



וְהָיָה
אִם-זָרַע
יִשְׂרָאֵל-וַעֲלָה
מִדְּבַר וְעַמְלֵק וְכָבֵד-שָׂדֵם וְעָלוּ עֲלֵיו.

So it was,
whenever **Israel**
had sown,
Midianites
people of the

would come up; also **Amalekites** and the
East would come up against them.

Judges 6:3

דאָס בוך ריכטע
KALLERSON

Artwork by Douglas Kallerson

Judges 6:1-10 (I Am the Lord Your God)

At the outbreak of hostilities between Israel and Gaza in October 2023, a Jewish “rabbi” Chaim Richman, was being interviewed and said to the interviewer –

“You guys are worshiping one Jew. That’s a mistake. You should be worshiping every single one of us because we all die for your sins every single day. And that’s exactly what’s going on here. We’re all God’s firstborn, and we’re dying for your sins right now.”
Chaim Richman

Rather disgusting, but this is not unlike the attitude of the Jewish people who attacked Paul, and it has permeated their society to this day. They cannot accept that it is they who need forgiveness of sin, not only individually but as a nation.

Until one comes to Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, there is a mental disconnect between one’s state as a sinner and the infinite holiness of God. This is why people grade themselves on a bell curve when asked why they should be allowed to go to heaven. A common answer is, “Well, I’m not as bad as...” or “Well, I’m a good guy.”

Such evaluations make oneself the acceptable standard of goodness, a standard that sets the bar for God’s decision. This is what Chaim Richman has done in relation to Israel.

He has openly avowed that Israel is the standard of God’s holiness, that they alone have met it, and they are, therefore, to be worshiped as a people. All others are to be subject to them, not because of who God is in relation to them, but who they are in relation to God.

Rather, there can be only one standard of holiness: God. The incarnation of Jesus Christ means that Jesus is God come in human form. He, therefore, is the standard – the bar – by which all men will be judged. One will stand in relation to Him and be condemned or saved, and the only way to be saved is by faith that He is the offering for man’s sin.

This is the message of the Bible. We must come to God through Jesus, and when we do so, God’s infinite perfection – His righteousness, holiness, etc., is imputed to us. Without this, we are condemned already. Let us hail God, who has brought us back to Himself through Jesus!

Text Verse: *“For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a*

discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.” Hebrews 4:12, 13

The word of God, meaning the Bible, is what reveals Jesus to the world today. He is not physically here. He is not popping into people’s heads, dreams, living rooms, or churches. He has left us with His word, and He has given His Spirit to those who accept what His word proclaims.

This is the way it is. And because of that, we have the often-repeated syllogism at the Superior Word to consider –

We cannot rightly know God apart from Jesus Christ.
We cannot know rightly Jesus Christ unless we know the Bible.
Therefore, we cannot rightly know God without knowing the Bible.

Israel will find this out someday. That will be seen in the pictures presented in our passage today. Get ready! It’s all to be found in His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. As Numerous as Locusts (verses 1-6)

¹ Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord.

vayaasu b’ne Yisrael ha’ra b’ene Yehovah – “And did sons Israel the evil in eyes Yehovah.” It is now the sixth of eight times that the term “the evil” is seen in Judges. It is an offense that is done openly, almost as mocking or challenging the authority of the Lord, testing Him to see what He would do about it.

Chapter 5 recorded the Song of Deborah. To close out the chapter, it noted that the land rested for forty years. With Israel doing such evil openly and brazenly before the Lord, He will now act to discipline them and bring them back to a right relationship...

^{1 (con’t)} **So the Lord delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years,**

vayitnem Yehovah b’yad midyan sheva shanim – “And gave them, Yehovah, in hand Midian seven years.” Midian is descended from Abraham by his second wife, Keturah. It says in Genesis 25:6 that he and his brothers born to Keturah were sent eastward, away from Isaac. These descendants encompassed nomadic tribes that were wealthy and which spanned a large area.

Moses' father-in-law was from Midian. Israel warred against Midian in Numbers 31 after they had allied with Moab in an attempt to seduce them through the treachery of Balaam. Verse 3 will note their alliance with the Amalekites and other people of the east. Judges 8:24 includes them under the Ishmaelites. Thus, Midian was allied with various Arab groups in differing ways.

The name comes from *madon*, strife, or contention. That is derived from *din*, to judge. Thus, it means Strife or Place of Judgment.

As for the number seven, it signifies spiritual perfection.

² and the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel.

Rather: *va'taaz yad midyan al yisrael* – “And prevailed hand Midian over Israel.” It is a new sentence rather than a continuation of the previous one. The Lord delivered Israel into the hands of Midian. From there, Midian began to increase over Israel.

This is unlike the internal warfare of Deborah's time. Rather, it is an external foe who has come to raid and plunder the land. It is as if their hand comes crushing down upon Israel during these attacks...

^{2 (con't)} Because of the Midianites, the children of Israel made for themselves the dens, the caves, and the strongholds which *are* in the mountains.

Rather than a general “because,” it provides a specific explanation to the thought that began the verse: *mipne midyan asu lahem b'ne Yisrael ha'minharoth asher b'harim v'eth hamaroth v'eth hamtsadoth* – “From faces Midian made to them, sons Israel, the dens which in the mountains, and the caves, and the strongholds.”

Midian began to come against Israel. In response to that, places where the people could run to (from faces Midian) were constructed. Israel is on the defense against attackers.

Two new words are brought into the Bible. The first is seen only in this verse, *minharah*. It is from *nahar* which has two distinct meanings: to shine or beam and to flow or stream. It thus signifies a channel or fissure. By implication, it means a cavern or den. John Lange's commentary provides an explanation of these dens –

“At some rocky, elevated, and dry place, a shaft was sunk obliquely into the earth; and at a depth of about twenty-five fathoms, streets were run off, straight, and from six to eight paces wide, in the sides of which the dwellings were excavated. At various points these streets were extended to double their ordinary width, and the roof was pierced

with airholes, more or less numerous according to the extent of the place. These airholes are at present called, *rôsen* plural *rawâsin* (windows)."

This would then explain the word *minharah*. The air and/or light would stream into these dens. Lange continues with the commentary, saying –

"...watchmen were employed, who gave alarm signals when the enemy approached. As soon as these were given, the ploughmen and herds hurried quickly into the earth, and were secure. Commonly, says Wetzstein, these excavations had a second place of exit; and consequently, in a region whose inhabitants are liable to constant attacks from the desert (he speaks of the Hauran), are regarded as strongholds."

The second place of hiding is "the caves." That comes from *ur*, to be bare or exposed. One can think of the place in the earth being exposed, either naturally or by man, leaving a place to hide.

The third place of hiding is the second new word, *metsad*. It comes from *tsud*, to hunt. By implication, it signifies a stronghold or fort.

Everything about the verse shows oppression by the enemy and retreat by Israel. They had forsaken the Lord, and He has brought this trouble upon them.

³ So it was, whenever Israel had sown, Midianites would come up; also Amalekites and the people of the East would come up against them.

Rather, it is all singular: *v'hayah im zara Yisrael v'alah midyan va'amaleq u-b'ne qedem v'alu alav* – "And was if sown Israel, and ascended Midian, and Amalek, and sons East. And ascended against him."

Saying "if sown" instead of "when sown" gives a sense of intensity in the minds of Israel: "Should we even bother to sow?" But when someone did, the oppressor would be there to plunder the effort.

Amalek was the first of Israel's enemies after leaving Egypt. The Lord declared war upon them from generation to generation (Exodus 17).

The name is derived from the word *am*, people, and *malaq*, which means to nip or wring off the head of a bird with or without severing it from the body. Thus, they are The People Who Wring Off. They are those who are disconnected from the body and strive to disconnect the body.

The *b'ne qedem* or “sons East” would be the various people groups, including Arab tribes, Ishmaelites, etc. These words are a way of saying that anyone and everyone found Israel a source of plunder and easy pickings. It thus speaks of real desperation.

⁴ Then they would encamp against them and destroy the produce of the earth as far as Gaza,

The narrator inserts the hearer into the narrative by using the second person singular: *vayakhanu alehem vayashkhithu eth yevul ha'arets ad boakha azah* – “And encamp upon them, and destroy produce the earth until your (2nd person sg.) coming Gaza.”

The heaviness of the oppression is seen in the words as the plunderers from the east would encamp upon Israel from the east to the west and towards the southwest where Gaza lay, destroying everything Israel had brought forth in the harvest season.

Gaza is a feminine form coming from *az*, strong. It signifies Strong or Strong Place. So heavy was their oppression that they destroyed it all...

⁴ (con't) **and leave no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep nor ox nor donkey.**

v'lo yashiru mikhyah b'Yisrael va'seh va'shor va'khamor – “And no remain sustenance in Israel: and sheep, and ox, and donkey.” This will be explained in the next verse. For now, it is as if these raiders came in, set up camp, and waited for the produce to come. When it was ready, they would take it for themselves. But more, because of their presence, there wasn't even sustenance left for any type of animal...

⁵ For they would come up with their livestock and their tents,

ki hem u-miqnehem yaalu v'aholehem – “For they, and their livestock ascend, and their tents.” The invaders are contrasted to Israel, their livestock are contrasted to Israel's, and their tents – being easy open-air dwellings – are contrasted to the oppressive dens, caves, and strongholds in which Israel hid. They are words of absolute superiority and dominance. They were...

⁵ (con't) **coming in as numerous as locusts;**

yavou k'de arbeh la'rov – “coming according to abundance locust to the multitude.” These words are given to explain the complete lack Israel faced. This is then expressed again for greater effect...

⁵ (con't) **both they and their camels were without number;**

v'lahem v'ligmalehem ein mispar – “And to them, and to their camels, not number.” Just as the locust that moves around, making it impossible to count them, so was the hoard of invaders alighting upon Israel.

Noting camels is intended to show another level of their absolute subjugation of the land. Camels were not found in abundance in Canaan. They were brought in by the invaders, and they demonstrate both ease of travel and ability to load and carry away plunder.

As for the *gamal*, or camel, that comes from the verb *gamal*, to deal fully or adequately with. Thus, it can mean to wean, repay, require, reward, ripen, and so forth. As such, it refers to the treatment, either well or ill, that a person will receive.

As such, the invaders would pick up and encamp from place to place, eating up or loading up everything as they went...

⁵ (con't) **and they would enter the land to destroy it.**

vayavou ba'arets l'shakhatah – “And came in the land to destroy her.” The words of this verse are well reflected later in Joel 1 when referring to the Day of the Lord. It speaks of invaders coming into the land of Israel as locusts, destroying everything in their path. The words are striking and magnificent, being summed up with the words –

“What the chewing locust left, the swarming locust has eaten;
What the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten;
And what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten.” Joel 1:4

To get a better sense of the level of devastation, take time to read Joel 1. It is probably not unlike what is being described here in Judges. Thus...

⁶ **So Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites,**

Other than Midianite being singular, the translation is fine. The word *dalal* is used. It comes from a root meaning to slacken or be feeble. It gives the sense of the people being so thin and gaunt that they could hardly lift their arms. As such...

⁶ (con't) **and the children of Israel cried out to the Lord.**

It is the anticipated result from the words of verse 1 –

v.1 – “And gave them, Yehovah, in hand Midian seven years.”
v.6 – “And cried out, sons Israel, unto Yehovah.”

The Lord's hand of discipline, through the subjugation of Israel by Midian, resulted in the necessary response to the corrective measures. Instead of crying out to the gods of the land, doing what was despicable according to the law, and failing to honor the Lord as expected, Israel again cries out to Yehovah...

*Years of trouble have come upon us
Misfortune that is of our own making
We rejected God's provision in Jesus
When it was always there for the taking*

*We are without sustenance all day
We have nothing but want and lack
We hear everyone of Israel now say:
"If we could only take it all back"*

*We are impoverished in the Place of Judgment
We have only one path left that we can go
Every other avenue has been spent
The Lord Jesus alone can take away our woe*

II. I Am The Lord Your God (verses 7-11)

⁷ And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried out to the Lord because of the Midianites,

v'hi ki zaaqu b'ne Yisrael el Yehovah al odoth midyan – "And was, when cried out sons Israel unto Yehovah upon turnings Midian." The word *odoth* is a plural noun with an almost poetic connotation. It comes from the same as the word *ud*, or firebrand.

Just as one uses a firebrand to turn the coals to keep them hot and burning, so were the "turnings" of Midian. The things they did stirred up the life of Israel. Hence, one might say events, happenings, or occasions. It was because of their actions, leading to these great woes, that Israel cried out to the Lord. Again, look at the way the Lord arranged this:

v.1 – "And gave them, Yehovah, in hand Midian seven years."

v.7 – "And cried out, sons Israel, unto Yehovah ... upon turnings Midian."

Notice that it doesn't say Israel repented of their sins. They simply cried out to the Lord. It can be assumed that at this point, they no longer even knew what the law demanded.

They had turned from Him and gone about their own ways during the forty years of peace after the battle against Sisera. Because of this, the Lord sent trouble upon them. But rather than acknowledging their wrongdoing, they simply cry out to the Lord. Because of these things, it was...

⁸ that the Lord sent a prophet to the children of Israel,

It is amazing how many translations brazenly omit a key word found in this clause. See if you can find it before I get to the explanation: *vayishlakh Yehovah ish navi el b'ne Yisrael*— “And sent Yehovah man, prophet, unto sons Israel.”

The majority of translations skip the word man, as if it was an irrelevant thing. The word *navi*, or prophet, is masculine. Therefore, the word may have been considered superfluous by the translators. However, it is the same addition as was stated of Deborah in Judges 4:4, “And Deborah, woman, prophetess, wife (or woman) Lapidoth.”

This is the first time any person is said to be a prophet or prophetess, since then. There is meaning that is being conveyed that will never be understood without a proper translation of the words. And yet, in both the account of Deborah and this one now, the identifiers, woman and man, are simply ignored by most translators.

Equally damaging as leaving out words in the translation are the writings of the Jews, stating that the prophet was Phineas. That may be true, and it is fine to speculate but to state it as a fact when the Bible leaves it out can only lead to unclear analysis of the story. Once something like that is introduced, it is what the mind will focus on rather than the story with its necessary typology.

It was seen that Deborah prefigured the New Testament. What is the progression of the stories so far? Do they form an understandable sequence of events? If so, what would be the logical progression of events concerning Israel during the church age?

The account now being presented is explaining the ongoing redemptive narrative with key words being presented to keep us on the right track. Understanding this, the words of this man, a prophet, are next conveyed to Israel at the end of the seven years of oppression by Midian...

^{8 (con't)} who said to them, “Thus says the Lord God of Israel:

vayomer lahem koh amar Yehovah Elohe Yisrael – “and says to them, ‘Thus said Yehovah God Israel.’” The prophet is conveying a proclamation of the Lord previously spoken to

Israel. They had been spoken to, and now they are being reminded of what was said to them. The proclamation is...

^{8 (con't)} **I brought you up from Egypt and brought you out of the house of bondage;**

It bears emphasis: *anokhi heeleti ethkhem mimitsrayim va'otsi ethkhem mibeth avadim*—“I ascended you from Egypt and you from house slaves.” The idea of being ascended from Egypt has been stated repeatedly since early in Exodus. Egypt pictures life under the bondage of sin. The Lord ascended Israel from that, exalting them to life under the law.

However, the law is its own type of bondage to sin. As Paul says, “for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.” (Romans 3:20). This is why Paul specifically calls the law bondage several times in Galatians. Despite this, with the proper observance of the allowances given under the law, sin was atoned for.

The law was a necessary step in the process of redemption. It was given to Israel to teach them, and the world at large, a lesson concerning their need for God’s provision found in Jesus, the Messiah (Galatians 3:24).

As for ascending Israel from Egypt and the house of bondage, the prophet continues with the words of the Lord...

⁹ **and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians**

More literally: *va'atsil etkhem miyad mitsrayim* – “I plucked you from hand Egypt.” It is as if the Lord literally grabbed Israel and tore them right out of the grasping hand of Egypt. Think of life in sin. One is a slave to sin in a world full of sin. But the Lord, through the work of Christ, literally plucks us out of that. And more...

^{9 (con't)} **and out of the hand of all who oppressed you,**

u-miyad kal lokhatsekhem – “and from hand all your oppressors.” Again, think of the state of people under sin. You are not just bound in sin, but you are tightly in the grasp of the oppressions of sin – drugs, drink, porn, idolatry, etc.

These things grasp us, and they hold fast to us. And yet, through the power of the Lord, one can be completely plucked out of that kind of life. This is what He had done for Israel. And more, the Lord’s words through the prophet continue...

^{9 (con't)} **and drove them out before you and gave you their land.**

va'agaresh otham mipnekhem va'etnah lakhem eth artsam – “And cast out them from your faces and gave to you their land.” It speaks of sanctification. First, the Lord saves people from the penalty of sin, Egypt, providing salvation. Then, He removes from them the power of sin, providing sanctification.

Being given the land of Canaan pictures salvation, while casting out the occupiers pictures the process of sanctification. These things are being reminded to Israel in their actual history. But the things picture other things. The Lord did these things for them...

¹⁰ **Also I said to you, “I *am* the Lord your God;**

v'omrah lakhem ani Yehovah elohekhem – “And saying to you, ‘I Yehovah your God.’” The appeal is made based first upon the revelation of Himself as Yehovah, the Lord, as seen in Exodus 3:13-15 –

“Then Moses said to God, ‘Indeed, *when* I come to the children of Israel and say to them, “The God of your fathers has sent me to you,” and they say to me, “What *is* His name?” what shall I say to them?’”

¹⁴ And God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM.’ And He said, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, “I AM has sent me to you.”’ ¹⁵ Moreover God said to Moses, ‘Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: “The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This *is* My name forever, and this *is* My memorial to all generations.’”’

The appeal is next based upon the covenant made at Sinai that the people had agreed to, saying “your God” –

¹ “And God spoke all these words, saying:

² ‘I *am* the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.’” Exodus 20:1, 2

It is Yehovah, Israel’s God, that then said...

¹⁰ (con’t) **do not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell.”**

lo tiru eth elohe ha'emori asher atem yovoshvim b'artsam – “No fear gods the Amorite which you dwelling in their land.” The words “dwelling in their land” are not speaking of the Amorite, which is singular. Rather, it is speaking of the gods of the Amorite who are feared by the Amorite.

The Lord is telling them to not fear those gods, as if they had any power, authority, or ability. They do not. Thus, it is ridiculous that they would be feared by Israel. Of this word *yare*, or fear, John Lange observes...

“The words put into the mouth of the unknown preacher, reproduce the old penitential discourse. In various but similar forms that discourse ever reappears; for it rests on Mosaic warnings and declarations whose truth all the fortunes of Israel confirm. For the first time, however, the verb יָרָא, to fear, elsewhere used only with reference to God, is here connected with heathen gods; but only to point out the fact that disobedient Israel has yielded to idol gods the reverence which it owed to the eternal God. When such rebukes are gladly heard by the people, deliverance is near at hand. When they believe themselves to have deserved such admonitions and punishments, they again believe God. In accepting the judge, we secure the deliverer. Such is the historical experience of all ages.” John Lange

Stated more briefly, it never actually says, “Do not fear their gods” prior to this. Rather, that is implied in the multiple instances where Israel was told to fear the Lord, thus implying not serving the gods of Canaan. They were to ignore them, destroy the idols that represent them, etc. Israel ignorantly or willfully snubbed this, even though it was implicit. As for the name, Amorite means Renown.

^{10 (fin)} **But you have not obeyed My voice.”**

v’lo sh’matem b’qoli – “And no heard in my voice.” The meaning of “hear” is to both listen and to obey. That is no different than the army sergeant saying to the private, “You didn’t listen to what I said.” He couldn’t help but hear, but he didn’t act on what was said to him. Hence, he is on KP duty for the next week.

Israel failed to hear, and they went on an extremely long term of serving other gods, culminating in seven years of absolute leanness, oppression, and deprivation in order to bring them back to the Lord.

That ending will be described as the verses in the next section are entered upon. The hero who will act on behalf of the Lord is named Gideon.

*I AM the Lord Your God, the God of Israel
I brought you up from the land of Egypt
You were sold out to sin, a sad story to tell
Of any hope, your chances had been stripped*

*I delivered you from the hand of Egypt
And from the hand of every oppressor
But from Me, you gladly skipped
Leaving your God for everything lesser*

*You did not heed My voice; you left Me behind
You did not pay heed to My word
You made the choice, one cold and unkind
When You rejected Jesus Christ your Lord*

III. The Ending of a Nightmare

The passage today has been an introductory note into what lies ahead with the calling and leadership of Gideon. This is what the Bible does from time to time. It opens a new thought with a short introduction or maybe a summary of something, and then it expands on it.

In this case, it speaks of the past and continues to the present of the narrative. Israel is said to have done “the evil” in the eyes of Yehovah. To see the progression of what has happened, a review of the earlier passages will help.

First was Othniel, who battled Cushan-Rishathaim. That was a picture of the Gentiles carrying the message of Christ until the House of Israel and the House of Judah would accept that message. That, in itself, was also a type of introduction to what lay ahead. It gave a snapshot of what would occur after the work of Christ, even before the work was detailed.

Next came the story of Ehud giving it to Eglon right where it hurts. As was noted in that sermon –

“:...it is a picture of the complete atonement of transgressions of the law. It represents the full, final, finished, and forever, satisfaction of the law in Christ’s work. The sword went in, the fat covered it over, and he did not draw the sword out of the belly. It is finished.”

It was further noted that this work was fully sufficient to save both Jews and Gentiles. Shamgar was then introduced giving a brief but complementary display of how to appropriate the work of Christ.

After that was Judges 4 and Deborah – the New Testament. The passage referred to the Dispensation of Grace which is represented by the Gentile-led church. As was noted during that sermon –

“That will come to its completion someday at the rapture, another noted mystery of Christ, when it will be too late for the wise of the world. Destruction will come on a global scale and a new dispensation will be ushered in after that time. ... God is working through the church to accomplish the redemptive plans set forth during this dispensation. He is revealing His nature, His goodness, His sole path to reconciliation, His wisdom, and so much more through the church.”

Judges 5, the Song of Deborah, was a rejoicing over the events of Judges 4. They were placed into a poetic narrative, gloriously revealing the obvious pleasure the Lord takes in His church. But, as noted, the church will end at the rapture.

What comes after that in the redemptive narrative? Yes, you, in the third row... Why yes, the tribulation period. For an extra bonus, can you tell how long that will be? Yes, very good... Seven years.

That is what is referred to in verse 1 of today’s passage. Israel, who has rejected the Lord, will face seven years of Strife in the Place of Judgment (Midian). It is a time when the world will prevail against Israel.

It is also a time when the whole world, not just Israel, will hide “themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains” (Revelation 6:15). The terminology in Judges anticipates the state of things in Revelation.

Mentioning Amalek means that there will be those who continue to wring people off from what is right. They will strive to disconnect Jews from their true Head, just as Jesus warned –

“For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵ See, I have told you beforehand.”

-Matthew 24:24

Indeed, He told them. Who will listen? As for the *bene qedem*, or “sons East,” the word *qedem* means not only east, but beforetime. That which has already been.” It seems logical that this would be referring to those who continue to cling to the law, annulled in the past through Christ’s work, simply because they cannot let go of it. That is carefully detailed in Hebrews.

Destroying the produce as far as Gaza (Strong Place), means that there will be nothing left of value in all of Israel every false hope will be shown for what it is and there will eventually be no place left to turn. That is explained in mentioning that these oppressors will be as numerous as locusts.

The symbolism of the Day of the Lord, as presented in Joel, which refers to the tribulation of the end times, is quite clear. Likewise, mentioning the camel then fits as well. There will be a sufficient treatment of what the nation deserves laid upon Israel.

For example, this is the general thought of what the word means –

“The Lord *is* merciful and gracious,
Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.
⁹ He will not always strive *with us*,
Nor will He keep *His anger* forever.
¹⁰ He has not dealt with us according to our sins,
Nor punished [*gamal*] us according to our iniquities.” Psalm 103:8-10

The psalmist essentially says, “He had not *cameled* us according to our iniquities.” In the case of the tribulation period, a fully sufficient *cameling* will be meted out.

All of this, however, has an intended purpose, which is for Israel to turn and cry out to the Lord (verse 6). As was noted –

“And gave them, Yehovah, in hand Midian seven years.”
“And cried out, sons Israel, unto Yehovah ... upon turnings Midian.”

The turnings of the firebrand in the Place of Judgment (the tribulation) will meet its final goal of bringing Israel out from the law and into the grace of God found in Jesus Christ. It will be during that time that a prophet will speak to them (verse 8).

It does not say “the Prophet,” which would anticipate Jesus. Rather, it is a prophet. The difference between Deborah and this unnamed prophet is clear. Deborah referred to the New Testament. The word *diathéké*, a covenant or testament, is a feminine noun.

However, this passage refers to “man, prophet.” It is the full word of God: Hebrew – *davar*, (word, masc.); Greek – *logos* (word, masc.). Israel had rejected the New Testament, but at some point, they will go to it, compare it with the Old, just as Jesus told them two thousand years ago, and they will finally listen.

In their search, they will realize that it was Jesus who led them out of what Egypt only pictured, the life of sin that they clung to. The law could never save them. Instead, they were brought out of oppression into another type of bondage because they failed to see that it had an end purpose of leading them to Jesus.

As noted, the passage is anticipatory of the battle itself. Gideon will be the judge directed by the Lord to wage it. Whatever typology comes from the rest of what is said about him, the passage today is one of recognizing that Israel will go through the tribulation.

As for the contents, it clears up some amazingly poor theology. It demonstrates that the words of Jesus in Matthew 24 are not referring to the church at all, that the tribulation period will be seven years, and that the church will not be here during those seven years. The attention is focused on Israel and those who failed to come to Jesus during the church age.

These things are evident. While Israel is currently fearing all of the gods of the Amorite, there are faithful people in the world – both Jews and Gentiles – who are fearing the Lord who presented Himself to the world in the Person of Jesus Christ.

It is He who prevailed over the law. It is He who is revealed in the New Testament, and it is He who is concealed in the Old, until the Old is compared with the New. Then everything fits like a glove.

Each step of what we have seen has been used to build a picture of the world in which we now live, and of what is coming upon it, probably in the near future. Think of the arrogance of Chaim Richman who was mentioned at the beginning of the sermon today.

We don't worship a nation, and we sure don't worship the people of a nation who have rejected and maligned the name of the Lord for thousands of years. They cannot atone for anyone's sin, much less their own.

There is only One who can do that. Someday, Israel as a nation will discover this. Until then, fix your eyes on Jesus. Give God all of your hope, faith, adoration, and praise for what He has done in the coming of Christ. We serve the Lord God Almighty when we serve the Lord Jesus. Hallelujah and amen!

Closing Verse: *"All flesh is grass,
And all its loveliness is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
Because the breath of the Lord blows upon it;*

Surely the people are grass.

⁸The grass withers, the flower fades,

But the word of our God stands forever.” Isaiah 40:6-8

Next Week: Judges 6:11-16 *Jay has a lot of work to do until Gideon is done...* (Gideon, Judge of Israel, Part I) (18th Judges Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who judges His people according to their deeds. So, follow Him, live for Him, and trust Him, and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

I Am the Lord Your God

Then the children of Israel
Did evil in the sight of the LORD as we understand
So the LORD delivered them
For seven years into Midian’s hand

And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel
Because of the Midianites from afar
The children of Israel made for themselves
The dens, the caves, and the strongholds which
-----in the mountains are

So it was, whenever Israel had sown
Midianites would come up again
Also Amalekites and the people of the East
Would come up against them

Then they would encamp against them and destroy
The produce of the earth as far as Gaza; acts so wonky
And leave no sustenance for Israel
Neither sheep nor ox nor donkey

For they would come up with their livestock and their tents
Coming in as numerous as locusts, they just wouldn’t quit
Both they and their camels were without number
And they would enter the land to destroy it

So Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites
-----as we have heard
And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD

And it came to pass, when the children of Israel
Cried out to the LORD because of the Midianites
-----a sad story to tell
That the LORD sent a prophet to the children of Israel
Who said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel:

'I brought you up from Egypt
And brought you out of the house of bondage too
And I delivered you out of the hand
Of the Egyptians and out of the hand of all who oppressed you

And drove them out before you
And gave you their land, so I did do

Also I said to you, "I am the LORD your God
Do not fear the gods of the Amorites. I gave you that choice
In whose land you dwell
But you have not obeyed My voice

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...