

The Battle of Midian as a
Foreshadow of Isaiah 9

Isaiah 9:2

The people who **walk** in darkness,

They will see great light

Those who **dwell** in a land of the death-shadow

A light will shine upon them

Is 9:3

You will cause to increase the nation.

To it you will cause to be great the jubilation

They will rejoice before your face

Like the jubilation of the harvest,

Like when they shout for joy in the division of the spoil.



What does the structure of v_3 say about prosperity or happiness in life?

An Expectation of Literal Fulfillment

1. God's focus remains on the Land and the People to whom He gave it.
2. Joy is God's eternal experience.
3. Therefore it is His to dispense.
4. He will cause light and joy for Israel, and they will rejoice in His presence.
5. No happiness or enjoyment in life can compare to fellowship with God on His terms.
 - Health & Wealth vs. Doom & Gloom

Jesus Came, but...

1. Part of this prophecy was fulfilled in the First Advent and part was not.
2. Which parts? The Light shined in the dark place, Matt 4:14-16 *and* 17.
3. But Israel did not rejoice in the presence of the LORD.
4. The disconnect with what happened and what Isaiah prophesied tells us either that God failed to fulfill what He said or that Isaiah 9 is not done yet!
5. Correct categorical eschatology comes from a verse-by-verse exegetical, historical observation of the Text.

Is 9:4

FOR the yoke of its burden

and

the staff of its shoulder,

The rod of forced labor against it

You will shatter like *in* the day of Midian

Is 9:4

For the **yoke** of its burden

and

The **staff** of its shoulder,

The **rod** of forced labor against it

You will shatter like *in* the day of Midian

Does that mean no more
authority?

Jesus in Contrast to the Gentile Oppression of Israel

28 “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.

29 “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

1. There *is* a yoke of authority!!
2. It is a burden of righteousness.
3. The King’s subjects may bear it only by God’s grace.
4. The answer is a *different* authority, not *no* authority.

Is 9:4

For the **yoke** of its burden

and

The **staff** of its shoulder,

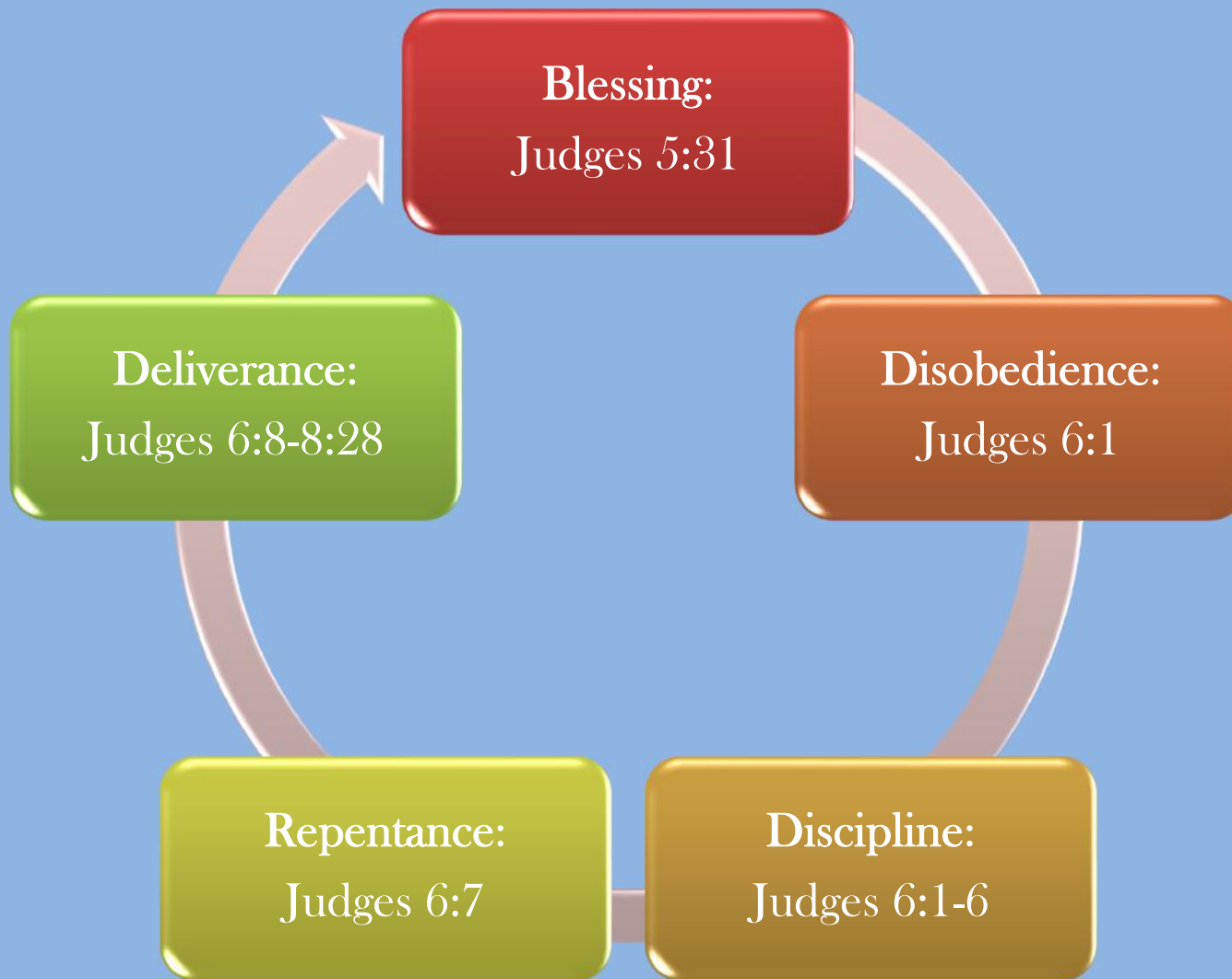
The **rod** of forced labor against it

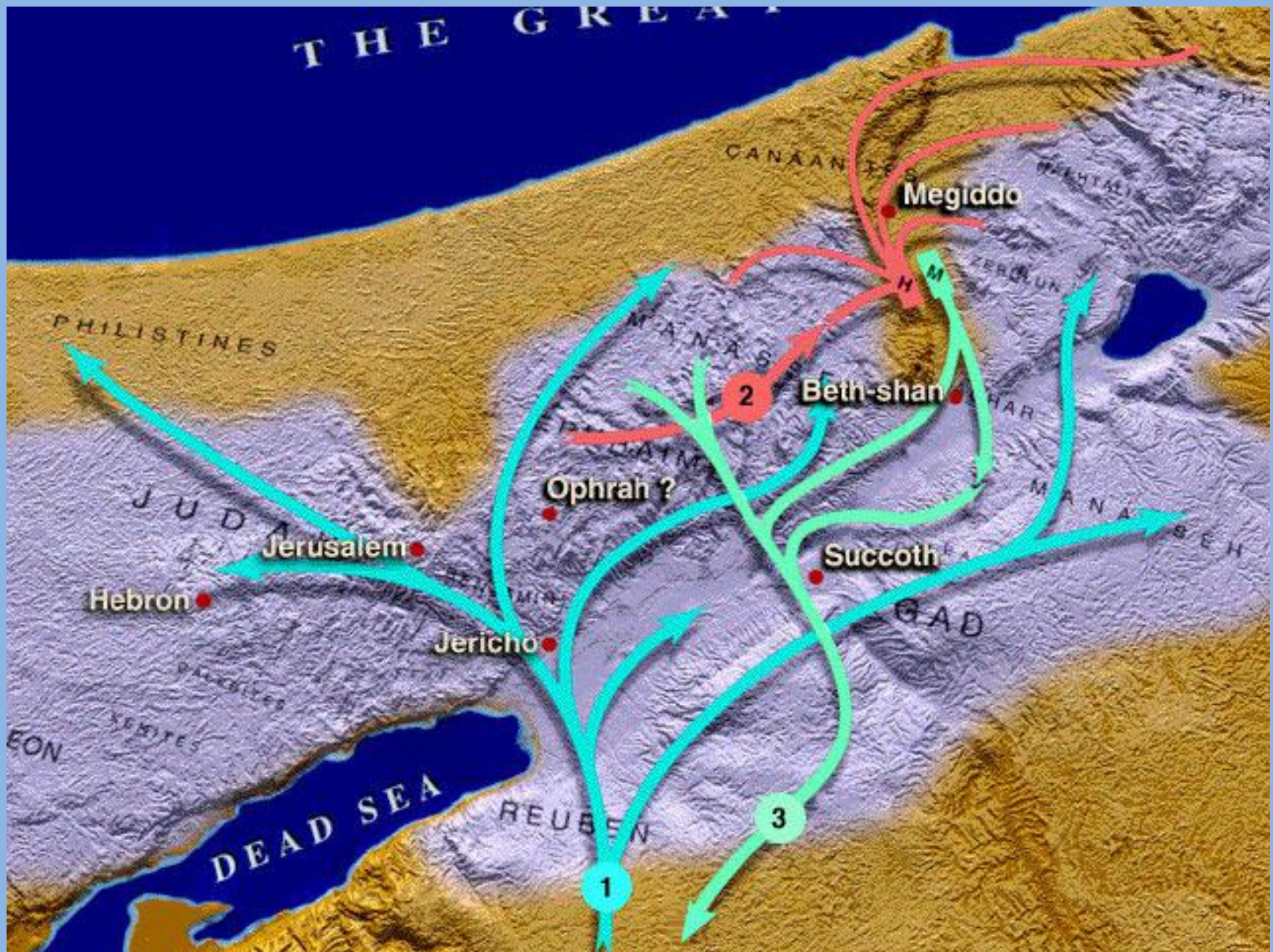
You will shatter like *in* the day of Midian

Cycle of the Judges



Cycle of the Judges with Gideon





Phase 1: Success Despite Weakness

- **Enlistment:** The Angel of the LORD who is the LORD: 6:8
cf 6:14.
- **Excuses:** Pattern of Revelation-then-rejection
 - 6:12-13
 - “The LORD is with you GIBBOR CHAYYIL”
 - “Really? Why has this happened to us?”
 - 6:14-15
 - “Go in this your strength and deliver Israel...”
 - “How shall I deliver Israel”
 - 6:16-24
 - “I will be with you”
 - “Prove that it is You.”

- **Execution:** Tearing down the Ba'al and Asherah, 6:25-32
 - Initial Command of the LORD dealing with internal matters of loyalty to Him.
 - Meets with Success
 - Defines Gideon to the people as a contender for the LORD against Ba'al.
- **Effectiveness:** Rallying of his family, Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphthali, 6:33-35
 - The basis for Gideon's authority is his fight against evil in the Land.
 - Thus his identity to the people is as God's servant.

Phase 2: Greater Success Despite Weakness

- **Flacid Faith and the Fleece: 6:36-40**
 - Follows in the story immediately after a major victory of obedience and worship.
 - Betrays a lack of faith in the promise of the LORD in 6:14, 16
 - Previous signs have proven Who is speaking.
 - Therefore Gideon has no excuse! Yet he receives mercy.
- **Fewer Fellas for Fighting: 7:1-8**
 - The LORD picks Gideon's army.
 - Fear is the first test of a warrior.
 - Discipline is the second test.

- **Fear Finds a Friend: 7:9-14**
 - Pattern of Gideon’s unbelief is anticipated by the LORD : v10-11, cf v9
 - The LORD uses the Midianites themselves to tell Gideon He will keep His promise!
- **A Fight with Flame and Flourish: 7:15-23**
 - Notice the “Sword of Gideon” and the contents of his army’s hands!
 - v22: The LORD set the swords against one another



Phase 3: The Least is Greatest

- **Diplomatic: 7:24-8:3**
 - Humility with Ephraim
 - Out of fear or largesse?
- **Disrespected: 8:4-9**
 - Demonstrates the people's immorality:
 - Failure to support the military
 - Failure to support the LORD's servant
 - A taunt about Gideon's success
- **Devastating: 8:10-12**
 - The taunt is answered by Gideon's success
 - There is no indication of any force greater than 300 soldiers.

Phase 4: Gideon's Final Success?

- **Gideon's Grudge: 8:13-17**
 - Punishment with thorns for Succoth
 - Killing the men of Penuel
- **Gideon's Gore: 8:18-21**
 - Personal satisfaction of avenging his brothers' murder
 - Weakness of firstborn? cf. ch 9 and Abimelek
- **Gideon's Gold: 8:22-27**
 - Success in rejecting rulership
 - Failure in prosperity

“As in the day of Midian”

1. The dramatic point of continuity between Isaiah 9 and Judges 6-8 is the PERSON doing the fighting.
2. The Angel of the LORD is the pre-Incarnate Christ, the 2nd Person of the Trinity.
3. It is He who confuses the armies of Midian.
4. It is He who will rule over Israel and destroy the rod of her oppressors.
5. Just as Gideon was encouraged to look to the Exodus and Moses' deliverance, Isaiah's generation was to look back to Gideon's deliverance.

- Principle: We have an even greater victory to remember, which was won by the same Hero as with Moses and Gideon.
- Application: Be deliberate about remembering God's past works of deliverance, especially the greatest Deliverance of the Cross.

Doggerel and Gideon

The Youngest of the Least

Got a promise from the Lord

And so he cast a fleece

Not believing in His Word.

And yet he won the battle

By just playing in a band,

But really it was God

Driving Midian from the Land.

Is 9:5

FOR every boot that marches with a roar

and

Every cloak having been rolled in blood

Will be for incineration, food for the fire.

Is 9:6

FOR a child (YELED) will be born (YuLAD) to
us (LANU)

A Son (BEN) will be given (NITTAN) to us
(LANU)

And the dominion will be upon His shoulder

And it will call His Name PehLeH YOETS, EL
GIBBOR, AVIY^aD, SAR SHALOM.