

## Judges 6-8 Midian & Gideon

### Chapter 6

v1-6 Sin, then seven years of suffering from the Midianites, who worked in cooperation with the Amalekites and “people of the East.”

v7-10 God sends a prophet to rebuke Israel: *You have not obeyed My voice.*

v11-24 Gideon is called to lead (Manasseh)

\* Why did Gideon believe Israel was being oppressed?

\* How was it possible for Gideon to save Israel?

\* How did Gideon know that he was receiving a message that was genuinely from God?

v25-32 Gideon is told to destroy his father’s idol; his father responds correctly

\* What does this tell of us of Gideon’s faith?

v33-40 The Midianite, Amalekite, and “people of the East” army numbered more than 120,000 (8:10).

Gideon prepares for battle by calling for help from various tribes and further confirmation from God.

God granted Gideon’s requests, but his faith was still not unshakeable (see ch 7). In Luke 16:31, what was the rich man told when he believed that witnessing a miracle was mainly what his brothers needed?

### Chapter 7

v1-8 God reduces Gideon’s army from 32,000 to 300 men. Summarize how God reduced the numbers:

v9-15a Gideon’s courage grows as God provides many infallible proofs—greater tasks require greater faith.

\* Compare Gideon’s response in verse 15 with his response in 6:23-24—what do they have in common?

v15b-25 Gideon defeats Midian; Midian army flees

\* Summarize the items Gideon’s small army took and how they used them.

### Chapter 8

v1-3 Gideon calms Ephraim’s anger (Prov. 15:1)

v4-9 Request for help from men of Succoth and Penuel rejected.

v10-17 Gideon completes the defeat of Midian (v10-12), then keeps his word to Succoth and Penuel (v13-17)

v18-21 Gideon kills the kings of Midian, who had murdered his brothers

v26 With what part of nature do we usually associate a crescent? (moon)

- Read Deuteronomy 4:19; 17:3; 2 Kings 23:5. What connection might these verses make with the “crescent ornaments”?

- Who uses the symbol of the crescent today?

v22-28 Israel’s offer; Gideon’s ephod

\* What did Israel offer Gideon?

\* What is odd about Israel’s offer?

\* What is an ephod and who usually wore an ephod?

\* Read 1 Samuel 23:6, 9-10 and discuss the use of the ephod by David and Abiathar.

Comments: We cannot know what was in Gideon's mind when he did this. Even if he was making it only as a memorial of God's deliverance (Josh. 22:10ff), it quickly was used much differently. At best, he was foolish, knowing that even his father had been deceived into worshiping Baal (6:25). At worst, he used it in connection with the altar he built (6:24) and presumptuously provided a place for imitation or substitution of the worship exclusive to the tabernacle. The bottom line is "it became a snare to Gideon and his children."

v29-35 Gideon's family and death

\* For what reasons did Israel not remember the LORD their God?

### Application Questions

1. In what way is the conversation recorded in 6:12-24 different from what people say today about God speaking directly and revealing His will to them?

2. What are some things of either personal, national, or spiritual importance that happened forty years ago that are generally not remembered today?

3. What are some current personal, national, or spiritual matters of importance which you suspect will be generally forgotten in forty years (the year 2054)?

4. Can you think of an example of a modern "Gideon's ephod" (if it was originally innocent)—meaning, something that was originally innocent but soon became