JUDGES 'My strength is made perfect in weakness'

16th Australasian Christadelphian Youth Conference

HANDBOOK

May,1981. Sydney

CONTENTS

<u> </u>	age
Preface	1
Contents	2
Theme	3
Background	4
The 2 Appendices chs 17-21	13
OTHNIEL	32
EHUD	35
SHAMGAR	39
DEBORAH AND BARAK	10
GIDEON 5	50
ABIMELECH 6	55
TOLA 7	2
JAIR 7	3
ЈЕРНТНАН 7	4
IBZAN 8	6
ELON 8	7 .
ABDON 8	8
SAMSON	_

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GOD'S STRENGTH MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS

- 1. Faith necessary factor in deliverance "No king is saved by the multitude of a host" Psalm 33:16.
- 2. N.B. the 'weak things' chosen by God to confound the mighty:
 - (1) left-handed man 3:15-16
- (5) 300 men with lamps 7: 6,16
- (2) an ox goad
- 3:31
- (6) woman with a stone 9:53

- (3) tent peg
- 4:21-22
- (7) a social outcast 11: 2-3

- (4) woman
- 5:7
- (8) jawbone of ass

15:16

BETHLEHEM JUDAH - CROSS SECTION OF COMMUNITY

 Though "little among the thousands of Judah" (Micah 5:2), yet village produces cross section of characters

Elimelech and Naomi - failure and desertion under trial Ruth 1:1-2

Mahlon and Chilion - Weak and sickly brothers Ruth 1:2

Boaz - Strong man, exhibiting faith in the midst of

apostasy Ruth 2:4; 4:14

Jonathan, grandson - Worthless, indolent, turns apostate

of Moses

Concubine of Levite - Loose and faithless woman Judges 19:1-2

<u>Ibzan</u> - the Judge Judges 12:8

- 2. "Out of thee shall he come forth unto me" Micah 5:2
- 3. Samson typical of Israel especially during this period "Right in my eyes" 14:3 (Mg) Epitome of their behaviour

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Background

"EVERY MAN DID THAT WHICH WAS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES"

INTRODUCTION - Failure through compromise

- Time of entry into land "iniquity of the Amorites". Gen 15:16
 Order of extermination. Deut 7:1-4
 "When Israel was strong" Judg 1:28, they compromise.
 N.B. Retrogression Judg 1:27,29,30,32,33
- "They were mingled among the heathen". Psa 106:34-36 Heb. 'Braid', 'intermix', used of 'traffic or mortgage'.
- 4 times "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes". Judg 17:6; 18:1; (cp Deut 12:8); 19:1; 21:25
- Record of violence and bloodshed = immorality.

DIVISIONS

1:1 - 3:7 1:1-36 2:1-5 2:6-23 3:1-4 3:5-7	Failure through compromise Failure of tribes to consolidate inheritance The rebuke of the messenger of Bochim Declension after death of Joshua - summary of failings The nations left to prove Israel Israel's failure under trial				
3:8 - 16:31	History of the 12 J	udges (Including 6 Here	oic Episodes)		
	Judge	Meaning of Name	Tribe		
3:8-11 3:12-30 3:31 4-5 6-8 9 10:1-2 10:3-5 10:6-12:7 12:8-10 12:11-12 12:13-15 13-16	Othniel Ehud Shamgar Deborah/Barak Gideon Abimelech - (the Bramble king) Tola Jair Jephthah Ibzan Elon Abdon Samson				

Chapters 17 to 18 First Appendix - Corruption of Doctrine

Chapters 19 to 21 Second Appendix - Corruption of Practice

THE FIRST CAMPAIGN 1:1-8

<u>Principles</u>

- 1. Typical History
 - (a) Joshua conquers enemy, makes inheritance possible. Josh 23:9,14; cp Heb 2:14
 - (b) Calls upon people to worship God "in sincerity and truth". Josh 24:14; cp John 4:23
 - (c) Israel faithful in days of Joshua and elders who follow. Josh 24: 31; cp Acts 20:29
 - (d) No king rapid decline. Judg 17:6; cp Matt 24:48-49
 - (e) Failure through compromise. Judg 1:29; cp Rev 2:14,20
 - (f) Corruption in practise and doctrine. Judg 17-21; cp 2 Tim 3:8
- Canaanites delivered into Israel's hand all that was needed was faith.
- 3. All Canaanites were to perish. The flesh found this repugnant and paid for their softness to wickedness.

- 1. What does Canaanite mean? Trace their history though the scriptures. (Deut 9:3; Zech 14:21; Gen 9:18)
- 2. Why was Judah chosen to go first? (Consider Num 10:14; Zech 12:7; Gen 49:10 Christ, leader of Judah)
- 3. Why did Simeon not have an inheritance? (Consider Gen 49:7; Num 26:14; Josh 19:1,9 & Num 25:9,14)
- 4. Was Adoni-bezek's punishment just? Is maiming what God desired?

 5. When will Judah fight successfully again for Jerusalem? (cf Zech 12: 5-6)

OTHNIEL & ACHSAH 1:9-15

<u>Principles</u>

- Caleb only allows he who fights the warfare of faith to be joined to his daughter.
- 2. Achsah takes the initiative, asking for a double blessing of springs, to water her dry ground.

1.	The world views Achsah's request, as one of a domineering, ambitious
	and liberated woman. What are the necessary characteristics of a
	faithful woman?

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JUDAH'S CAMPAIGNS 1:16-21

Principles

- 1. The Kenites (descendants of Jethro), leave Jericho to live a hard, but separated life as sojourners in the inheritance of Judah.
- Judah takes inheritance in mountains, but is not strong enough in faith to take the valleys. The first compromise.
- 3. Caleb, an example to all those younger than he, drives out the Anakim from Hebron to secure his inheritance.

Questions
1. Who are the Canaanites we have to fight with?
2. What is our inheritance - can we take it now?
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CAMPAIGNS OF HOUSE OF JOSEPH 1:22-26
<u>Principle</u>
 All enemies of the truth must be stopped - there is no such thing as a helpful enemy!
Question
1. What was wrong with Judah's compassion in verses 25 and 26? Surely he had sided with Israel?

FAILURE OF REST OF TRIBES TO CONSOLIDATE 1:27-36

Principles

- 1. Strength in numbers, certainly doesn't mean strength of faith.
- 2. To dwell with the enemy courts certain danger.
- 3. The world has always had greater persistence than the majority of those living the truth.

Questions

1.	The term '	the Canaanites wo	ould dwell" in	verse 27,	takes on a
	different	light in the R.S.	.V what is i	t?	

2.	How far had to verses 34 to	penetrated	into	Israel's	territory?	(Examine

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MESSENGER OF BOCHIM 2:1-5

Principles

- 1. Yahweh will never break his covenant. (cf Judg 2:1; Deut 31:16,20; Lev 26:15; Isa 50:1 & Rom 11)
- 2. Israel unfaithful to the conditions of the covenant.
- 3. Yahweh 'gives them up' the Canaanites they wouldn't destroy, become their snares.

- Is the messenger ("Angel" Heb. Malak) of Yahweh, an immortal one? (cf Judg 5:23; 6:11,12,20-22; 13:3,16,17,18,20,&21; 18:20-21 also Isa 63:9 & Exod 23:20-23)
- 2. Look up the meaning of Gilgal and follow its significance in scripture. How closely is it linked with Shittim ("Acacia" or "thorns")? (cp Judg 2:3 with Micah 6:5)
- 3. How can we relate Israel's covenant conditions (v2), with the way we are required to live under Christ?

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	THE DEATH OF JOSHUA 2:6-10
Pri	nciples
1.	Same record as Joshua 24:28-31. After denunciation by angel, Joshua convenes assembly at Shechem (Josh 24:1) - the place of decision (Josh 24:14-15), 'Sanctuary of Yahweh' (Josh 24:26).
2.	The people go out to possess the land - under the greater Yahoshua, Israel will be "settled after their old estates". (cf Ezek 36:11)
3.	Under strong leadership, Israel did not waver.
Que	estions
1.	How was Joshua, the Son of Nun, a true Ephramite? (Look up the meanings of the names)
2.	Does the "falling away" (apostacy) of the 4th generation, have any specific relevance today? In what ways can we as individual young people combat a similar decline if it existed, or began to exist?
3.	For what did Mount Ephraim become noted, in the later chapters of Judges?
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COMMENT - It is suggested that between verses 9 and 10, is the time period in which Appendices I & II (Chapters 17 to 21) are set.

PATTERN OF HISTORY OF JUDGES SUMMARISED 2:11-19

Principles

- Israel did <u>THE</u> evil against Yahweh mentioned 6 times Judges 3:7-12;
 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1 and the above account.
- Yahweh sells them (Yahweh owned them, they were His, bought with a price!) Refer Judges 3:8; 4:2; 10:7 and Rom 7:14; 1 Kings 21:25.
- 3. Judge was 'raised up' (v16), but when 'dead' (v19), Yahweh's presence was no longer among people. Jesus once 'dead', now 'raised up' Yahweh will never leave or forsake us. (Heb 13:5)

1.	When it purpose	with	Israel?	18 "it repented Yahweh" - o Support your answer with so	cripture.
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THE WORSHIP OF BAAL - Judges 2:11

- 1. Supreme male deity of Phoenicians and Canaanites, often associated with "Asherah", the supreme female deity. (v13)
- 2. "Asherah" often rendered "groves" (Judg 3:7; 2 Chron 33:3), Heb. "straight" immoral object of sexual licence. (Isa 57:3-8)
- "Baal" ("Lord, Master, Possessor") title used for whatever form of idolatry or immorality "possessed" the people.
 - (a) BAAL-PEOR title signifying the corruption of young women (Num 25:3), a lasting shame (Deut 4:3; Hos 9:10).

 N.B. 'Joined themselves unto Baal-peor' (Psa 106:28 quoting Num 25:3). Paul's exhortation in 1 Cor 6:13-20.
 - (b) BAAL-BERITH Judg 8:33 Enslaved to a false covenant.

 N.B. Use of this title with Abraham (Gen 14:13) "owners of a covenant" (Roth ft/note).
- 4. Term 'Baal' used for husband (Exod 21:22; Lev 21:4 mg). Israel confused Baal with Yahweh (Hos 2:16-17).
- 5. Term 'Baal' used as "Lord" and "Master" also confused Israel (Jer 23: 27).
- 6. Jehu, appointed scourge of house of Ahab, turns house of Baal into a public toilet. (2 Kings 10:27)

THE NATIONS LEFT TO PROVE ISRAEL 2:20 - 3:4

Pri	inci	p1	.es

1. Yahweh allows the Canaanites to remain to prove Israel.

Question	s
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2.	Canaanites were left to teach Israel how to fight (v2).
Que	estions
1.	Yahweh left the nations amongst Israel, when He could have miraculously driven them out. Why could Israel <u>not</u> blame God for <u>causing</u> them to err?
2.	Does God work in the same way today?
3.	We are to fight the warfare of faith (cf 2 Cor 10:4-5) - do we attack or defend? What weapons do we bear?
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THE ABSOLUTE FAILURE OF ISRAEL 3:5-7

Principle

1. Marry into the world and you will forget Yahweh and worship idols.

1.	Has the principle above,	lessened throughout	the ages?
2	What does Paul say on th	ia matter?	

2.	What	does	Paul	say	on	this	matte	er?					
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The 2 Appendices chs. 17-21

COMMENT - Although chapters 17 to 21 representing 2 appendices, occur at the end of the book of Judges, these in fact, belong chronologically before chapter 2 verse 10 and after chapter 2 verse 9. This highlights Israel's rapid and tragic decline.

- (i) The 2 historical accounts of corruption are set in the very early period of the Judges.
 - 1. They are linked together as occurring at the same time (19:1).
 - 2. In the 2nd appendix, Dan already established in the north (20:1).
 - 3. Their establishment in North recorded in 1st appendix (18:29).
 - 4. In the 2nd appendix, "Phinehas, son of Eleazar" is the High Priest (20:28). He figured in the overthrow of the Balaamite influence (Num 25:7-8) and in the controversy soon after settlement of the tribes in the land. (Josh 22:13-14)
- (ii) FIRST APPENDIX CORRUPTION OF DOCTRINE Chapters 17 to 18
 - 1. Story of Micah's idolatry with Jonathan, the grandson of Moses. (18:30)
 - 2. Of the tribe of Dan, establishing their own inheritance in the North. Becomes centre of apostasy. (18:31)
- (iii) SECOND APPENDIX CORRUPTION OF PRACTICE Chapters 19 to 21
 - 1. Horrible outrage of Levites concubine in Gibeah.
 - 2. Revenge against Benjamin, near extermination of that tribe.
- (iv) These accounts are selected to indicate general condition of whole nation. N.B. Leading characters from same localities.
 - 1. From Mt. Ephraim:Micah (17:1)
 The Levite (19:1)
 - 2. From Bethlehem: Jonathan (17:7)
 Levite's concubine (19:1)

FIRST APPENDIX:-

MICAH THE DESPICABLE THIEF 17:1-6

Principles

- The worship of Yahweh and of the gods around them, had become intermixed and finally confused.
- Indulgent parents (who give everything to their children), eventually by their actions, permit their children to 'mix' their religions.
 Result: selfwilled children, who apply this principle in living the truth their way.
- 3. Ignoring or rewarding a sin leads to wholesale trangression of God's laws.

- 1. What was the real motive of the mother in verse 3? How deep was her conviction (cf v4 '200 shekels)?
- 2. How many commandments did Micah break? Write them in your margin.
- 3. Where was the tabernacle at this time? (cf chapter 21) How far was this away (approximately) from Micah's centre of worship?

 Consider the significance of Micah's house on others. (cf Judg 21:19)

JONATHAN - APOSTATE GRANDSON OF MOSES 17:7-13

Principles

- 1. Israel had so quickly (3 generations) forsaken the rights of the Levites (cf Deut 14:27).
- 2. False teachers will always find positions of authority amongst fleshly thinkers and ambitious or ignorant people.

Questions

- 1. As Jonathan was the grandson of Moses (cf Judg 18:30 'Manasseh' = Moses, changed by the Massoretic Jews to protect Moses' name), would not this have guaranteed his employment? What does this tell us of his character and of the 'environment' of Israel?
- 2. Jonathan wandered from place to place 'searching for a job'. Does this situation ever arise in our ecclesias today?

3. Has this problem always existed? (cf 2 Tim 4:3-4)

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THE SPIES OF DAN AT MICAH'S HOUSE 18:1-6

Principles

- The flesh thinks it always knows better than God. God gave Dan a work, which they didn't fulfil and they decided to look for a better (easier) inheritance.
- 2. The men of Dan are drawn to Micah's house rather than Shiloh principle: "Birds (in this case fleshly minded men) of a feather, flock together!"
- Jonathan incorrectly thinks that his new qualifications, as priest over Micah's house, <u>NOW</u> qualify him to speak wisely and have communication with God.

- 1. The men of Dan 'knew' the voice of Jonathan. How could they have known him?
- 2. Does qualifications, positions of importance or status in this world, make us fit teachers of the word or give us a closer association with God? Discuss in context of other scriptural examples.
- God? Discuss in context of other scriptural examples.

 3. How did Jonathan answer their appeal to God? (v6)

 4. When should we ask God's blessing on our decisions?

THE SPIES OF DAN AT LAISH 18:7-10

Principle

It's easy to be confident, even brave, when the enemy looks a pushover
 - yet, the victory is hollow, for it was no victory of faith.

1.	After examining verse 7, what would you say, would be a good description of the environment at Laish? Why was this Dan's cho Would this have helped them in building a strong ecclesia?								
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FREEBOOTERS OF DAN COMMANDEER MICAH'S GODS & PRIEST 18:11-26

Principles

- An ecclesia who travelled away from God's heritage, stole foreign gods, elected an unqualified leader and still expected to be blessed by God! (cp v6)
- 2. Ambition and base ingratitude (vs 19,20), demonstrated by the flesh.
- The blindness of idolatry (cp Isa 44:14-18)
 - v24 'My gods which I have made'
 - v24 Micah seeks to 'protect' his gods
 - v26 Men of Dan too strong for him even though he had gods

- 1. Is there any significance in the 600 men of Dan? Any connection with Judges 3:31 or Judges 20:47?
- Verse 21 relates a 2nd Exodus. What does this mean to Dan? Is this why Dan is not mentioned in Rev. 7:4-8?
- 3. Dan withdrew themselves from the chastisement of Yahweh, received at the hands of those whom Yahweh had left for that purpose (Judg 3:1-4). How did the Father view this?

4.	What exhortation today?	does	verse	22	carry,	in	1ight	of	fellowship	issues
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FOUNDATION OF APOSTACY OF DAN 18:27-31

Principles

- 1. Dan applied the law of destruction of idolaters (Deut 13:12-16) to the Laishites, when they themselves practised this abomination.
- Alternative and convenience worship, hinders people from seeing the need to attend the places of true worship - it causes ecclesial self destruction.

Questions

- 1. Are all 'cities' bad? What are God's thoughts on this matter?
- Are we given any indication of how Dan developed after this? Trace their history to see the lessons.

3. With verses 30 & 31 in mind, do you think that <u>any</u> activity which clashes with a study class, should be supported? How important is

ecclesial study and worship? How much of the "other activities", and of what type, should we allow in our personal and ecclesial programmes?

SECOND APPENDIX - THE OUTRAGE OF GIBEAH:-

THE LEVITE & HIS CONCUBINE 19:1-7

Principles

- 1. A Levite, representative of his class, is not fit for his role of a 'teaching priest' (2 Chron 15:3; 17:8-9), because the lust of his flesh, overruled God's laws. (cp Deut 22:21)
- 'Socialising' and 'hospitality' without any scriptural education, will never help anyone to develop spiritual thinking.

- 1. Why does it state "there was no king in Israel"? (Also consider Judges 17:6; 18:1)
- 2. Verse 1 describes the Levite as 'sojourning', and he takes on a loose relationship (a concubine) with a young woman. How would a firm foundation on God's word, have changed this man's life?

JOURNEY TO GIBEAH 19:8-15

Principles

- 1. Inconsistency in decision making and obstinancy when the decision is finally made, causes many tragedies in the truth.
- 2. The ecclesia at Gibeah had mixed and borrowed so much from the Canaanitish way of life, that separation was not the question, but who was worse!
- 3. The principle of hospitality (along with the other laws of God), was missing.

- 1. How does this incident apply in fellowship matters today? Ought we bid those holding wrong doctrine and practice "God speed"? In offering such hospitality, do we lay ourselves and our family open to the danger that threatened this man's home? (2 John verses 10 & 11)
- 2. Whose fault was it that they were at Gibeah at nightfall and that this evil occurrence happened?

3.	Was	it	just	the	Levite's	fau1t	or	were	all	Israel	implica	ated?		
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HOSPITALITY OF THE OLD MAN OF MT. EPHRAIM 19:16-21

Principles

- The <u>old</u> man, although a tireless worker (it is night), is ready to put into practise, the law of hospitality.
- 2. He is careful to ascertain whether this man is worthy of hospitality. i.e. a man of God.
- 3. He provides all that is necessary his sacrifice, his 'service of reason' rejecting the offer of his guest to supply his own refreshments.

- 1. Paul says we should be "given to hospitality" (Rom 12:13), but to whom, when, and where?
- 2. Does this mean to open our homes only?
- 3. How do young people living at home (with parents in or out of the truth), act hospitably?

	truth), act hospitably?										
4.	What does	'sacrifice'	mean to you?	(cf 2 Sam	24:21-24)						
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THE MEN OF BELIAL 19:22-28

Principles

- 1. In the R.S.V. & Roth. 'certain' is ommitted from the record in verse 22. We see that this abominable practice had infected all the men of Gibeah. So it is today, as men convince themselves that this is a natural feeling. (cp God's view Rom 1:27-28)
- Lack of feeling and sensitivity in a man (the Levite), given over, only to satisfying his own desires.

Questions

- Note the marginal cross references to Gen 19 (the men of Sodom).
 Were the men of Benjamin justified in their defence of Gibeah?
- When the old man offered his daughter and the concubine of the Levite, he paralleled Lot's remark (Gen 19:8). Was this a thoughtless compromise to save their skins? Did it show the low status of women or was it a sarcastic comment, indicating his disgust of their abominable practice?

3. Did you notice the repetition of "in the morning"? (cf Judges 19:5,8,

25, 27; 20:	119)					
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CUT IN 12 PIECES 19:29-30

Principles

- It took a horrific deed to cause the Israelites to act on something, which should have been eradicated when they took their inheritance.
- They merely act on the "effect" here, not considering they were all to blame for the cause.
- 2. Blood (ties) runs thicker than right principles (i.e. water).
 Benjamin stands by and defends Gibeah. Compare also this record and
 1 Sam 11:4,7; Judg 21:8,12; 1 Sam 31:11-13.

THE GATHERING AT MIZPEH 20:1-7

Principles

- 1. There is often ecclesial unity when a brother has erred. Had this unity existed previously, the problem may not have arisen.
- 2. This gathering had all the trappings of a powerful ecclesial force. Apart from Jabesh Gilead and Benjamin (cf Judg 21:8), all the 'ecclesia' was there (v2) with their 'chiefs' or 'cornerstones' (cf Isa 28:16). It was obvious from proceedings, however, that not one had any spiritual qualifications.
- 3. The tribe amongst whom the incident occurred refuses to come.

 Benjamin obviously knew of the problem because the Levite had cut the concubine in 12 pieces and sent one to each tribe.
- 4. The assembly asked no questions of the accuser (Judg 20:12-13) and only made demands of the defender. Poor ecclesial policy. (See Prov 18:17)

1.	Where was Mizpeh and how important did Mizpeh mean? Is this significant?	this place become? What does
2.	What details had the Levite left out? they not important?	Why did he do this, and were
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THE APPEAL TO BENJAMIN 20:8-17

Principles

- 1. Again, the emphasis of unity, in verse 8 "as one man" and verse 11 "knit together", but their purpose was motivated along fleshly thinking, therefore this unified stand was not blessed by Yahweh.
- 2. All Israel found at fault:
 - v7 Sons of Israel they found no 'power with God'
 - v16 Sons of Benjamin they were lefthanded
 - v13 Sons of Belial ('worthlessness') these divided Israel
- 3. Ecclesial diplomacy (Israel) was lacking, and ecclesial obstinancy (Benjamin), was alive and well this combination caused a tragedy in Israel.

Questions

- 1. Israel sent word to all the 'tribe' (Heb. 'families') of Benjamin. (v12) What of the ecclesial leadership in this issue? How much say should the body of the ecclesia have in issues today? Why must they be guided and by whom?
- 2. Investigate the significance of right-handedness and left-handedness in scripture.

3. Verse 16 says they could not 'miss', yet in what way had they missed

the mark?	
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THE FIRST ENCOUNTER 20:18-21

THE SECOND ENCOUNTER 20:22-25

ISRAEL'S HUMBLE APPEAL 20:26-28

THE LESSON IS LEARNT

v18 The children of Israel	v23 The children of Israel	v26-28. The children of Israel & all the people		
Asked counsel of Elohim	Asked counsel of Yahweh	Asked counsel of Yahweh		
Who shall go up first	Shall I go up again to battle	Shall I go out to battle		
	Against Benjamin my brother	Against Benjamin my brother or shall I cease Wept & sat before Yahweh & fasted until even		
	Went up & wept before Yahweh until even			
		Offered burnt & peace offerings		
	YAHWEH'S ANSWERS			
vl8 Judah first	v23 Go up against him	v28 Go up for tomorrow I will deliver him into thine hand		

Questions

1. Does verse 18 and verse 26 speak of Bethel, the place (the house of God) or Shiloh, the place of the tabernacle? (cp vs27,28)

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3.	What	secured :	Israel's v	ictory o	n the 3	rd occa	sion?		
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THE BENJAMITES ARE DEFEATED 20:29-35

Principles

- Israel went back to the 'scripture' to look at a strategy based on sound spiritual wisdom. They found it in <u>Joshua 8:4</u>.
- 2. It was Yahweh's victory, as He acts decisively.

Questions

1. Could Baal-tamar (of v33 'Lord of the Palm') be the Palm of Deborah, between Bethel and Ramah? If so, is there any further significance in the 10,000 chosen men? (v34)

2.	Did He g	Yahw ave	eh de	esire into	this thei	whole r hand	esale d?	slau	ghter	of	а	tribe	in	Israel,	thoug
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RECAPITULATION - DETAILS OF THE BATTLE 20:36-48

Principles

- 1. All that live like Gibeah, will be judged like that of Gibeah. (v38) (cp Sodom Gen 19:28 & Babylon Rev 18:5,9,18 "the whole city flared up toward heaven")
- 2. Notice terms of Harvest. This is typical of the judgement that will be reaped against the enemies of the truth v43 'trode', v45 'gleaned' (cp Joel 3;3; Rev 14:18-20)
- 3. Revenge and hatred decimates the tribe of Benjamin (v48), yet the Canaanites who they should have destroyed, they did not. No thought of brotherly kindness, no extension of mercy. It was the men who were in the error, not the families.

1.	Why did	God	allow Be	enjamin t	to be	almost	wiped	out?		
2.	What is	the	signific	ance of	the 6	600 men	left (on the	rock	Rimmon?

3.		verse	48	any	parallel	to	us	in	1981	and	can	we	learn	from	this
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TEMPERS COOL - THE REMORSE OF ISRAEL 21:1-7

Principles

- 1. Don't swear rash vows (Eccl 5:4-6)
- 2. Changeable emotions reek of hypocrisy (cp Judg 20:26). This is always followed by a change of policy. (cp vs 4,5) Here they circumvented an earlier vow unto Yahweh.
- 3. Keeping an even temper is far better, than trying to solve the problems that come through hot headedness.

- 1. Who were the people blaming in verse 3 for this predicament?
- 2. Where should they have gone if they really wanted an answer to their question of verse 3?

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WIVES FROM JABESH-GILEAD 21:8-15

Principles

- 1. Compromise of integrity and justice, to make peace. The problem was caused by their own rashness.
- 2. No cry unto Yahweh they had devised their own answer a problem which they claimed Yahweh had caused! (cp v 15)

- 1. What were they looking for, when they numbered the people? (v9)
- 2. Did the 12,000 valiant men have significance?
- 3. The word 'destroy' in verse 11 means to 'devote'. What does the scripture mean, when it speaks of being devoted? How did they not keep this? (v12)

•	After four months (v13), they call peaceably unto the murderers concubine. Can you see any connection between the original errethe last?	of the or and
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WIVES FROM THE DANCERS AT SHILOH 21:16-25

Principle

1. Hypocrisy is used to clothe decisions, made contrary to God's will.

- 1. Comparing verse 17 with verse 11, where lay the hypocrisy?
- 2. Why the need for all the directions to Shiloh in verse 19?
- 3. Search Deut 12:4-8, 10-13 and find out where the feasts should have been held. Why were they at Shiloh?
- 4. What was the excuse given to the fathers of the girls? (See Roth on v22)
- 5. Who came 400 years later, out of one of these unions, devoid of spirituality?
- 6. How appropriate in the context of these 5 chapters is verse 25?&. List some of the errors and impurities that come out of these chapters.

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Othniel

Judges 3:5-11

v5-7 <u>Israel's Sin</u> - Intermarriage and compromise with the world

v5 - Israel dwells among the nations

v6 - Intermarriage between Israel and nations

v7 - Israel drawn away and serve other gods

Principles

- 1. Israel in passive role living side by side before those whom Yahweh had declared He was to destroy because of their iniquity (Exod 34:11). Lack of faith and refusal to be separate led to compromise and departure from the Truth (Psa 106:35-36).
- 2. Israel willingly and purposefully intermarried with the nations so as to be assimilated into their society and worship.
- 3. Israel departed from the one true God and became polytheists with its associated debased worship (note Exod 34:11-17, also see Rotherham's preface to Judges).

Judg 1:28 - "When Israel was strong they put the Canaanites to tribute and did not utterly drive them out".

Judg 1:32 - "But the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out".

Judg 1:34 - "And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountain: for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley".

Judg 2:3,11-12



Judg 2:2

- 1. Instead of actively destroying their enemies they "mingled" (to braid, intermix, literally to traffic by barter) with them (Psa 106:35). Compare 1 Cor 10:11-14. Do we dwell among the Canaanites in the same sense?
- 2. How can we assess our relationship with the world? (see Jn 15:19; Jas 4:4; 1 Jn 2:15-17;3:1; Jn 17:14-16) To what extent is it possible to keep ourselves separate?
- 3. The Bible represents the relationship between Israel and the Ecclesia with Yahweh as a wife to her husband. When Israel forgot Yahweh and served other gods, how did Yahweh view it? Are we in the same position? (Note: Jas 4:4; 1 Cor 10:22; see principles in Num 5:11-31)

	(Note:	Jas	4:4;	1 0	or	10:22;	see	principles	in	Num	5:11-31)		
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v8 <u>Israel's Suffering</u> - Sold to the King of Mesopotamia

Principles

Their sin becomes their punishment, as Yahweh gives them up to their own way and their enemies oppress them (Psa 106:41; 81:12; see also Rom 1:24,28). They are oppressed 8 years - which is significant as on the 8th day the firstborn was given to Yahweh (Exod 22:29-30), yet here Yahweh's firstborn forsook Him, so He forsakes them (2 Chron 15:2) and to emphasise the point, Othniel of the seed of Esau (the firstborn who rejected the birthright), who seeks to associate in the promise of the spiritual firstborn's inheritance (Judg 1:12-13), is the only one seen faithful to be sent as the deliverer.

Que	stio	ns ·
1.	How	did God sell His people into the hand of His enemies?
2.	How	can He justly punish their enemy for doing His work?
3.	How	does this principle relate to today (Rom 1:24-28)?
		
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- v9-11 <u>Israel's Deliverance</u> <u>Yahweh</u> raises up Othniel
 - v 9 Yahweh raises up Othniel
 - v10 Yahweh delivers through Othniel
 - vll Yahweh's peace reigns during Othniel's lifetime

Principles

- 1. Israel's cry is heard by Yahweh (Psa 106:44-45) and He remembers His covenant of promise to the fathers and so once again accepts His first-born. Othniel is raised to deliver Israel a Kenezite, like Caleb, who showed more faith than any in Israel (cp Lk 7:9). He previously went up fearlessly to possess his inheritance Kirjath-sepher (the city of the book) which name afterward was changed to Debir (living oracle). Thus worldly learning was replaced by the living power of God's word in Othniel (Force of Ail).
- Yahweh strengthens Othniel and Yahweh delivers the enemy into his hand. The emphasis is on Yahweh's strength manifested through one man. Note: The type of King of the North, Cushan of "double wickedness" (see Dan 11:44; Ezek 38:10-12), comes against Israel. God raises up Othniel, "the lion of God" of the tribe of Judah, to deliver Israel by the force of the Spirit of Yahweh.
- 3. The land had rest during the days of Othniel for 40 years (period of probation). Yahweh's protection afforded Israel peace, whilst they obeyed His laws. Once their leader and judge died, they forsook His commandments.

- 1. Why did Yahweh deliver Israel when they cried? Does Yahweh deal with the individual as with the nation?
- 2. How does the theme "strength from weakness" exhibit itself in v10?

3.	3. If we follow in God's principles, ca a future promise? (cp 1 Tim 4:8 wit	an we expect peace now, or is it online the 1 Cor 15:19)
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Ehud

ISRAEL'S IDOLATRY BRINGS UPON THEM THE RUTHLESS CONFEDERACY 3:12-14

Principles

- 1. Yahweh permitted the Gentiles to exercise lordship over His land and His people, when Israel "added to do the evil", forgot God and worshipped with the nations. (Judg 2:1-3)
- 2. Israel's enemies (Moab, Ammon, Amalek) "united" with a common purpose to destroy them. (Psa 83)
- 3. "Eglon" ("fat bullock") with his 10,000 lusty ("fat"), valiant men impoverish Israel. (Psa 80:12-13)
- 4. Under Eglon, Jericho, the city of Palm trees, was occupied to become a curse to Israel. (Deut 34:1-3)

1.	Because of the wickedness of Israel, Yahweh punished them harshly, but justly. Their sins brought them suffering. In what way does He deal with us today, and are we chastised if we break His covenant? (Consider Lev 26:27-28 and Rev 3:19)
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YAHWEH RAISES UP EHUD, A MAN WHO PREPARED HIMSELF FOR THE WORK 3:15-17

Principles

- 1. Ehud as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ:-
 - (a) The son of Gera (lit. "grain" the seed of the woman)
 - (b) A Benjamite (The son of my right hand) Psa 80:17
 - (c) Left-handed (withered right hand no confidence in the flesh) -Phil 3:3
 - (d) By him they sent a present to Eglon (despised because of bodily weakness) - 1 Cor 2:3 cp 2 Cor 13:4
- 2. He made preparation for the day of opportunity (in the day of small things), by means of his sharp two edged sword (Heb 4:12) which he made skilfully, and with which he brought to light the power of the truth. (Eph 6:16-17)
- 3. United in trouble, they needed to be united in time of peace, on the basis of God's word. Unity in this way, between those upholding truth is essential for the survival of the ecclesias today, when the temptation is to do that which is right in our own eyes. Ecclesial pride of independence, was condemned.

1.	Ehud girded his two edged sword under his garment, upon his right thigh. Is there any significance in this? (Consider Lev 7:32 R.V.)
2.	Ehud brought the truth to light again. How did he do this, and what lesson can we learn from it? (Consider Eph 6:13-18)
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EHUD, ANGERED BY THE IDOLATRY, RETURNS TO PUT TO DEATH ITS KING 3:18-25

Principles

- The carved images at "Gilgal", angers Ehud, to the extent that he is determined to execute his plan without delay, "to roll away" Israel's reproach. (Col 2:9-11) Consider Gilgal in relation to the history of Israel. (Josh 4:19-24; Josh 5)
- Israel had cast aside the principles of circumcision and now are back in bondage to the flesh.
- Ehud refuses to submit to the servitude of one representing the power of the flesh, that "waxed fat" at the expense of Yahweh's people. (Rom 6:12-19)
- 4. The spirit of Yahweh comes upon Ehud, the son of the right hand, who is shut up of his right hand (A.V. margin) a thing of weakness, which God makes strong for the work of deliverance. (2 Cor 12:9)
- 5. He played on Eglon's superstition and weakness, in his plan to remove the "diabolos" from power. (Heb 2:14) He left in victory. (Rom 6:11; 2 Cor 5:15,17)

Questions

- 1. What significance does Gilgal have upon Ehud, in relation to Israel's past history? Why should the quarries at Gilgal make Ehud determined to execute his plan immediately?
- 2. Was the dagger that was on his thigh connected in any way to Gilgal, and if so, how? (Consider Josh 5:2-3)

Ehud being fully persuaded that Yahweh was with him, drove the dagger

into the stomach of Eglon with such force, that he couldn't remove it.

Is there any significance in this act, and how does it have relation to our walk in the truth?

THE GATHERING OF THE FAITHFUL TO TREAD DOWN THEIR ENEMIES 3:26-30

Principles

- 1. Ehud escaped to "Seirath" (rough she goat). This female goat was offered for the sin of omission, when brought to one's knowledge (Lev 4:27-29) Israel had forgotten Yahweh and His covenant of circumcision.
- 2. His second weapon, the Shophar, (the sword having been left in the belly of Eglon) was used to invoke the help of Yahweh. It speaks of the Mediator, the leader and defender of the flock, or the 'Shepherd of Israel'. This highlights the work of the Lord Jesus Christ as the horn exalted. (1 Sam 2:1-10) The dead ram raised to life by the power of God. (Heb. 2:9-10)
- 3. Ehud gathered the faithful to "Mount Ephraim" (double fruit the typical firstborn), by a blast on the Shophar. (Psa 110:2-3; Gen 49: 10) It was used to assemble Israel on many occasions. It announced the year of Jubilee or year of release (Lev 25:9), it warned them of approaching danger (Joel 2:1), and it will announce the return of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess 4:16) and the change of this body into incorruptibility (1 Cor 15:52).
- 4. The faithful followers led by Ehud, now united, go down to cut off the fleshly oppressors of God's people, at the place of crossing, "Jordan". This represents the winding and treacherous probation of the saints, that descends and dissipates into the Dead Sea, where Ehud suffered no man to pass over. (1 Cor 15:50; Gal 5:19-21)
- 5. The Moabites are subdued (from the root, "to bend the knee" i.e. to bring into subjection) that day under the hand of Israel, and eighty years of peace results. (Isa 45:23-25)

1.	Ehud l	blew	the	Shor	har	in	Mour	nt E	Ephra	aim.	What	sig	nifi	cance	is	there	in
	this,	in 1	relat	ion	to	the	hist	tory	of	Israe	e1?						
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2.	What is important about the "fords of Jordan"? Consider not only Israel's past history, but the times of Christ himself.
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Shamgar

Judges 3:31; 5:6

Principles

- 1. "Shamgar" some suggest it signifies "Desolation Removed" which was, to some extent, the result of his courageous actions.
- 2. "The son of Anath" some commentators believe that this indicates Shamgar came from the town of Beth-Anath in Galilee (Josh 15:59). If this is so, he showed a brotherly concern for the safety of Israelites in Judah and Benjamin (the usual area of Philistine aggression). "Anath" signifies "affliction", which was widespread and severe in Shamgar's day, as we can see from Judges 5:6-8.
- 3. He "slew of the Philistines" this is the first mention of the Philistines actually being fought by Israel, and the last before Samson's great task which implies that Shamgar's faith and courage had a lasting effect for many years afterwards.
- 4. "Six hundred men" a number that speaks of the arm of flesh on which the gentile multitudes relied $6 \times 10 \times 10$. Apparently the slaying of the 600 Philistines was accomplished singlehanded, but we are not told whether they were killed in one incident or over a period of time.
- 5. "With an ox goad" an ox goad speaks of service, even if unwilling at first. Israel, who were Yahweh's ox (Hos 4:16; 10:11), had to be goaded out of its idolatry by the oppression of foreign peoples. Saul of Tarsus attempted to kick against the ox-goad of conscience (Acts 9:5). This use of what is ordinarily weak, but which becomes devastatingly effective in the hands of a man of faith, is illustrative of 1 Cor 1:27-29 and 2 Cor 12:9.
- 6. We are reminded that the Judges accomplished their deliverances, not from natural ability or strength, but "out of weakness were made strong" through faith and the grace of Yahweh.

Questions

- 1. How can our actions make lasting impressions on those in and out of the Truth?
- 2. The world trusts on the might of its own arm. What are the weapons of our warfare?

When fighting for a cause, how do we know whether we are doing God's

3. Can you define modern Philistine characteristics?

service or not?			
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Deborah & Barak

Judges ch 4 & 5

Judges 4 - CO-OPERATION IN FAITH

ISRAEL SOLD TO JABIN THE CANAANITE - SIN'S POWER PREVAILS 4:1-3

Principles

- 1. 80 years of peace had not proved of benefit to the ecclesia of God. Ehud was dead. "Ehud" means "united" or from a Hebrew root "to collect one's thoughts". Gesenius "gather thyself together i.e. attend". But Israel had not used the period of ecclesial peace for attending to God's word nor to unify on the basis of truth. They returned to the "evil" of doing that which was "right in their own eyes".
- Jabin II (cp Josh 11) had been allowed to re-form and return, this time with <u>iron</u> chariots. Iron "breaks in pieces and bruises" (Dan 2:40); such was the mighty oppression on all the government and economy of Israel.

Questions

- 1. Why aren't peaceful periods always conducive to spiritual fortification and growth?
- 2. Consider the spiritual circumstances of Yahweh selling Israel. How do the following verses draw out this principle?

Rom 1:24 "God gave them up..."

Rom 6:16-18 "...his servants ye are to whom ye obey..."

Rom 7:14 "I am carnal sold under sin..."

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3.	How	is	Haroshetl	n ("carv	ing,	cutting	") a	link	to	Ehud's	record	(cp	3:19)?
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THE CALL TO MOUNT TABOR - CALL TO SEPARATION 4:4-12

Principles

- 1. Deborah was an Ephraimite a proud tribe judged by a woman ("the weaker vessel" 1 Pet 3). There was no man, no counsellor, among the men of Ephraim (Isa 41:28). This was a reminder and a rebuke to Ephraim.
- 2. Another Deborah was likewise the nurse of Israel's children (Gen 35:8). She was buried beneath "the oak of weeping" (cp Josh 24:1,20,25-26); probably the same area in which Deborah arose a "mother in Israel". It was here that Jacob buried the household gods (Gen 35:4) and here that Israel chose new gods (Judg 5:8).
- 3. Barak and 10,000, with no weapons, gathered to Tabor (fragile) at the inspiration of a woman ("Deborah" "a bee" or "orderly motion") elements of weakness to defeat the mighty General Sisera "warlike array".
- 4. 10,000 willingly jeoparded their lives to the death and were prepared to leave their wives and children and city of refuge to place their refuge in Yahweh and "wrestle" (Naphtali) for their "dwelling" (Zebulun).
- vv8-9 Deborah and Barak were partners in faith's encounter with the enemy. Notice the principle of esteeming a brother and sister better than self. See Phil 2:3-4.
- 6. "hand of a woman" that no flesh might glory. The final victory of spirit over flesh was to be gained by the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15). Herein is a type of Christ's victory over sin and death. Sisera stands as a type of the propensities that rule in human nature. This was put to death by being bruised in the head and on account of which captivity was led captive.
- 7. Heber was their Judas but Yahweh turned his wicked counsel into victory. "Heber" (a community) set his family aside from Israel and the exceptional faith of the Kenites. He lived near the Sanctuary (Kadesh) but never sought 'refuge' in Yahweh.

- 1. What do we know of Deborah's character?
- 2. What do we learn of Barak's character (Heb 11:32)?
- 3. How do the following verses relate to this record?

 2 Cor 10:3-5 "weapons of our warfare not carnal"
 (Judg 5:8 no carnal weapons)

 Eph 6:12 "wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities...powers..."

 Eph 6:16 "...shield of faith"

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VICTORY IN DIVINE STRENGTH - FAITH IS REWARDED 4:13-17

Principles

- Sisera arrayed his forces an unparallelled military build-up, a war machine unequalled and unrivalled in history. Compare present day Soviet military machine.
- 2. Isa 54:17 "No weapon formed against thee shall prosper".
- 3. Though fleshly men's hearts failed them for fear, 10,001 men lifted up their heads because their "DAY" of deliverance had come. Judg 4:14 the day of Yahweh is a "day of battle" ordained for Divine victory. See Zech 12-14.
- 4. "Barak" (lightning) discomforted (to put into commotion) "Sisera" (warlike array). See Psalm 18:14.
- 5. "Into thine hand" It was thence up to Barak to decide Sisera's fate. Barak faithfully dispensed Yahweh's commission (Deut 7:2).

- 1. The power to subdue the influences of sin in our lives has been placed in our <u>hands</u> through the Word of God. What have we done with it? How have we used the Word to subdue sin's influence in our life? How do we personally view sin?
- How does the following Scripture relate to Judges 4:16?
 Hab 3:13 "Thou woundest the wicked...by discovering the foundation unto the neck"
 Mic 5: 6 "They shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword...in the entrances"
 Gen 22:17 "Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies"

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3.	How	did	Yahv	veh ;	go b	efore	Bara	k (4	:14)?							
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JAEL AND THE TENT PEG - 'DEVIL' DESTROYED 4:18-24

Principles

- 1. "Jael" (a wild goat) was 'sure-footed' in her approach to Sisera. She gained Sisera's complete confidence and lured him to his death. Her love for Yahweh was greater than her love for her husband. Consider her courage and faith to take a tent peg, stealthily approach the mighty warrior, and with all her might sunder the skull cap from Sisera's head by driving a nail so hard it plunged through his temples into the ground.
- 2. Sin is to be shown no mercy. Barak pursued Jabin and his army harder and harder until they were destroyed.

- 1. All sin is rebellion against Yahweh. What is our attitude to the evils of this age?
- 2. How do we spend our time?
- 3. What friends do we choose?
- 4. What criteria do we use to select our jobs? clothing? homes? husband/wife?
- 5. What is our goal now and in the future?

6.	Are we in the	'gather: time of	ing our peace	thoughts available	togethe	er' by	'attend	ling'	to	the	Word	of	God
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Judges 5 - SONG OF DEBORAH - LEAD CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE

An Epitome A glorious song of a true mother in Israel, sung in good company with Miriam, Moses, Hannah, Mary and the Lamb. It tells of the:

utter destruction of the flesh complete exaltation of Yahweh alone!

10,001 men on that day became the vehicle of Yahweh's manifestation through whom He showed wondrously "the hiding of His power" in Cherubic manifestation. On that day was revealed the hearts of many. Action not resolution was the test of those who "loved Yahweh". The song may be divided into 3 parts:

1st Strophe 5:1-11

YAHWEH'S GIFT - PRAISE FOR LONG-HAIRED LEADERS v1-3

Principles

- 1. Barak went beyond natural abilities to do something quite beyond man they went in faith (Rom 4:20-21).
- As Deborah and Barak looked down on the carnage and tangled, twisted chariots, they spontaneously burst forth into this song of praise and victory.
- 3. v2 co-operation in faith is highlighted. Here was true "unity".
- 4. Kings were to stop their mouths to listen to a woman.

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1.	How may Isaiah 52:15 apply in verse 3?
2.	Explain how the principle of a woman's subjection to a brother is not set aside in this record. Consider Eph 5:21,24; 1 Cor 11:3; 1 Tim 3: 11-12.
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FROM CAPTIVITY TO MT. SINAI 5:4-5

Principles

- Deliverance from Egypt was memorialised, never to be forgotten. (Exod 12:14) It also is typical of the deliverance of God from that day forward, particularly of the greater deliverance under the leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ. See Psa 83:9-12; Psa 68; Deut 33:1-3; Hab 3:3.
- 2. The victory is also typical of the Lord Jesus Christ's victory and exodus from sin and death. (Eph 4:8)

	exodus from sin and death. (Eph 4.0)
Que	stions
1.	Explain how this victory is typical of the Lord's victory over flesh.

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	"WAR IN THE GATES" 5:6-8
Pri	nciples
1.	The truth was threatened in the days when men walked in crooked paths.
2.	Their military strategy was typical of their spiritual condition.
Que	stions
1.	Why is Shamgar mentioned in verse 6? Could Shamgar have assisted?
2.	Make a comparison with Deborah in Genesis 35.
3.	What is the significance of the 40,000 when Barak was only commanded to call, 10,000.
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VICTORY IN THE GATE 5:9-11

Principles

- 1. Without weapons and without military training (80 years peace), Deborah extols the faith of those who offered themselves willingly.
- 2. All stratas of Israel's society, nobles, priests and common people are called to <u>consider</u> it.
- 3. It was now possible to visit the wells unmolested. They could return without hindrance to the gate - civil and religious freedom.
 Opportunity was again restored, to worship Yahweh in the spirit of humility and truth.

2nd Strophe 5:12-23

YAHWEH'S GIFT - CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE 5:12-13

Principles

- 1. See Eph 4:8-16. Yahweh had lead captivity captive. Gifts of faithful men and women were given to educate the people in Divine ways (Eph 4:15) and to restore true "unity" (Eph 4:16). Consider Eph 4:17-18 in relation to Israel.
- 2. "He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity" (Rev 13:10).

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FROM CAPTIVITY TO MT. TABOR 5:14-18

The Spirit in Deborah searches Israel for faith and faithfulness.

Principles

- There are those who responded to the call of Yahweh among the tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, Machir (Manasseh), Zebulun, Naphtali and Issachar. They could see the jeopardy the truth was in, and offered their own lives in response to Barak's call.
- 2. Verse 15 "they came willingly and swiftly", into the valley they rushed at his feet. (Comp. Bible)
- 3. Reuben made resolutions and were conscience stricken.
- Gilead once afraid they would be excluded from Israel (Josh 22:24-26), now found the Jordan a convenient boundary.
- 5. Dan preferred to pursue their worldly commitments, than come to the aid of his brethren.
- 6. Asher was a tribe very close, but they chose to visit their holiday homes on the coast, at the appropriate moment.
- 7. Zebulun & Naphtali were prepared to suffer the reproach of Christ.

 All who open their lives to such reproach for Christ's sake, shall not lose their reward. (See Matt 5:11-12; 2 Tim 2:12)

VICTORY - WICKED TRODDEN DOWN 5:19-23

- 1. Taanach and Megiddo were still Canaanite strongholds (Judg 1:27).
- 2. "From heaven was the battle fought" (Roth). See Psa 68:33, Yahweh rides in the heavens. Note also Deut 33:26-29.
- "Trodden down strength" a common figure for dominion see Deut 33:29;
 Mal 4:3. Contrast the prancings of the horse hoofs.
- 4. Meroz Gesenius "refuge", "to draw in" they drew back from participation (Heb 10:39) located about 7½ miles south of Kedesh Naphtali, if forms a contrast with this city of refuge.
- They failed to perceive the calling as being of God.

1. How did the heavens literally fight?

2.	What	is	the	significance	of	the	appearance	in	the	record	of	the	angel

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3rd Strophe 5:24-31

YAHWEH'S GIFT - JAEL - SIN'S POWER CRUSHED IN THE HEAD 5:24-27

Principles

- 1. These verses record the faith of Jael, as she with deliberation of action, destroyed the enemy of Yahweh.
- 2. In reconciling the two accounts (Judg 4:18-24 and Judg 5:24-27), Jael smote Sisera as he lay asleep. In his last death throes, he partially rose only to crash, destroyed at the feet of a woman. As it were, we have the two goats of the day of atonement, one destroyed and one (Jael = wild goat) alive, to deliver Israel from the power of sin's oppression.

SISERA'S MOTHER MOURNS, AWAITS FLESHLY GIFTS 5:28-30

<u>Principles</u>

- 1. False confidence is disappointed. Prov 10:24 "The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him, but the desire of the righteous shall be granted".
- 2. Compare 5:19 "Plunder of silver, they took not away" (Roth)
- 3. Damsel is Hebrew for "womb", indicative of the purpose for which these women were captured (Judg 5:11). Is it any wonder that Deborah should find consolation in the consternation of these people?!

FINAL CHORUS - VICTORY OVER ALL ENEMIES 5:31

Principles

- 1. Those who love Yahweh, are those who love not their lives unto the death, and who willingly offer themselves.
- 2. A.S.V. "... be like the rising of the sun in its might". The coming of the "Sun of righteousness", will illuminate a world in gross darkness. We are living in such days, which if not shortened will mean the destruction of all flesh. May the day therefore, soon dawn upon us and the hidden things of darkness be revealed and God's glory fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. (Isa 60:1-5; Psa 19:4-6)

- 1. How is this typical of the destruction of the final enemy? (1 Cor 15: 26)
- 2. In the context of this incident, who are those who love Yahweh? (See Matt 16:25; Mal 3:16)

Gideon

Judges ch 6 - 8

OPPRESSED BY MIDIAN 6:1-6

Principles

- 1. Israel again commit "the evil".
- 2. The number of the covenant 7. God delivers them into the hand of Midian for 7 years. Midian a descendant of Abraham.
- 3. Israel driven from their inheritance to unproductive tracts of land.
- 4. Israel sowed "evil" and reaped destruction but not sustenance ('preservation of life').
- 5. Israel plagued by grasshoppers as God had so plagued hard-hearted Pharaoh.
- 6. In their "paupered" condition the cycle brings them to supplicate God for deliverance.

- 1. What is "the evil" Israel did in Yahweh's sight? Are we sometimes guilty of this? How?
- 2. Find the number of either allusions or direct references to '7' in these three chapters and outline their significances.
- 3. Do you think it is significant that their oppressors were: (a) Midianites, (b) Amalekites? Discuss the significance of these races to Israel.
- 4. How complete was the devastation of the land by the eastern hordes? Are there times when the truth suffers like this today?

5.	Is there a regrasshoppers?	eason why t	the Scriptures	speak of their	multitudes as	like
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PROPHET'S MESSAGE - REASON FOR OPPRESSION 6:7-10

Principles

- 1. God answers their cry by sending a messenger ('prophet') to explain the cause of their suffering.
- It was God's will to bring them out of Egyptian bondage to bring them into the promised land. But they had disobeyed Yahweh Elohim.
- 3. It was the land of the Amorites ('mountain dwellers') here mentioned rather than the Canaanites who dwelt on the plain. Consider where Israel now found themselves.

Questions

- 1. Why did God wait until Israel cried before he answered them? Can you see an application of this for our day?
- 2. What is the significance of the prophet's message in referring to their deliverance from bondage? What bondage have we been delivered from?

5. What had Israel done to find themselves in their present situation?

- 3. Who now oppressed them and why?
- 4. Why does the prophet use the title Yahweh Elohim?

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APPEARANCE OF ANGEL - GIDEON'S COMMISSION 6:11-18

Principles

- Special angel of God's presence sent to the oak which symbolized the strength of Israel based upon the promises to Abraham (cp Gen. 12:6; 14:13).
- 2. It belonged to the one 'Yahweh supports' (Joash) and 'whose father is help' (Abiezer). Contrast Israel's present position.
- 3. Gideon ("hewer down") because of the oppression was forced to thresh wheat in the hollow rock of a winepress.
- 4. The angel addresses Gideon with a title of a mighty warrior (cp Ruth 2:1; Isa. 9:6).
- 5. Gideon addresses the angel as lord, but does not recognize him as an angel.
- 6. Gideon's answer from the angel is not recorded, it was unnecessary because Gideon understood it. See Deut. 31:16-18. His own family position contributed to 'the evil' Israel was doing, the Angel's <u>look</u> was enough to answer him.
- 7. Gideon was sent in the strength of conviction that Yahweh was with him and would repeat the miracles of Egypt.
- 8. Gideon's expression of inadequacy highlights the theme 'strength through weakness' and so he is encouraged by the promise that sustained Moses. (Exod. 3:12) and Joshua (Josh. 1:5) and ourselves (Heb. 13:5).
- 9. Gideon in v17 uses the words of Moses in Exodus, demonstrating (a) his desire to be like that faithful man and (b) his desire for the events of the Exodus to re-occur.
- 10. Gideon desired God to consume his minchah (meal offering) as a sign of its acceptance.

- 1. What is the significance of the oak mentioned in v11?
- 2. Was the angel's description of Gideon in v12 fitting when we consider he was threshing wheat in a winepress?
- What is the purpose behind Gideon's entreaty in v13?
- 4. Was Gideon's lack of qualifications (v15) sufficient reason for reluctance: Do we sometimes use similar reasons as the basis for being excused?

5.	What	is	the	purpose	behind	the	sign	Gideon	seeks?	
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THE OFFERING UPON YAHWEH SHALOM 6:19-24

Principles

- 1. Gideon's offering consisted of a goat for a burnt offering and an ephah of flour for the meal offering indeed a generous measure. Ten times the quantity of the normal offering (Lev. 6:20).
- These were placed on the upper rock and, like Elijah's offering, would be made quite sodden by the broth. (cp 1 Kings 18:33-34).
- The staff, a symbol of trustworthy strength, was used to ignite the offering indicating divine acceptance (cp Lev. 9:24; 1 Kings 18:38; Heb. 11:4).
- 4. Gideon's dismay on realizing he had been an angel, was removed when Yahweh spoke peace (Shalom) unto him. He then names his altar Yahweh Shalom.
- Its location Ophrah (' a fawn') and Abiezer ('my father is help').
 Speaks of Yahweh's help for the helpless.

- 1. Why do you think Gideon was asked to pour broth over his offering?
- 2. Why did the angel consume the offering in this way?
- 3. Need Gideon be disturbed at his having seen an angel face to face. Cp Judges 13:22-23? Do we come across angels from time to time (see Heb. 13:2)?

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THE CLEANSING OF HIS FATHER'S HOUSE 6:25-32

Principles

- 1. Before Gideon could deliver Israel from the oppressor he must first remove the cause of oppression idolatry. He must start at home.
- 2. 'The same night' v25 shows his individual sacrifice must be carried over until the whole nation is cleansed.
- 3. For 7 years Moab had oppressed them and for 7 years Israel had served 'Baal-berith' (the Lord of the Covenant). Cp Judges 8:33.
- 4. Two bullocks one for a national offering (positive) and the second a 7 year old to repudiate the 'Baal-berith' altar. The male bull and the female 'asherah' (grove) were associated with the false worship.
- 5. Gideon is instructed to act in accordance with his name "hew down" the grove.
- 6. An ordered altar of unhewn stone set up in contrast to baal's brick altars (cp Isa. 65:3).
- 7. Ten men, an aggregate number, labour to overcome spiritual darkness. They cast down 'the prince of this world' and cut off fleshly lusts.
- The sacred bull had been caused to ascend to Yahweh and peace established.
- 9. It was obviously Gideon's work as he was so opposed to Baal.
- 10. Gideon was named Jerubbaal 'baal's contestor'. The folly of idol worship was now seen.

- 1. Why does the record mention Gideon's commission to overthrow Baal occurring on the same night as his offering being accepted? Is there a lesson for us?
- 2. What is the significance in mentioning the bullock of 7 years?
- 3. Why does it mention 10 men as accompanying Gideon?

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GIDEON GATHERS HIS ARMY 6:33-35

Principles

- 1. The hordes come for their annual forage and camp at 'Jezreel' (God sows). This is appropriate, as the typical day of Jezreel was drawing nigh. (cp Hos. 1:10-11; 2:21-23).
- 2. Gideon's weakness was clothed upon (see mg) by Yahweh's spirit.
- 3. The support began with his family and spread to his tribe, Manasseh, then to Asher (who reversed their stand of 5:17) together with two of the northern tribes who had responded to Barak's call (5:18).

Questions

- 1. Is there any great significance in mentioning the place, Jezreel, where the enemy camped?
- 2. If someone we know needs help should we leave it to others?
- 3. Perhaps we have failed to support in the past, like Asher (5:17), what can we do now if the trumpet blast calls for help?

4.	What	lessons	do	we	1earn	from	Zebulon	and	Naphtali	ср	5:18	with	6:35.	
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THE SIGN OF THE FLEECE 6:36-40

Principles

- Gideon does not doubt God, but sees the weak link in the chain as himself - human strength may fail at such a crisis.
- 2. The first sign left doubts in Gideon's mind as it was not impossible for the fleece to retain a little moisture. The second sign confirmed his faith because it was an outstanding miracle.

- 1. Why does Gideon question his part in God's stated purpose?
- 2. Is there a lesson for us in this?
- 3. Is it wrong to ask a sign, or even two, from God? Why is Gideon's sign given yet when Zecharias asked a sign (Luke 1 :18-20) he was struck dumb?

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Judges 7

THE DAY OF MIDIAN

THE TEST AND SELECTION OF THE 300 7:1-8

Principles

- 1. Jerubbaal 'contends with Baal' and 'hews down' his followers.
- 2. Israel 'trembles' (Harod) before Midian.
- 3. Their enemies lay between them and their families between Tabor and Gilboa.
- 4. Too many but they were only 32,000 (v3) and the Midianites 135,000 (Judges 8;10). No human exaltation, the victory would be Yahweh's (cp Psalm 33:16; 44:1-8; Isa. 59:16).
- 5. The fearful must return from the battle (Deut. 20:8; Phil. 1:20-21).
- 6. Before the battle is commenced another class of followers are tried (v4), (or as the Septuagint puts it "purged" i.e. as gold). A tried faith was the basis of selection.
- 7. God chooses, not Gideon.
- 8. They were dangerously exposed at the well of "trembling". Those fully aware of the dangers were chosen. Their eyes would be upward they would deliver Israel and fully appreciate it to be Yahweh's victory.
- 9. 300 only 1% of original army. Many are called but few chosen. Disciplined yet aware of weakness. Cp Abraham's 318 trained servants (Gen. 14:14).
- 10. Yahweh saves by many OR BY FEW (1 Sam. 14:6; 2 Cron. 14:11). The 300 were retained Heb. 'seized' or 'fastened upon'. Chosen dedicated vessels.

- 1. Why is the name Jerubbaal used in vl?
- 2. Do you see any reason in Gideon's army assuming a position south of the enemy?

3.	What classes were excluded from Gideon's army and why? Is there a lesson for Christ's soldiers in this?
4.	Why were so few chosen?
With resident	
	THE FOUTH AND FIFTH SIGNS ACCOMPANIED BY PHURAH AND A SUPERSTITIOUS DREAM 7:9-14
Pri	nciples
1.	God's merciful provision of yet another sign to a fearful brother.
2.	vll. Roth. "Thy hands shall grow strong" i.e. Yahweh would strengthen him and show him how to conduct his campaign.
3.	The barley was the bread of the poor, Israel were so. It was also an indication of Passover and the deliverance from Pharaoh's host by the angel of God.
4.	Midian's host like the tent would be inverted by an object of weakness.
5.	Gideon, assured that the sword he wielded to 'hew down' with, was strong because Yahweh supports (Joash).
Que	stions
1.	When have we had similar feelings to Gideon's fears and reluctance?
2.	Was it significant that Gideon take Phurah with him/ Is there a lesson here for us?
3.	What are some of the significances of the barley bread inverting the Midianitish tent?
4.	What was it that strengthened Gideon when he heard it? Is there a lesson for us?
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THE SWORD OF YAHWEH AND OF GIDEON 7:15-25

Principles

- 1. The mg v15 shows Gideon now clearly saw what he must do.
- Humiliated after receiving five signs he thanks God for his mercy and tolerance.
- 3. Yahweh's deliverance of his people now effected. They must rally to the victory.
- 4. Three companies to give appearance of large army, as did Abraham (Gen. 14:15), Saul (1 Sam. 11:11) and David (2 Sam. 18:2).
- 5. 300 trumpets seem like 300 armies. Pitchers with lamps within earthern vessels containing divine light (2 Cor. 4:7).
- 6. Gideon led as Christ leads and we must follow (Isa. 55:4; 2 Cor. 4:6; Heb. 12:1-3). Divine lights is to be manifested by all.
- 7. v18 RSV, RV "For Yahweh and for Gideon". 'For Yahweh' as the giver of victory. 'For Gideon' the inspired leader of Israel (his name feared by reason of the dream).
- 8. Enemies of truth are caught not understanding the signs of the times.
- 9. Panic ensured Israel need not move. Their enemies came to them. They could stand still and see Yahweh's salvation (cp Exod. 14:13,16) on this "the day of Midian" (Isa. 9:4).
- 10. Like the future Gogian their hand was against each other (cp Exek. 38: 21), when Yahweh "called for a sword".
- 11. The rest of Israel rallies to victory.
- 12. Appeal to Ephraim to aid in the warfare of faith.
- 13. At the 'house of the fords' Beth-barah) of 'the descender' (Jordan) they took the two lesser princes (others were kings).
 - * Oreb 'a raven' unclean bird (Lev. 11 5) that picks eyes out of help-less animals.
 - <u>Zeeb</u> 'wolf' attacks the flock (defenceless sheep and lambs) with ferocity (Ezek.22:27; Jer.5:6; Zeph.3:3; John 10:12, etc). Israel's enemies.
- 14. Oreb slain on a rock (tzur) from whence came the divine fire (6:21) and Zeeb on the upper rock (Sela) where ideon placed his offering. See future application. Psa. 83:1-4, 9-18; sa. 9:4-5; 10:24-27.

- 1. What lessons do we learn from Gideon's response to divine forbearance (cp Rom.2:4 lesson for us)?
- 2. In their cry "for Yahweh and for Gideon", is there an application of this today?
- 3. Compare "the day of Midian" then and that to come?

Judges 8

FAITH VICTORIOUS DESPITE ENVY AND INDIFFERENCE BUT TRIUMPH SOURED BY THE SNARE OF ERROR

8:1-3

THE ENVY OF EPHRAIM

Principles

- 1. The proud tribe who did not respond originally but only when victory was assured. In Judges 12:1 they make the same charge to Jephthah who does unto them (12:5-6) as they did to the Midianites.
- 2. Their chiding (same word) was as Israel to God (Exod.17:2; Psa.103:9) "to wrangle".
- 3. Since it was Yahweh's victory none ought vaunt themselves.
- 4. The victory was seen in the death of the princes of flesh. cp Isa.10:26
- 5. "A soft answer turneth away wrath" (Prov.15:1). Their anger (ruach breath, wind, exhaltation) was abated.

Questions

- What will become of those who are proud and hypocritical?
- 2. Why could the men of Ephraim take pride in what they had achieved?

3.	What	do	we	learn	from	the	manner	of	Gideon's	dealings	with	his	brethren?
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THE NEUTRALS OF SUCCOTH AND PENUEL 8:4-9

<u>Principles</u>

- 1. "FAINT YET PURSUING" theme for the day. Languishing, faint and weary on the truth's service.
- The booth dwellers acted more like conspirators of this world than strangers and sojourners motivated by faith.
- He asked only assistance not active participation but they failed to trust God for fear of the present. Faithfuless generation. Would not meet any cost for the truth.

- $\frac{Zeba}{Zalmunna} = 'defence is denied'$
- This was what they had done to Israel and this would be their end (Psa. 83:11). They were kings (of greater importance than the princes of 7:25).
- 5. Their failure to support the truth (Gideon) Matt. 12:30.
- 6. Despite ecclesial disunity (though tragic if ever it happens) and failure of others to support, Yahweh will give victory to the faithful to those who endure to an end. (Matt. 24:12-14).
- 7. Gideon as the type of Christ would again 'tear' (Heb. 'thresh') (i) the wheat would be separated from the chaff. (ii) pricking thorns, those cursed and rejected (cp Matt. 25:33-46) (iii) there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Luke 13:27-30) (iv) beaten with many stripes (Luke 12:45-48) (v) briers speak of final rejection (Heb. 6:8-12).
- Penuel 'face of God'. Yet they turned their face away. God saw and he would remember and repay. To the righteous Yahweh is a strong tower (Psa. 61:3). But these ungodly were self-sufficient in their tower, disinterested in the war of faith. The tower once destroyed, demonstrated that one should only trust in Yahweh.

Questions

- 1. What should we do to help those labouring in the truth? (cp Titus 3:13).
- 2. Are there any neutrals in the warfare of faith? What becomes of those who think they are neutrals?

THE FINAL VICTORY 8:10-12

Principles

- 1. Gideon seeks total eradication of the enemy. He takes 'the caravan route' (RSV) aside from the main highway so that he might surprise the remainder. He passes through Manasseh's towns of eastern Gilead and comes when (RSV) v12 "the army was off its guard".
- 2. They fled "like whirling dust as stubble in the wind" (Psa. 83:13). Gideon continued to pursue, there was to be no rest until they "perished" (Psa.83:17) that all men acknowledge Yahweh (Psa.83:18).

Questions

When should a truce be declared with the truth's enemies? When is it "enough"?

to flow. 2. These men were "described" (NB mg 'writ'). Their names were "written in the earth" (Jer. 17:13) recorded for judgement. 3. 77 men (ish) but they were unfaithful to the covenant. The HYPOCRISY of Brethren declared! 4. He shows them Zebah and Zalmunna about whom they had "taunted" him. 5. He 'taught' them - see mg. "made them to know" - a practical and painful lesson of Moses' words (Num. 33:50-55). 6. And at Penuel he demonstrated the vanity of those who trust in the flesh (cp Psa.91:1-16). Yahweh is a sun and shield (Psa. 84:7-12). Questions 1. Why is there always an emphasis in the record of 'that night'? How does this compare with our attitude of putting off until tomorrow what can be done TODAY, while it is still called TODAY? 2. What will become of those who are unfaithful to the covenant? 3. How do these lessons demonstrate the need for trust in Yahweh?	2.	Can we ever be caught off guard? What could result? How can we be on guard?
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DESTRUCTION OF ZEBA AND ZALMUNNA 8:18-21

Principles

- 1. Zeba and Zalmunna had been preserved as an object lesson to Succoth and Penuel.
- 2. In an earlier battle Gideon's brothers, who showed the same family likeness and regal appearance had been slain by the Midianites at Tabor.
- 3. Had they respected the kingly status of his brothers he would have respected theirs.
- 4. He seeks to (1) humiliate them by having them slain by a boy, and (2) impress the lesson of the thorns on his son.
- 5. As they request they die 'honourably' at Gideon's hand.
- 6. Gideon takes the "moon crests" off the necks of their camels. (same word ornaments Isa. 3:18). The symbol of Yahweh's victory over their gods.

Questions

1.	Do y	you	think	it	was	providential	that	Gideon	's	brothers	had	not	been
	pres	serv	red?										

2.	Why did Gideon there here for			Zeba	and	Zalmunna?	What	1essons	are
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GIDEON REFUSES THE MONARCH 8:22-23

<u>Principles</u>

- 1. Because of what he had done, in a wave of popularity they sought to make him king (cp John 6:15). Such popularity is shortlived (cp v35 and John 6:66). They also offered him a dynasty.
- 2. It had not been Gideon's victory, but as he well knew it was Yahweh's victory.
- 3. Gideon declined their invitation acknowledging Yahweh's sovereignty (cp Exod. 15:18; Num. 23:21; 1 Sam. 8:7). No man was king in Israel but unfortunately many had also forgotten Yahwey and to them "THERE WAS NO KING IN ISRAEL" (Judges 21:25).

- 1. Why did Gideon decline the monarchy?
- 2. How do the events of this section compare with attitudes today?

THE SNARE OF GIDEON'S HOUSE 8:24-27

Principles

- 1. Gideon's request for the golden earrings was no doubt inspired by the fact that the golden furniture for the Tabernacle was made from Egyptian golden earrings (Exod. 35:20,23). An earring of gold is likened to an obedient ear (Prov. 25:12). He had failed to remember that the golden calf had also been made from earrings (Exod. 32:2).
- 2. Midianites and Ishmaelites are exchangeable terms (cp Gen. 37:25, 39: 1 with Gen. 37:28,36). They were a gaudy race (v26), part of whose vain attire were these earrings (Hos. 2:13).
- 3. About 9 kg of gold (approx. 300 ounces), or on todays values well over \$100,000. The wealth was of no interest to Gideon. In addition he requested their "moon crescent pendants" and the costly purple that spoke of royalty (cp Esther 8:15; John 19:2,5 with Jer. 10:9; Ezek. 27:7), and the camel collars to which wisdom is likened (Prov. 1:9). The collar is on the neck of an unclean animal (Lev. 11:4) (see also in relation to us Song of S. 4:9).
- 4. Gideon usurps the priesthood after refusing the monarchy by copying the blue garment of the High Priest which supported the breastplate of Judgement. (Exod. 28:6-30). The breastplate spoke of Divine authority and judgement. It was used in the absence of effective priesthood. (1 Sam. 23:6-9; 30:7).
- 5. Ophrah not God's choice of central worship.
- 6. Gideon's ephod soon became a "snare" (Heb. 'noose' or 'trap') to Israel. (see 1 Tim. 6:10). Gideon and his house like Hezekiah lapsed into error after great success (cp 2 Chron. 32:23-26).

- 1. Why did Gideon wish to make an ephod?
- 2. Was he right in making an ephod? Do we do things like this at times how?

3.	Why	is	idolatry	likened	to	spiritual	adultery?	Comment	on .	James	4:4.
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THE DEATH OF GIDEON 8:28-35

Principles

- Midian was subdued (Heb. 'Kana' root word for Canaanites) cp Judges 4:23, ' to bend the knee'.
- Their heads hung in shame pride abased (see Lam.2:10 and ct Psa. 24:7).
- 3. The land was at rest 40 years a period typical of God's rest (cp Jud. 3:11; 5:31; Heb. 4:9).
- 4. Alas "Baal's contender" and the hewer down gave opportunity for Baal's worship to revive. He seems as he got older to have limited his influence deliberately and not lived up to his name. His house became ensured, just as Micah's had with his ephod (cp Jud. 17:5).
- 5. A large family typical of the nations (Exod. 15:7; Deut. 32:8) speak of the sons of God given in the "rest". They were "of Gideon's body, as we are of Christ's, called" sons of Jerubbaal (Jud. 9:25) those who contend and strive with flesh and blood to overcome it (cp Heb. 2:13-16).
- 6. Gideon's many wives and concubine, that may have been a Canaanite, contributed to his undoing. Shechem Heb. 'shoulder' by implication 'burden bearer'. Gideon could not carry this burden.
- 7. The concubine's influence and Gideon's pride combine to call this troublous offspring by that which Gideon had refused. "Abimelech" my father is a king.
- 8. Gideon died in peace and prosperity but the seeds of wickedness had been sown in the new generation and the results were certain to be idolatry and bloodshed. The influence of older generations frequently dissolves with the passage of time (cp Josh. 24:31). There is then an urgent need for faithful leadership (Heb. 13:7,17; 2 Tim. 2:2).
- 9. From a position where Israel had wrongly attributed victory to Gideon (8:22) later men, those of Shechem, attributed their defence to Baal (9:46). Yahweh's deliverance again forgotten.
- 10. Yahweh "remembered him for good" (Neh. 5:19). "and what shall I say more? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon... who through faith... out of weakness was made strong (6:16), waxed valiant in fight (8:4), turned to flight the armies of the alien (7:22)" Heb. 11:32,34

- 1. What do you think of Gideon's association with his concubine? Do you think there are lessons on marriage here for young people?
- 2. Why do you think the record of Gideon ends on such a negative note? For warning?
- 3. What effect does the passage of time have on adherence to the truth? What can we do about this?
- How is Gideon throughout the record a type of Christ (particularly in the use of his two names)?
- 5. Gideon although forgotten by Israel was remembered by Yahweh for good. What must we do to be likewise remembered?

Abimelech

Judges 9 - THE DESTRUCTIVE POWER OF FLESHLY AMBITION

ABIMELECH SEEKS THE THRONE 9:1-4

Principles

- 1. "Abimelech" (Father of the king) with regal ambition went to Shechem to his mother's brethren. In so doing he disassociated himself from his father, Gideon, and his work. He associated himself with Ephraim and despised Manasseh.
- 2. He seeks elevation on the grounds of fleshly relationship and not because of merit.
- 3. He is encouraged by the Shechemites by the provision of 70 shekels of silver from the idolatrous worship of the house of Baal-berith, the ancient god of Shechem. The money he used to hire vain and worthless men to follow him.

- 1. What had Gideon's 'work' been and should it have been perpetuated?
- 2. Ephraim consistently vied for ecclesial pre-eminence. What place has ecclesial rivalry got in the service of the Truth?
- 3. On what basis is it that those in the Truth will sit on thrones and when will that be? (Consider 1 Cor 4:8)

4.	Contrast in the Tr		who	followed	Abimelech	for	hire	and	true	companionship
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GIDEON'S SONS SLA

<u>Principles</u>

- All of Gideon's sons, exce one by one upon one stone.
- 2. Abimelech was made king "b memorial" which it would s as "the oak of the soothsa

1.	Consider the historical as
	Gen 12:6; 33:19-20 and Jos
	in Israel's development?

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JOTHAM - A PARABLE, A CHALLENGE & A CURSE 9:7-21

Principles

- 1. The 'trees' with qualities that suggested skills of leadership, refused lest they should mar what they viewed as their sole purpose for existence, i.e. bearing fruit.
- When leadership is taken by those motivated by ambition and not by a
 desire for the spiritual well-being of the whole ecclesia, then tragedy
 will result.
- 3. The bramble is fruitless and dangerous, and fit only for burning beware of such.
- 4. The Shechemites were challenged to consider Gideon and his service to them and to examine their actions and motives in their dealings with him and his house.
- 5. Jotham curses Abimelech and Shechem with mutual destruction by fire if their dealings with Gideon have not been "true and sincere".

- 1. Of what significance to the work of the Truth was the fruit of the olive, fig and vine?
- 2. Does ecclesial leadership preclude the bearing of fruit?
- 3. What are the responsibilities of ecclesial leadership?

4.	What shado	significance	do	you	see	in	the	bramble's	invitation	to	"trust	in	my
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REBELLION IN SHECHEM 9:22-29

Principles

- 1. After 3 years of oppressing Israel an "evil spirit" divides Abimelech and the Shechemites. They seek to catch him and kill him.
- Disloyalty breeds fear and hatred. He had destroyed his own brothers.
 They could not trust him nor could he trust them.
- 3. No longer could they "trust in the shadow" (protection) v15 of Abimelech. They now sought it in "Gaal" (loathing) who demonstrated similar characteristics of ambition and self-aggrandisement as Abimelech had shown.
- 4. They turned the worship of Yahweh into idolatry. The praise offerings at harvest (cp Lev 19:24) went into the house of Baal-berith instead of to the Tabernacle. They turned "the grace of God into lasciviousness" (Jude 4) and desired to return to their former ways under ancient authority of Shechem.

1.	What	was	the	"evil	spira	it" God	sent	betw	een A	Abim	elect	n and	the	mer	of	She	chem
2.				danger Shech		'strong s?	g dri	nk'?	How	is	this	seen	in	the	exan	nple	of
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ABIMELECH WARNED OF SHECHEM'S TREACHERY 9:30-33

<u>Principles</u>

- 1. Even those without merit will have faithful adherents who, for whatever reason, remain loyal to their cause. Abimelech had Zebul.
- Like his master, Zebul was not to be trusted. Though he acted as a confident he was practising deceit. This is the way of the world. Avoid it.

Ques	tion

What contrast can be made between Zeb		to Gaal's	boast	(v29-30)	and
the advice Paul gives in Eph 4:26-27?	?				
Particular to the second secon	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·				***************************************

SHECHEM TAKEN AND DESTROYED 9:34-45

Principles

- 1. In a manner very much like a spoilt child, Abimelech had no concern at all for Shechem (as evidenced in his lack of action when it was enclosed by bandits v25) until someone else wanted it. In like manner the world cares not what we do until it is evident that our desires are for the things of the kingdom. The world fears that challenge to its authority and seeks to destroy it in us.
- 2. Dulled by sleep and celebrations, Gaal and the men of Shechem were defeated; so much so that Zebul was easily able to expel those who had escaped back into the city.
- 3. Abimelech's desire for revenge was not to be sated until the city was in ruins. When the people came out into the fields they were surrounded and destroyed; the city was captured, its walls broken down and it was rendered barren by being sown with salt.

1.	What significance v	was there	in Gaal'	s	standing	in	the	"entering	of	the	gate
	of the city"?										

2.	Draw comparisons and contrasts between Abimelech's treatment of Shechem and the parable of the fig tree in Luke 13:6-9.
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THE MEN OF SHECHEM DESTROYED BY FIRE 9:46-49

Principles

- 1. Note the irony of v46 when compared with v4. Those who had provided him with the impetus to pursue his ambitions by funding his slaughter of his brethren were to be destroyed along with the temple from which they had taken those funds.
- 2. Jotham's words v20 were literally fulfilled when the men of Shechem and the house of Millo were destroyed by fire.

1.	What	is	idolatı	cy?										
2.	What	sar	nctuary	is	there	in	the	false	religions	of	this	world?		
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ABIMELECH - SLAIN BY A WOMAN 9:50-55

Principles

- Abimelech's vengeance was not extinguished at the destruction of Shechem and its inhabitants. It is evident his unpopularity was widespread and the rebellion had been taken up in other centres.
- 2. "Thebez" (brightness), a short distance to the north of Shechem, was besieged and then captured with the inhabitants fleeing to the supposed safety of their 'tower'.
- 3. Abimelech was struck on the head by an upper millstone cast by a woman.
- 4. Seeking to preserve his reputation and to avoid his memory being tarnished by the epithet "a woman slew him", Abimelech had his armourbearer thrust him through with a sword (see also 1 Sam 31:4).
- 5. Israel is again leaderless "There was no king in Israel...".

Questions

- 1. How could it be said that fire came out "from the men of Shechem and from the house of Millo and devoured Abimelech" (v20)?
- What shame would there be in him dying by the hand of a woman? What significance does the "upper millstone" have?

Why was he onames to be	concerned with his remembered? (Cons	s reputation at sider Eccl 8:10	death?	Why do mer 14)	want th
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SUMMARY 9:56-57

Principles

- 1. The words of Jotham are fulfilled.
- 2. God is just in all His dealings with men.

Tola

Judges 10:1-2

Name meaning: A (red) worm

Principles

No great event in the brief mention of Tola's judgeship - or is there? Consider the enormous task that lay before him as he began to judge. Abimelech's grasp at power and military glory had left a legacy of anarchy, bitterness, bereavement and parochial jealousies. The people of Shechem had sought shelter in the temple of Baal Berith and the result was ruin. Tola's divinely appointed work was to mercifully re-establish order, justice, righteousness and peace where chaos reigned, revealing Yahweh as the true "refuge in times of trouble".

Tola set his mind to something nobler, more glorious and more demanding than "the pulling down of strongholds" - namely the elimination of apostacy and the fostering of harmony in the ecclesia. No doubt the healing of dissension after the civil war under Abimelech would require all the kindness, resolution and clear-sightedness of a Christ-like character.

His father and grandfather are named. there a significance in their names? term of disparagement (even today!). one in a humble or despised condition (Job 25:6; Isa 41:14 See its use prophetically of Christ in Psa 22:6). What a contrast (in name at least) to the vanity and pride of Abimelech! Considering his task, the other names given in v1 are of interest. As judge he had to combine severity

Can this be an idle detail or is Tola's name signifies "a worm", a In some places the term is used of with goodness and we find that while Puah means "blast of wind", Dodo means

Tola did not desert an ecclesia that was in trouble; his home in Shamir was close to the scene of Abimelech's domination.

Questions

"loving".

Many brethren and sisters are quite eager to criticize and tear down, but how many are willing to patiently "strengthen the things that remain"? What qualities are needed for the task?				
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Jair

Judges 10:3-5

Name meaning: Enlightener

Principles

To Israel's spiritual wounds was applied the balm of Gilead in the form of Jair "the enlightener".

Gilead means "heap of witness" and in referring back to the boundary mark between Jacob and Laban (Gen 31:45-53) was always a reminder of the separation that must exist between Truth and error, Israelitish and gentile ways.

Camon ("elevated"), Jair's headquarters, and Havoth-Jair ("the villages of Jair") are all in the territory of the eastern half of Manasseh. These villages are named after Jair's namesake and probable ancestor (Num 32:41; Deut 3:14) who originally captured most of Bashan from the Amorites.

Jair had so well educated his large family that he could trust each of his thirty sons to administer justice over the thirty cities of Havoth-Jair. As Josephus says of Jair: "He was a man happy in other respects also, but particularly in his children who were of a good character". Such responsible positions would require spiritual discernment and sound knowledge of the Law.

Jair's sons rode asses, which not only pointed to their exalted position but, as beasts of burden, were a reminder of Israel's role as the servant of Yahweh.

The administration of the world during the Millennium is typed here. Christ "the light of the world" will rule from Zion "beautiful for elevation" and will exalt his "seed" (Isa 53:10) to rule with him (Rev 2:26, 20:6) over various areas of the earth (Lk 19:17 here termed "cities") according as they have used their opportunities now "as obedient children".

Are we aiding, and Truth's service?	how can we	e aid, either	r our parents	or others i	in the
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Jephthah

Judges 10:17 - 12:7

"Jephthah" - Name means 'He openeth' - i.e. the womb. The Hebrew name, Jephthah, appears also as a place name, JIPHTAH (Josh 15:43). It is a shortened form of JIPTHTAHEL, a place name meaning 'E1 (God) opens (the womb)' or 'E1 (God) frees (the captive)' (Josh 19:14,27). Related is the Hebrew personal name PETHAHIAH meaning 'Yahweh has opened' (1 Chron 24:16; Ezra 10:23; Neh 9:5;11:24).

That Judges 10:17 should commence this new section can be seen by examining both chs 10 and 11. The preliminary matter of Israel's sin, of their oppression by the Ammonites, of their repentance and return to the God of their fathers, and of Yahweh's merciful acceptance of their penitence and prayer was concluded in 10:16. The history of their deliverance by Jephthah begins here in 10:17.

AMMONITE INVASION v17

- 1. What was the background to the Ammonite invasion?
- 2. Had the Ammonites encamped in Gilead before? If so, over what period of time and for what purpose?
- 3. Mizpeh or Mizpeh of Gilead. What other notable event took place here? (cf Gen 31:25,49)

	(cf (Gen 3	1:25,49)								
4.	What	does	Mizpeh	mean?	What	does	its	name	therefore	<pre>imply?</pre>		
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A LEADER NEEDED v18

Principles

The children of Israel needed a head or leader of the people then but, like spiritual Israel even of today, there is a greater need than ever before for that head, the leader, the great and mighty Prince of Israel, to emerge to redeem them from the impending Ammonite (the carnal world) invasion.

1.	Why do yo	ou think	that a	fter all	Lof	the	invasion	ns by	the .	Ammon	Ltes	in	the
	past tha	t they h	ave now	come to	the	cor	nclusion	that	they	need	a 1	.eade	r
	(a savio	ur)?											

2.			ns can v				l's att	itude?			
3.	What	is th	e Hebrev	word	for "h	nead"?					
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LEADER REJECTED 11:1-3

Principles

- 1. The chapter begins with an unfaithful woman it closes with a faithful woman.
- 2. It begins with a broken vow it closes with a fulfilled vow.
- 3. The story of how Jephthah delivered Israel not only speaks of Yahweh's mercy to His people, but also shows how He taught them a lesson by making them dependent upon one whom they had wronged.
- 4. Jephthah cannot boast in his ancestry no virtue in the flesh. He is a man of no reputation despised and rejected by his brethren.

- 1. Who are the probable ancestors of Jephthah? (cf Num 26:29,30; 1 Chr 7:14)
- 2. Do you see any relationship (type) between Jephthah being the son of a harlot and another 'mighty man of valour'?
- 3. Since Gilead (it seems) had legitimate children by his wife as well as Jephthah by an harlot, what law would be used to expel Jephthah from their home and from the inheritance of their father? (cf Deut 23)
- 4. What is a better word or words for "strange"?
- 5. Do we see a similar set of circumstances when Jesus was called a Samaritan, John 8:48?
- 6. Where is the land of Tob and what does it mean?
- 7. What does "vain" mean here and what type of men did Jephthah therefore gather around himself? Suggested reading: Story of the Bible vol 3, no 2, p27.

8.	What	does	it	mean	that	"they	went	out	with	him"?				
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AMMONITE WAR **v**4

This verse brings us back to 10:17 and reunites the two streams of narrative. In fact, the first three verses of ch 11 should chronologically appear before 10:17.

JEPHTHAH CALLED vv5-6

Principles

"The elders" - these are the same as the princes in 10:18. These men would have been Jephthah's own brothers or close relations. No Saviour is to be found in all Israel, cp Isa 59:16.

1.	Do you see	any s	imilarity	between	Jephth	ah and	the	Lord	Jesus	Christ	S
	first and	second	advent i	n relatio	on to the	heir b	rethi	en?			

1.	Do you see any similarity between Jephthah and the Lord Jesus Christ's first and second advent in relation to their brethren?
2.	Why do you think "captain" is used here first, and later in vv 8-9 he is to be their "head", and in vl1 their "head and captain"? Also compare their determinations in 10:18.
	JEPHTHAH APPOINTED vv7-11
of eve	earch this section with a view to making comparisons with other great men the Bible. Jephthah's brethren made a vow at Mizpeh that they must honour n though it is a vow they would prefer to avoid. Consider this in relation Jephthah's later vow made at the same place.
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AMMONITE NEGOTIATION vv12-28

Principles

In this section there are many nations involved in the background, including the Ammonites, the Edomites, the Moabites and the Amorites. In order to understand the background to this negotiation there can be no better way of developing a good understanding of the events referred to than to trace the history in a chronological sequence. Mark that sequence with the various Scriptural sources in the margin of your Bible. This is best done with a small map marked in your margin with the route and place names drawn in. Read a summary of the events from The Story of the Bible, Vol 3, no 2.

JEPHTHAH INSPIRED v29

- Why does Jephthah involve Yahweh with the gods of the nations in this encounter? Is the outcome to be on the basis of carnal weapons? (cp 2 Cor 10:4)
- 2. Does Yahweh determine the boundaries of nations and their inhabitants? (cp Dan 4:17; Acts 17:26-31)
- 3. What is your opinion of the marginal reference which says "Jephthah seems to have been Judge only of North-east Israel"?

4.	Cp vv29-30 where it says Does this mean Yahweh was				Jephthah.
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JEPHTHAH'S VOW MADE vv30-31

For reference compare as many translations as possible e.g. The Amplified Bible, Douay, RSV, RV (mg), Moffatt, Rotherham, New World, N.E.B. etc.

Qu	es	tio	ons

- 1. Was the vow that Jephthah made binding on him? (Cf Deut 23:23; Num 30:2; Josh 9:18-19; Lev 27:28-29; 1 Chron 11:6; Eccl 5:2-6)
- 2. In the context of the various translations you have read, should the word in v31 (AV) be "whatsoever" or "whomsoever"?
- 3. Do you think that Jephthah had human sacrifice in mind?
- 4. From where would he have developed such an idea that Yahweh would be pleased with such a vow?

	pleased with such a vow?
5.	Do you think he meant what he promised?
-	
	AMMONITE DEFEAT vv32-33
Tra	ce this victory on your map.
Que	stion
Whe	re is Aroer, Minnith and the "plain of the vineyards"?
-	

JEPHTHAH'S RETURN v34

Questions

- 1. Where else in Scripture can you find that the young maidens came out with singing and dancing to meet the warriors returning from war?
- 2. Where else in the O.T. does a similar statement occur as and she "was his only child"?

JEPHTHAH VOW PERFORMED vv35-40

Principles

Again consider as many translations as possible so as to gain the context of these verses.

v35 "Thou hast brought me very low" - literally, thou hast thoroughly bowed me down ie. with sorrow.

"I cannot go back" - a forcible illustration of the evil of rash vows.

The character of Jephthah's daughter, like that of Isaac, was such that she was prepared to be a sacrifice, that Yahweh's name might be honoured - a submissive and faithful daughter of Yahweh who would accept death rather than cause her father to break his vow. Consider Christ's attitude - "not my will but thine be done". Though Jephthah's name indicates 'fertility' he died without issue.

Proposition I:

That, because it was an outrageous sin to engage in human sacrifice, Jephthah did not sacrifice his daughter but instead committed her to a life of perpetual virginity and some form of dedicated service unto Yahweh.

Proposition II:

Nothing can be more expressive than the narrative of these verses. In fact, except for the natural horror we feel at human sacrifice, there is nothing to cast the least shade of doubt upon the fact that Jephthah's daughter was offered up as a burnt offering, in accordance with his vow. Josephus says it was neither "conformable to the law, nor acceptable to God". It was a stupid and rash vow but Jephthah also understood the consequences of breaking a vow unto Yahweh (cf again Lev 27:28-29; Eccl 5:2-6).

- 1. Why should Jephthah or any other father be grief stricken because his daughter should give her life in dedicated service unto Yahweh?
- 2. Are not all saints called upon to do that?
- 3. Where is the Scriptural warrant for a vow of perpetual virginity? (literal)

- 4. What work would she have been engaged in? (She would not have been able to work in the Tabernacle as there was no provision under the law for her to do that)
- 5. If she was given to the work of Yahweh, why would she have to remain unmarried?
- 6. Why was there any point of bewailing her virginity for two months if she was not put to death? (She could have done that for the rest of her life)
- 7. Where, in any translation, is there legitimate narrative which would give us reason to believe that Jephthah did not carry out his vow?
- 8. Where is there a law which would have relieved Jephthah from carrying out his vow?

9.	Why would there be a limit of only four days in the year when the daughters of Israel could speak with her if she was still alive? (Check most translations - the word in v40 is to lament, celebrate or mourn for her. See RSV, RV, Moffat, Rotherham, etc.)
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Judges 12

- v 1 Ephraimite dispute
- 2-3 Jephthah's answer
- 4-6 Jephthah's action
- 7 Death of Jephthah

- 1. What was the background of Ephraim which caused them to adopt this 'high and mighty' attitude?
- 2. What is the meaning of SHIBBOLETH?
- 3. What is the meaning of SIBBOLETH?
- 4. Why do you feel that Yahweh uses an example like these names to determine who shall and who shall not be spared?
- 5. What is the numerical significance of 42,000?
- 6. Do you believe that Jephthah will be in the Kingdom of God? What Scriptural reference would you use to prove your point?

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Principles from the Great Judge - Jephthah

The story of Jephthah outlines how an illegitimate son of Gilead could turn unto Yahweh and because of his great faith in Yahweh be used in the Divine scheme of things to deliver Israel from their enemies.

He was of flesh and in this state he made a dreadful and foolish vow; yet in the grief that confronted him he realised the principle that it was better not to vow than to make a vow unto Yahweh and not keep it.

He was a great man, a hero of the Truth, in that while he was oppressed on every side he laboured for the salvation of Israel and he laboured for the purity of the Truth.

Bro H.P. Mansfield in 'The Story of the Bible' beautifully summarises the final section of Jephthah's life in this way:

"The boasting of Ephraim was now at an end. When they came streaming back defeated from the field of battle to cross the Jordan, they were met by Jephthah's men who asked, "Are you an Ephraimite?' If they said 'No', they were put to a further test. They were told to say 'Shibboleth' (which means a river). The Ephraimites could not pronounce this word properly. Their accent was different to that of the Gileadites, and instead of saying Shibboleth, they said Sibboleth. This showed that they had lied to Jephthah's men, and they were punished accordingly. Thus by this simple test, the Ephraimites were shown to be liars as well as insolent and overbearing. It was but a little thing - the pronunciation of a letter - but it revealed much. Life is like that. It is in the little things that we show our true character. It is how we conduct ourselves in small matters - in our homes, or at work, or at school - that reveals our true characters. It will be upon our 'Shibboleths' that we will be judged at Christ's second coming, and if we are found to be liars, like the Ephraimites, we will suffer a similar fate. Many use this incident in relation to doctrines of religion. They ridicule the need for purity of belief, by claiming that to demand such is like the Gileadites insisting on the Ephraimites pronouncing 'Shibboleth'. But God demands purity of doctrine; He requires that we correctly pronounce the things He has set down in His book. The test that Jephthah made revealed that his enemies were lying to conceal their true identity, and the fact that they could not pronounce this letter showed them up for what they The lesson to us is, Be careful of the small things in life'.

Jephthah continued to judge Israel for a further six years, and then was laid to rest in one of the cities of Gilead, awaiting the reward that will surely be given him at the second coming of Christ."

JEPHTHAH AS A TYPE OF CHRIST

Of lowly birth - his parenthood questioned John 8:41
Hated by his brethren Luke 19:14; John 15:25
Sought to kill him - an outcast Mark 12:7; John 8:48
Went into a far country Luke 19:12
No inheritance Luke 9:58; 20:14
His vain followers 1 Cor 4:9-13
Filled with Spirit of God Isa 61:1

Israel became dependent on one whom they had wronged

Will be accepted of his brethren Rev 1:7
Raised up as captain - head Isa 55:4
Became Israel's saviour - deliverer Rom 11:26

Through their Deliverer they had victory over their enemies

Established Yahweh as the supreme God Zech 8:7,8
Nation's idols destroyed Zech 13:1-5
Established Yahweh as Judge Isa 33:20
Brings peace to his people Psa 72; Isa 9:6
Rebels purged out Ezek 20:38
Pride humbled
Fulfils his vow Psa 116:14,18

THE PRIDE OF EPHRAIM

Why was this tribe so haughty considering all other tribes to be subservient:

- 1. Chosen as firstborn Gen 48:13-14 "Ephraim" means 'Double Fruit'
- 2. Son of Joseph Great Deliverer in Egypt
- 3. Exalted as Standardbearer 'Ox' the 'Serving Worker'
- 4. Position nearest Tabernacle
- Joshua of the tribe
- 6. Given two representatives in dividing the land Num 34:17 Joshua, :24 Kemuel
- 7. Claimed extra portion of land Josh 17:14-18
- 8. Tribe placed in centre of land Shechem, Bethel, Shiloh chosen as sites for Tabernacle
- 9. Joshua and Eliezer buried in Ephraim

YET Ephraim reduced numerically when they entered the land - second smallest to Simeon.

Psalm 78:5-11 - Ephraim and EPITHET OF FAILURE.

Ibzan

Judges 12:8-10

Name meaning: Splendid

Period of judging: Seven years

Principles

Ibzan probably came, not from the Bethlehem, south of Jerusalem, which usually is explicitly termed "Bethlehem of Judah" (ch 17:7,9; Ruth 1:2; 1 Sam 17:12) or "Bethlehem Ephratah" (Mic 5:2), but from the Bethlehem in the territory of Zebulun (Josh 19:15).

The aspect of Ibzan's life which the Spirit has singled out is his concern for his family; and we may be sure that even if we neglect our responsibilities in that direction, the eyes of "the Righteous Judge" will not overlook it when He brings "every work into judgement".

We note that Ibzan had thirty sons and thirty daughters and that he was particularly careful to arrange and direct the marriage of every one of them. In other words, he decided who they were going to marry. He sent his daughters "abroad" in the sense that he chose husbands for them outside of his own household, not necessarily in far-flung portions of the land.

It is right, nay necessary, for godly parents to ascertain whether or not a young brother or sister, to whom one of their offspring may be attached, is truly a suitable partner. Their criterion being, of course, faithful devotion to the Truth.

It goes without saying that the parents' duty is to absolutely forbid and oppose marriage with the alien.

Do we have the spiritual insight to see the wisdom of Yahweh's commands concerning marriage?	
Do we have the humility and wisdom to submit to them?	
Do we have the courage to insist upon their observance?	
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Elon

Judges 12:11-12

Name meaning: Oak-grove

Period of judging: Ten years

Principles

Elon was of the same tribe (Zebulun) as his predecessor, Ibzan, living only 10km north of him.

It is interesting that Elon and Aijalon (where he was buried) are written with exactly the same letters, only the vowel points differing (see the back of Strong's Concordance).

Elon's record in Scripture is virtually a blank, but his name is "written in heaven" and his deeds, words and thoughts are remembered by God without error or omission.

We can take comfort in the fact that although <u>we</u> find not even our names in "Holy Writ" our Heavenly Father cares for us also. As Paul counselled the Hebrew brethren: "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love which ye have shewed towards His Name" (Heb 6:10).

Abdon

Judges 12:13-15

Name meaning: Slave

Period of judging: Eight years

Principles

Abdon's forty sons and thirty grandsons (as "nephews" means) were like the sons of Jair (see the notes concerning him) in that they entered into harness with their father in the judicial administration of Israel. How gratifying it must have been for Abdon to see not only his children, but his children's children, obeying and administering the laws of Yahweh.

Every Christadelphian parent in such a position can well say with the apostle John: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in Truth" (3 John:4).

Abdon's seventy helpers remind us of the seventy elders who assisted Moses, and of the efficient government of the "seventy" nations by the saints during the Millennium.

Questions Are we studiously following the instruction of our Heavenly Father that we might be prepared to fulfil the awesome responsibilities of that future Age?

Samson

TYPICAL OF NATURAL ISRAEL

Samson's failures typify the failure of the nation.

<u>Israel</u> - "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes" Judg 17:6; 21:25

Samson - "She is right in my eyes" Judg 14:3 (mg)

	THE TYPE: SAMSON		ISRAEL
1.	Nazarite from birth, separated to Divine service	Judg 13:5	Lev 20:24-26
2.	God was the Source of his amazing strength	Judg 15:14	Exod 15:13
3.	His strength inexplicable to his enemies	Judg 16:5	Micah 7:16
4.	He was invincible as long as he was faith- ful to his vow	Judg 16:9, 12,14	Deut 28:7
5.	He was constantly led astray	Judg 14:15; 16:1,4	Judg 2:17-18
6.	He lost his God-given strength when he broke his vow	Judg 16:17- 20	Lev 26:15-20
7.	His sin led to blindness - the chains of captivity	Judg 16:21	2 Kings 25:7
8.	A captive slave in the prison house	Judg 16:21	2 Chron 36: 15-21
9.	A glorious future awaits him	Heb 11:32	Rom 11:25-26

ANGELIC MESSAGE TO MANOAH'S WIFE 13:1-7

Principles

- 1. Oppression of the Philistines
- 2. Samson's mother to share Nazarite vow with her son
- 3. Samson's work defined

- 1. The Philistines were known as "the uncircumcision". Were Israel any different to them though literally circumcised? (cp Jer 9:25-26)
- 2. Samson's parents still lived in the original inheritance given to the Danites. How does this indicate their faithfulness?
- 3. Manoah's wife was barren. Was that significant?
- 4. Her coming son was to be a Nazarite. What is the significance of the three fundamental rules -
 - (1) No wine or strong drink?

	(2) (3)	No cutting	of the hair? with the uncl	ead)?	
5.				deliver Israel?	
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MESSAGE TO MANOAH 13:8-14

Principles

- Anxiety of godly parent regarding child rearing
 Studied attempt to direct information through his wife

- 1. How important is the early training of a child?
- 2. Why did Samson go wrong even when brought up in a godly house?

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THE OFFERING OF MANOAH 13:15-23

<u>Principles</u>

- 1. Gifts to God must be sacrificial in principle
- 2. Yahweh reveals Himself in sacrifice
- 3. The understanding of Manoah's wife

- 1. Why did the angel refuse at first to eat the food of Manoah?
- What was "secret" about the name of the angel?
- 3. Why a "burnt offering"?
- 4. Manoah recognized the angel of Yahweh as he ascended in the flame of the sacrifice. How does this prefigure the work of Christ?
- 5. Manoah's wife showed confidence in Yahweh by using her logic. There were three points of logic. Equate the significance to us.
 - (a) Yahweh had accepted their offering
 - (b) He had showed them the wondrous ascent of the angel

(c)	не	had	told	them	of	the	coming	birth	of	their	son	
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THE BIRTH OF SAMSON 13:24-25

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- 1. Divine activity to save Israel
- 2. The effect of God's power on Samson

- 1. What is the significance of his name?
- 2. The Spirit moved him "at times". How did his subsequent life illustrate this?
- 3. Would life in "the camp of Dan" be easy?

4.	Why	the ter	m " <u>camp</u> "	of Dan?						
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14:1 - 15:8 THE WOMAN OF TIMNATH

WEDDING PLANS 14:1-4

Principles

- The power of attraction to opposite sex
- Youthful scorn of parental advice

- 1. Which of the three avenues of temptation caused the downfall of Samson?
- Why were the Philistines particularly known as "the uncircumcised"? 2. (refer Eph 2:11-14)
- His parents' advice was sound. Why did he reject it? 3. The margin of v3 suggests a comparison between Samson and the whole nation. 4. Yahweh does not cause men to do evil to forward his purpose. How then do you explain v4?

THE RUIN OF THE LION 14:5-9

Pr	inc	:ip	1es

- 1. Yahweh's power given to men for a specific purpose
- 2. The slaying of the lion an enacted parable to warn Samson

Qu	es	t	i	01	n	s

- 1. What qualification is needed before men receive Divine assistance and power?
- Samson pondered the killing of the lion and the unusual position of the swarm of bees. What was God trying to show him?

THE WEDDING FEAST 14:10-18

Principles

- 1. The danger of fraternising with the world
- 2. Samson's misuse of God's enacted parable
- 3. The betrayal of trust by Samson's worldly friend

- 1. N.B. Samson's mother never attended the feast. Could you suggest some reason?
- 2. Samson was given 30 friends at the feast. Would they be a help to him?
- 3. Did Samson's riddle really illustrate how clever he was?
- 4. Samson the strong man had one very weak spot in his character.
 - (a) What was it?
 - (b) Is it a common or uncommon weakness?

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SAMSON SLAYS 30 MEN OF ASHKELON 14:19-20

Principles

- 1. Divine purpose is often forwarded even in the folly of men
- 2. Worldly associations always end in bitter frustration and animosity

Questions

- 1. Was Samson justified in killing 30 men of Ashkelon?
- 2. The "Spirit of Yahweh" associated with him in his attack why?
- 3. He returned to his father's house. Was this a good idea?
- 4. Samson's worldly girlfriend left him for another.
 - (a) Was this a good or a bad thing for Samson?

		Do you feel What do you		have	said	to	his	father	and	mother?
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SAMSON RETURNS TO TAKE HIS WIFE 15:1-2

Principles

- 1. Samson's failure to learn lessons
- 2. The power of desire resists the power of reason
- 3. Samson is finally frustrated

- 1. Discuss the inability of human nature to learn the lesson of bitter experience.
- 2. Samson's return to worldly friends was on account of physical attraction. Is this the best reason to form a partnership in life?

3.	Why	won't	human	desire	heed	sound	and	reasonable	advice?
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SAMSON BURNS CORNFIELDS OF PHILISTINES 15:3-6

Principles	iples
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- 1. Again the Divine purpose is forwarded even in man's failure
- 2. The gentiles suffer the just retribution of God

Questions	u	es	t	1	o	n	8
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- 1. Any significance in 300 foxes?
- 2. How serious was the destruction of the agricultural prosperity of the Philistines?

3.	Samson's think of	friend	is	destroyed	Ъу	her	own	people.	What	do	you
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THE TREACHERY OF THE MEN OF JUDAH 15:7-13

Principles

- 1. Circumstances force Samson to now oppose Philistines
- 2. In the warfare of faith Israel is divided
- 3. The treachery of brethren

- 1. Would God be pleased with Samson's opposition to the Philistines?
- 2. Were the men of Judah right in refusing to help Samson?
- 3. Why did they fear the Philistines?

4.	In -	betraying	Samson,	ot	whom	do	they	remind	you?
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SAMSON SLAYS PHILISTINES WITH JAWBONE 15:14-20

Principles

- 1. God's strength made perfect in weakness
- 2. In victory Samson learns humility

Quest	ions

- 1. Was there any significance in the choice of the weapon?
- 2. Samson immediately suffered thirst for what reason?

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SAMSON AND THE HARLOT OF GAZA 16:1-3

Principles

- 1. Bitter experience does not lessen the power of human desire
- 2. Continued association with the world leads to even lower associations
- 3. God's mercy prevails over man's depravity
- 4. His escape from Gaza an illustration of God's victory over fleshly lust

- What avenue of temptation attracted Samson to Gaza?
- 2. What does the Scripture say concerning associations with harlots?
- 3. Why would God still continue to assist with His power a man who had continued to associate with corrupt gentile women?

4.	Any significance Hebron?	in	Samson	carrying	"the	gate	of	his	enemies"	towards
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SAMSON AND DELILAH 16:4-20

16:4-14

Principles

- 1. The danger of emotional involvement with gentile partners
- 2. The danger of underestimating the power of gentile persuasion

- The record states that Samson "loved a woman". This is a new development. Discuss the comparative power of
 (a) a physical attraction

 - (b) an emotional involvement
- 2. What is the possibility of a physical attraction developing to an

	emotional involvement:
3.	Even in the Truth human nature is deceitful. What trust could we have therefore in any association with those outside the covenants?
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SAMSON BREAKS HIS VOW 16:15-20

Principles

- 1. The truth demands respect for and faithfulness to its demands
- 2. God is with those who remain faithful to their calling
- 3. The need to confide in God and not the world

Questions

- 1. How would we withstand an appeal to betray our trust when it comes from one with whom we are emotionally involved?
- 2. Why did Samson reveal his secret to one who had betrayed him 3 times previously?

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3.	Was	there	any str	ength in h	is long h	air?	•		

SAMSON IN CAPTIVITY 16:21-27

Principles

- 1. The ultimate and tragic result of continuance in sin
- 2. Bringing the Truth into disrepute by immoral behaviour
- 3. Painful experience often necessary to impress the lessons of life

Questions

- 1. Was it altogether a bad thing for Samson to lose his eyesight?
- 2. His prison house duties would have mirrored some of his past failings. What do you think he would have thought about?

3. How do you think Samson would have felt in being made sport of and as

a triumph for Dagon?

SAMSON'S HUMILITY AND ULTIMATE TRIUMPH 16:28-31

Principles

- 1. Faith develops under trial and affliction
- 2. Life's failures can turn into triumphs when lessons are learned and discipline is accepted
- 3. Samson's triumph in death a vindication of Yahweh's justice and mercy

- 1. What should be our attitude to adversity?
- 2. What could be our attitude to adversity?

۷.	what could be our attitude to adversity.
3.	Do we ever suffer unjustly?
4.	Can we relate to Samson in his weakness and his strength?
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