ruled under Jehovah, the King. Through the lives and work of these judges, we can learn about God's works and ways.

II. We have been considering the song of Deborah and Barak. The highways of Israel and the small towns had been deserted for fear of the Canaanite invaders, who were kidnapping all the young, marriageable-aged women to make slave wives supporting polygamy. The tribes of Israel that came to fight for the LORD are praised, whereas those who remained home are mocked. The LORD was the One Who helped Israel win the victory!

III. Judges 5:21-31. The song of Deborah and Barak continues.

- A. Verse 21. The River Kishon flooded and swept the enemy troops away. Kishon runs from Mount Tabor to the Mediterranean near Mount Carmel. These describe the obvious help of the LORD in the victory.
- B. Verse 22. The horses galloped in trying to get away, but their hooves were broken.
- C. Verse 23. Meroz = Refuge, a city that did not come to fight, and so is cursed. Note it is not just counted as letting their countrymen down, but letting Jehovah down!
- D. Verse 24. Praising Jael above all other tent-dwelling women.
- E. Verse 25. She brought buttermilk when he asked for water.
- F. Verse 26. She pierced through his temples with the tent peg and cut off his head.
- G. Verse 27. He lay down at her feet, and there he died at her hand.
- H. Verse 28. Taunting the mother of Sisera, as she waits anxiously for him to return. Why bitterness against his mother? Because she supported him in this oppression against the women of Israel. Now Sisera's mother is mocked by Israel's mothers.
- I. Verse 29. Her wise ladies and her own wisdom tell her nothing can be wrong.
- J. Verse 30. They think he must just be delayed dividing the spoil. Note the "girl or two," the point of the oppression. Girl = womb, reducing a woman to this. Along with spoil of rich clothing, which is what his mother benefited from.
- K. Verse 31. Let all Yahweh's enemies die like Sisera did! But those who love Him be like the mighty sun, never failing to go forth perpetually.

IV. Verse 31. The result of Barak's (and Deborah's) judgeship: forty years of rest.

V. Judges 6. The oppression of the Midianites.

- A. Verse 1. The evil is again idolatry, their common rebellion. Midian = "Strife," the son of Abraham by Keturah, his wife after Sarah died. Now his descendants too are grown into a nation. Had intermarried quite a bit with the Ishmaelites, so the two nations were related. 7 years. (8 years of Mesopotamia + 18 years of Moab + 20 years of Canaan + 7 years of Midian = 53 years total)
- B. Verse 2. Hand stands for power. They were again forced to hide. Dens = dugouts.
- C. Verse 3. They were an agricultural society, so their crops were much of their wealth. Midian is joined by the Amalekites, the LORD's enemy, along with the sons of the east (Ammon, Moab, Edom?)
- D. Verse 4. They destroyed their crops. Their purpose is not necessarily to steal their wealth, but to destroy them.
- E. Verse 5. Their numbers were huge. It emphasizes that their goal was not plunder, but destruction. This was a vicious attack!

F. Verse 6. Israel was made poor. So the sons of Israel cried out to Jehovah. The right thing, but they never should have

VI. Judges 6:7-10. The rebuke of a man a prophet.

A. Verse 7. This was Yahweh's response.

B. Verse 8. He sent an unnamed prophet to them. He speaks in the name of Jehovah Elohim of Isarel. He recalls His past help in bringing them up from Egypt, the house of slavery.

C. Verse 9. He saved them from the power of the Egyptians and rescued them from all who oppressed them. He drove the Canaanite nations out in front of them and gave them their land.

D. Verse 10. Then He gave them orders: not to fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land they were now living. They, however, had disobeyed. That is why He had now allowed them to fall into this vicious oppression! Yet though He had every reason to allow them to be destroyed, He will now graciously step in and rescue them.

VIII. The oppression of Jabin and Sisera was the kidnapping of Israelite girls. The LORD gave Israel the victory, and their poor, kidnapped girls were saved. The mother of Sisera is mocked, as the women of Israel have victory over them. Forty years of rest follow for Israel, but then they forsake Jehovah again and He allows them to fall into another oppression. When they cry out to Him, He reminds them of their unfaithfulness. Yet He graciously comes to His chosen deliverer: a man so courageous he threshes in a winepress! But his might is Jehovah being with him. Do we too recognize the LORD as our true strength?