

Sunday Night Message

September 9, 2018

Judges 8

Series – *Judges*

Text – Judges 8

Introduction

In Judges six, we saw God's calling of Gideon to lead Israel against the Midianites who had been oppressing them for seven years. Though Gideon is insecure and reluctant, God assures him that he is the man that God has chosen, and the man that God will equip and bless to bring victory to Israel. God gives Gideon three assurances in chapter six:

He asks the Angel of the Lord to give him a sign (v. 17), which the Angel does by consuming with fire the sacrifice and the unleavened cakes that Gideon placed upon a rock.

He also asked God to make his fleece wet while the ground remained dry.

Finally, he asks God to keep the fleece dry while the ground around it is wet.

In chapter seven, God encourages Gideon again and assures him that Gideon is doing exactly what God wants him to do, and that God is with him. We saw in chapter seven:

The Lord Culls the Crowd (Gideon's army) from 32,000 to 300 (vs. 1 – 8)

The Lord then cheers Gideon up by causing him to overhear a conversation between two Midianites. (vs. 7 – 15)

The Lord then comes up with a strange plan involving pitchers and lamps. (vs. 16 – 22)

The last thing we see in chapter seven is Israel chasing away the Midianites. (vs. 23 – 25)

In chapter eight, we see the conclusion of the campaign against the Midianites and we learn what happens to Gideon afterwards, and what happens to Israel when Gideon is gone.

I **Gideon Placates the Ephraimites Anger (vs. 1 – 3)**

As the Midianites were escaping to the south and east, Gideon called upon Ephraim, which was located to the south of the location of the battle. They were strategically in the right spot to cut off many of the escaping Midianites, and they were able to capture and kill two of the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb.

However, the Ephraimites were upset because Gideon had not initially called them to fight. (See Judges 6:35) I am not sure of the reason that Gideon didn't call for them at the beginning of the battle, but he assures them that their role at the end of the battle was critical to Israel's success.

Don't be offended if you are not asked to do something. It may be that God is reserving you for something bigger later.

Illustrate – I wanted to teach the 4th – 6th grade class, but wasn't asked. Later, however, Pastor Wedemeyer asked me to be his youth director.

II Gideon Pursues After the Remaining Midianites (vs. 8 – 12)

The men of Succoth and Penuel both chose the wrong side. They calculated that the 15,000 left from Midian should easily conquer these 300 from Israel. They calculated against God. Always a mistake.

Always take the side of what is right, regardless of what you think the consequences may be. Sometimes it looks as if the devil's crowd is winning, but you should always side with God's people.

Note – “discomfited” means “terrified.”

III Gideon Punishes Succoth and Penuel (vs. 13 – 17)

Gideon teaches Succoth a lesson, and then he kills all of the men of Penuel. These cities reaped what they sowed. They were warned, but they made a bad decision, and God was giving them exactly what he warned them that he would give.

IV Gideon Puts an End to the Princes of Midian. (vs. 18 – 21)

These princes were brutal men who had murdered members of Gideon's family.

Notice that Jether was asked by his father to put these princes to death, but he refused.

It would have been humiliating for (and possibly more painful) for these kings to be killed by Jether, rather than Gideon. Perhaps he was afraid. Maybe, he wasn't ready. Maybe, he wasn't gifted to be a warrior.

V Gideon Produces an Ephod (vs. 22 – 27)

Gideon turns down the offer of being their king. This is the first mention of Israel desiring a king.

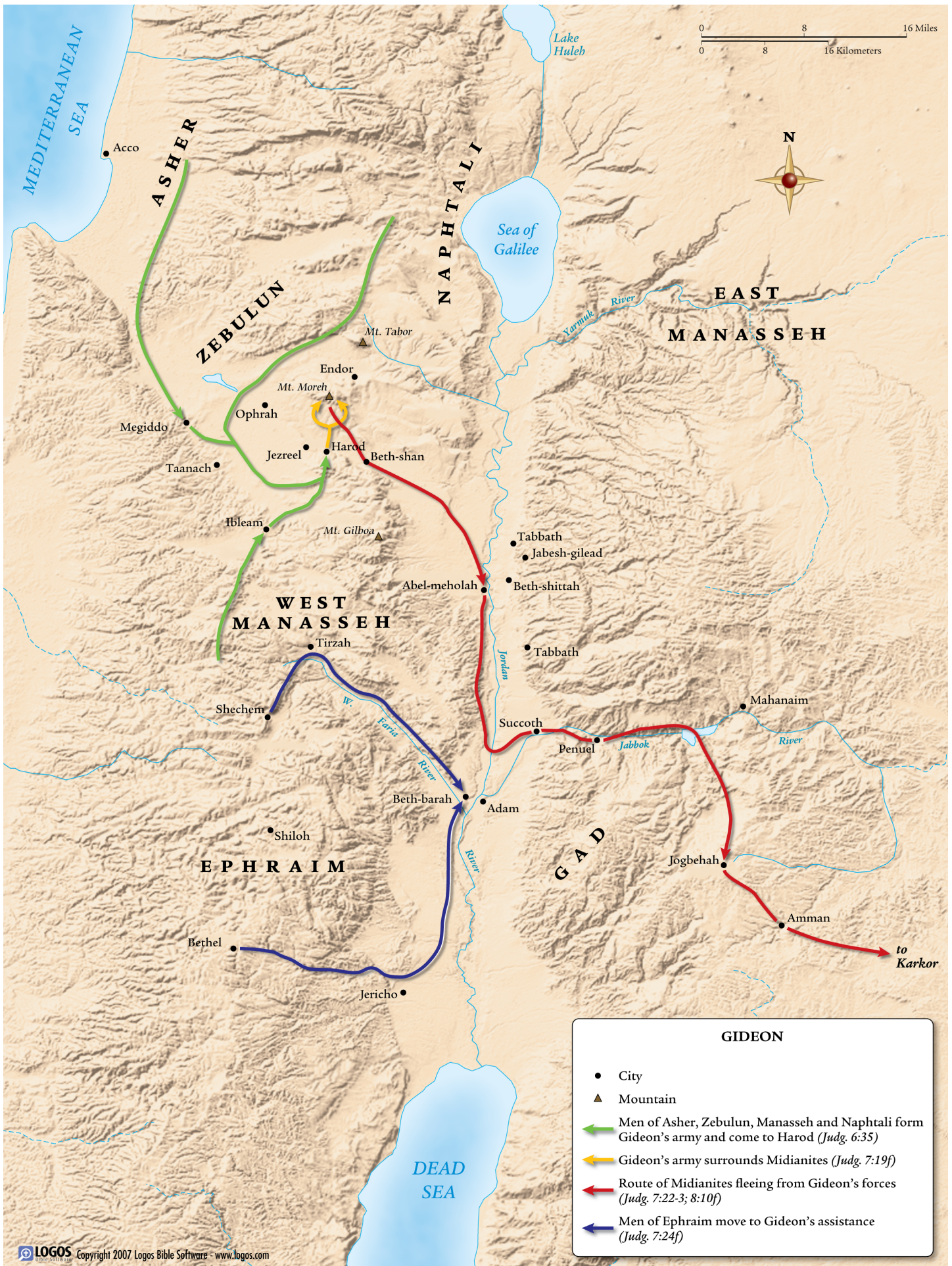
The ephod eventually became an idol that the people worshipped.

Hezekiah had the same problem with the brazen serpent. People were worshipping it, so Hezekiah destroyed it. (2 Kings 18:4)

Note – 700 shekels = 42.5 pounds.

VI Gideon Passes and the People Forget God and Gideon's Family (vs. 28 – 35)

Israel failed to continue to worship the Lord, and they also failed to appreciate Gideon.



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*)

