

## Sunday Night Message

August 5, 2018

Judges 6

Series – *Judges*

Text – Judges 6

### Introduction

Judges six begins the story of our fifth judge, Gideon. The story of Gideon is one of the more familiar stories from Judges, perhaps second only to the story of Samson. The account of Gideon and his victory over the Midianites takes up three long chapters in the Book of Judges.

The story begins with the familiar Judges pattern of God's people forsaking the Lord, and thus reaping the consequences of a strengthening enemy. This time the enemies are the Midianites and the Amalekites.

The account of Gideon is a fascinating story of a miraculous victory lead by a reluctant commander who needed God to reassure him not once, but three times that he was actually the right man for the job.

As we read through this first chapter in the Gideon saga, I want us to especially notice two particular observations that we will further develop as we come to them:

1. The first observation that I have from this chapter is that God chooses to use whom He will to perform His will. God's call is not based necessarily upon an individual's qualifications, but God does uniquely and miraculously qualify those that He calls.
2. The second observation that I have is that God went to great lengths to assure Gideon that He was, in fact, the right man for the job. Three time Gideon asked God to show Him a sign that what God was asking him to do was really God's will.

Note – Gideon was not asking God for proof of His (God's) existence:

*"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."* (Hebrews 11:6)

Nor was he asking God for proof of something that was clearly revealed in His Word.

*"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* (Romans 10:17)

He was asking God to reveal to him something that particularly involved God's will for Gideon.

### I The Midianites Rise Up Against Israel (Judges 6:1 – 6)

Again, we see the pattern of Israel getting away from the Lord, resulting in the judgment of God. This time God allows the Amalekites and the Midianites to become powerful and oppress

Israel. Notice that the oppression was so bad here that the Israelites had literally moved into hiding. (v. 2) and they were impoverished (v. 6). In their distressed state, they called upon the Lord.

The Bible says, *“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”* (Romans 10:13) Christians get themselves in trouble, but they need to realize that they can call upon God and God will help them.

## II A Prophet Rebukes Israel (Judges 6:7 – 10)

Notice here that God first sends them pain, and after they cry out to Him, He then sends them a prophet. It is plausible to assume that at least some of the Israelites received and repented of their sin that was revealed by the prophet. The preaching of the Word of God will “reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” (2 Timothy 4:2)

## III The Lord Reveals Himself to Gideon (6:11 – 24)

Notice that Gideon is fearful. He is also reluctant and feels that could not possibly be the one to deliver Israel. God does not see people as man sees people.

See 1 Samuel 16:1 – 13

Gideon asks the Angel for a sign as proof that he was actually an angel of the Lord.

Notes from Judges 2 on the Angel of the Lord:

The Angel of the Lord is believed by many to be a theophany (an appearance of God), or perhaps, a Christophany (a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ). At the very least, this Angel is a spokesman for God – God is speaking through him. We saw “the Captain of the Lord’s host” in our study of Joshua (Joshua 5:13 – 15), and in that passage we talked about some of the other pre-incarnate appearances of Christ. We also studied “the Angel of the Lord” recently in our series of messages from Zechariah. The Angel of the Lord appears throughout the Old Testament and even in the New Testament.

Notes concerning the Angel of the Lord from Bible Doctrines Notes:

Many would claim that the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament is a pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is known as a Christophany or a Theophany:

- 1.) Appearance to Hagar: Proclamation (Genesis 16:7-14)
- 2.) Appearance to Abraham: Proclamation (Genesis 18:1; 22:11-13)
- 3.) Appearance to Jacob: Proclamation (Genesis 28:13; 32:24-32; 48:16)
- 4.) Appearance to Moses: Proclamation (Exodus 3:2-6; 23:20; 33:18-23)
- 5.) Appearance as Pillar of Cloud/ Fire: Protection (Exodus 14:19-21)
- 6.) Appearance to Joshua: Proclamation (Joshua 5:13-15)
- 7.) Appearance to Balaam: Punishment (Numbers 22:22-35)
- 8.) Appearance to Gideon: Proclamation (Judges 6:11-24)
- 9.) Appearance to Manoah: Proclamation (Judges 13:2-23)

- 10.) Appearance to David: Punishment (I Chronicles 21:15-18)
- 11.) Appearance to Elijah: Proclamation (I Kings 19:5-8)
- 12.) Appearance to the Assyrian Army: Power (II Kings 19:35)
- 13.) Appearance to Isaiah: Proclamation (Isaiah 6:1-13)
- 14.) Appearance to the Three Hebrew Children: Protection (Daniel 3:25)
- 15.) Appearance to Daniel: Protection (Daniel 6:22; 7:9-14)
- 16.) Appearance to Zechariah: Protection (Zechariah 1:8-13; 2:8-11; 3:10)

The problem with this theory is The Angel of the Lord also appears in the New Testament:

*"But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."* (Matthew 1:20)

*"And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him."* (Matthew 2:13)

*"And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid."* (Luke 2:9)

See Also Acts 5:19; 8:26; 12:7; 12:23

There are two more appearances of this angel in Judges (6:11 – 18 in connection with Gideon; 13:3 – 23 in connection with Samson)

#### **IV Gideon Razes (Destroys) an Altar of Baal (6:25 – 32)**

Gideon and ten men destroy the altar of Baal, which caused the men of the city to call for Gideon's death. Gideon's father, Joash, tells them that Baal can fight for himself and if he was truly a god, he didn't need their help. Gideon's father changes his name to Jerubaal, which means Baal will plead, or Baal will contend.

#### **V The Midianites and Amalekites Get Ready for War (6:33 – 35)**

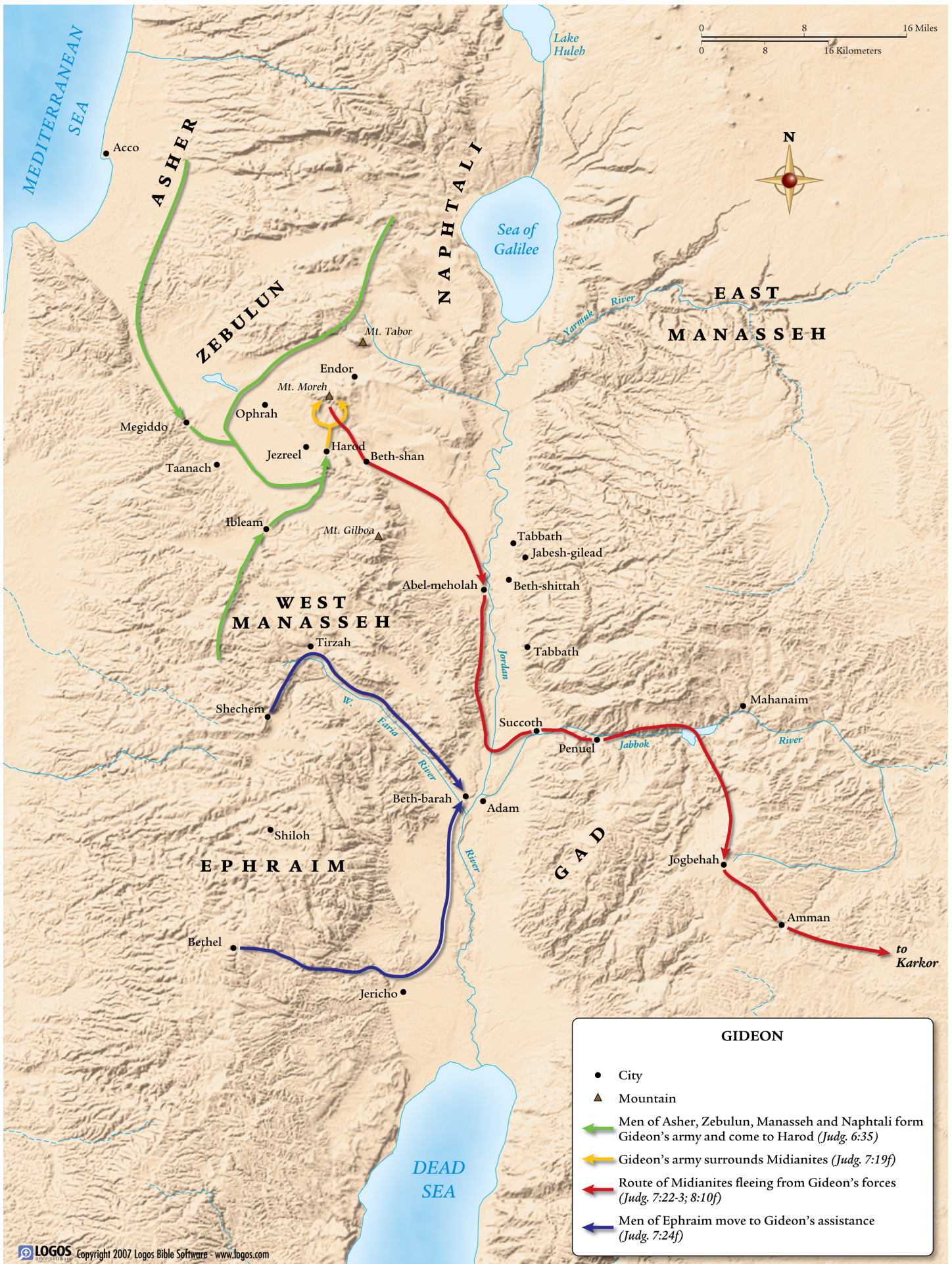
The Midianites are obviously not happy about Baal's altar being destroyed. They align themselves for war in the Valley of Jezreel. The Abiezrites were the people who dwelt in Ophrah (Judges 8:32). They stand behind Gideon and some of the other tribes of Israel are summoned, and they respond favorably.

Notice that the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon. The Spirit of the Lord did not typically enter or fill Old Testament saints, yet He often came upon them and empowered them for service. (used 6 times in Judges - also 3:10; 11:29; 14:6; 14:19; 15:14)

#### **VI Gideon Requests a Sign Through a Fleece (6:36 – 40)**

Illustration – My call to go to school in Longview, and my call to come to Galloway after graduation.





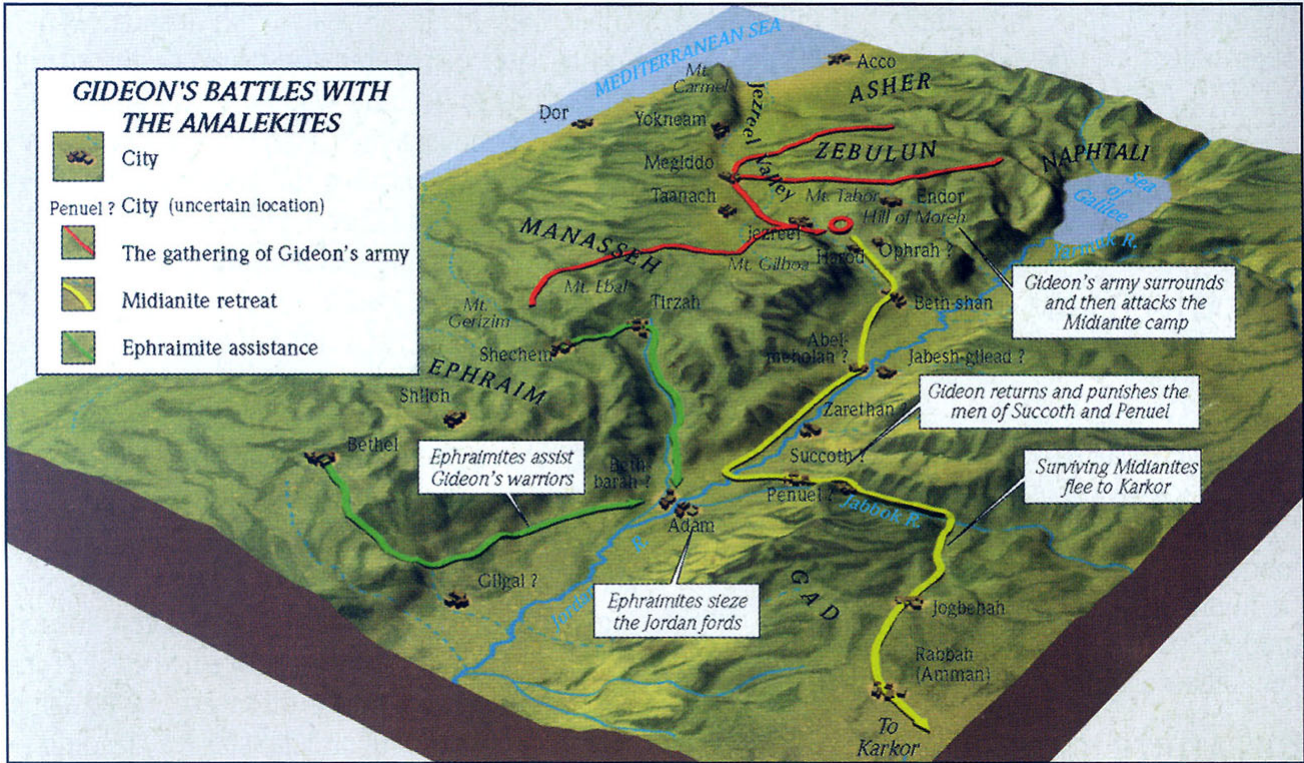
0 8 16 Miles  
0 8 16 Kilometers



**GIDEON**

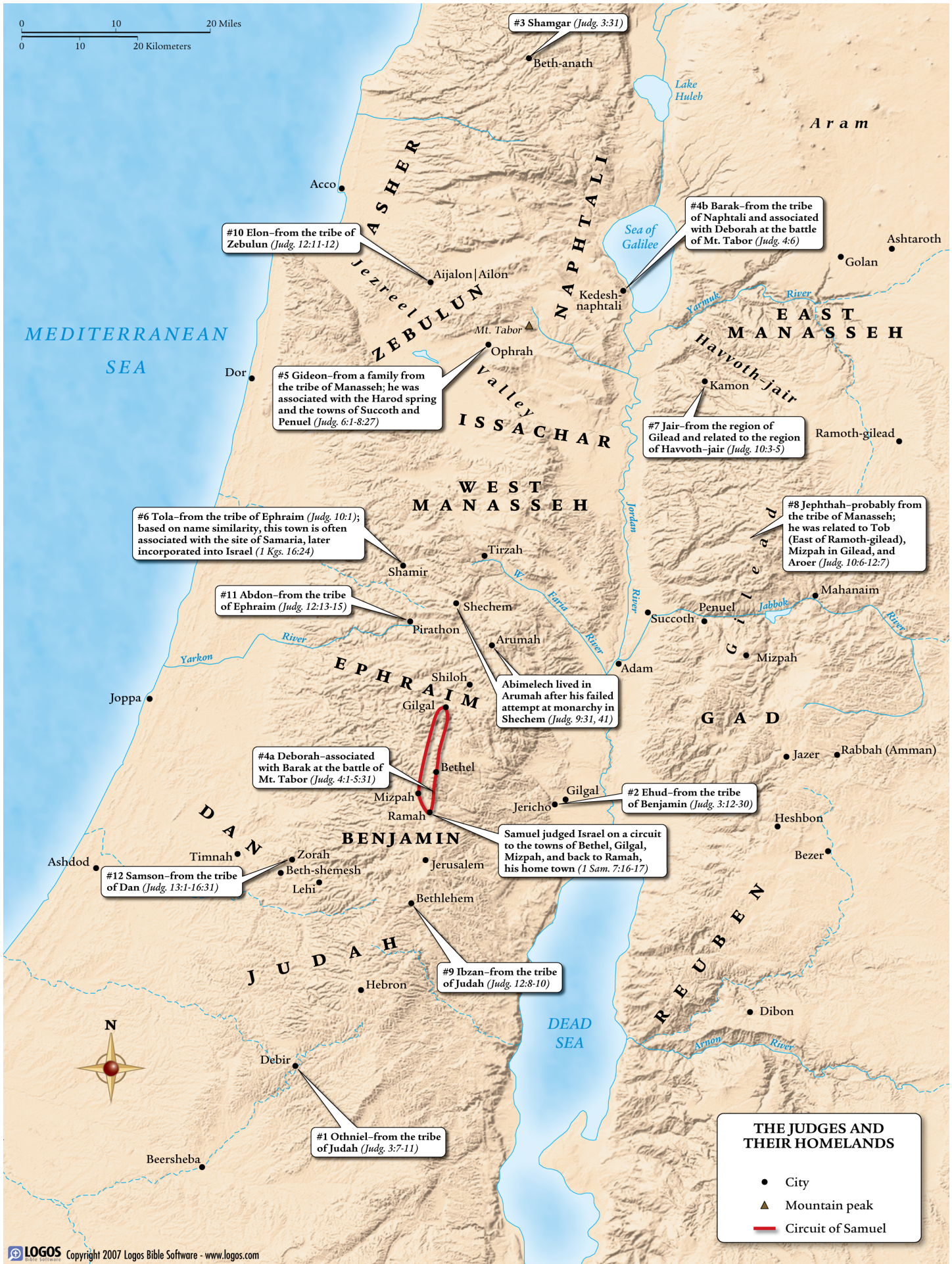
- City
- ▲ Mountain
- Men of Asher, Zebulun, Manasseh and Naphtali form Gideon's army and come to Harod (*Judg. 6:35*)
- Gideon's army surrounds Midianites (*Judg. 7:19f*)
- Route of Midianites fleeing from Gideon's forces (*Judg. 7:22-3; 8:10f*)
- Men of Ephraim move to Gideon's assistance (*Judg. 7:24f*)







0 10 20 Miles  
0 10 20 Kilometers



#3 Shamgar (Judg. 3:31)  
Beth-anath

#10 Elon—from the tribe of Zebulun (Judg. 12:11-12)  
Aijalon|Ailon

#4b Barak—from the tribe of Naphtali and associated with Deborah at the battle of Mt. Tabor (Judg. 4:6)  
Kedesh-naphtali

#5 Gideon—from a family from the tribe of Manasseh; he was associated with the Harod spring and the towns of Succoth and Penuel (Judg. 6:1-8:27)  
Ophrah

#7 Jair—from the region of Gilead and related to the region of Havvoth-jair (Judg. 10:3-5)  
Kamon

#6 Tola—from the tribe of Ephraim (Judg. 10:1); based on name similarity, this town is often associated with the site of Samaria, later incorporated into Israel (1 Kgs. 16:24)  
Shamir

#8 Jephthah—probably from the tribe of Manasseh; he was related to Tob (East of Ramoth-gilead), Mizpah in Gilead, and Aroer (Judg. 10:6-12:7)  
Mahanaim

#11 Abdon—from the tribe of Ephraim (Judg. 12:13-15)  
Pirathon

Abimelech lived in Arumah after his failed attempt at monarchy in Shechem (Judg. 9:31, 41)  
Arumah

#4a Deborah—associated with Barak at the battle of Mt. Tabor (Judg. 4:1-5:31)  
Bethel

#2 Ehud—from the tribe of Benjamin (Judg. 3:12-30)  
Jericho

Samuel judged Israel on a circuit to the towns of Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpah, and back to Ramah, his home town (1 Sam. 7:16-17)  
Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpah, Ramah

#12 Samson—from the tribe of Dan (Judg. 13:1-16:31)  
Timnah

#9 Ibzan—from the tribe of Judah (Judg. 12:8-10)  
Bethlehem

#1 Othniel—from the tribe of Judah (Judg. 3:7-11)  
Debir

**THE JUDGES AND THEIR HOMELANDS**

- City
- ▲ Mountain peak
- Circuit of Samuel