



JUDGES

our deepest need





10 Day Israel Tour

November 22 - December 1

Limited Availability
Register Online



Samaritan's Purse®
INTERNATIONAL RELIEF







The Beauty of Christian Theism

WHY GOD
MAKES SENSE
IN A WORLD THAT
DOESN'T

GAVIN ORTLUND

“Suppose Hamlet is searching for Shakespeare. He cannot find him in the way he might find other characters in the play, like Ophelia or Claudius. So where should he look?

“Hamlet’s knowledge of Shakespeare will be different than anything else in his life. On the one hand, finding Shakespeare will be very difficult. Shakespeare is very far removed; Hamlet has never encountered him.

“On the other hand, the knowledge of Shakespeare might also prove unavoidable. For in a deeper sense, Shakespeare is very close; Hamlet has never done anything but encounter him.

“As Hamlet’s creator, Shakespeare is at once beyond his every device and inside his every thought.”

Gavin Ortlund

“The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian seven years.” (1)

- Midian is **overpowering**.

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- Israel is **hiding**.

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“And the hand of Midian overpowered Israel, and because of Midian the people of Israel made for themselves the dens that are in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds.” (2)

- Midian is overpowering.
- Israel is **hiding**.

“And Israel was brought very low because of Midian. And the people of Israel cried out for help to the Lord.” (6)

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“very low” = lit. “became small”

Episode #1 -

God **comes**, and Gideon **wavers personally**.

God comes -

God comes -

“And the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him, ‘The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor.’” (12)

Gideon wavers -

Gideon wavers -

“And said to him, ‘Please, my lord, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all his wonderful deeds that our fathers recounted to us?’” (13)

God comes -

God comes -

“And the Lord turned to him and said, ‘Go in this might of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?’” (14)

Gideon wavers -

Gideon wavers -

“And he said to him, ‘Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.’” (15)

God comes -

God comes -

“But I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man.” (16)

Gideon wavers -

Gideon wavers -

“If now I have found favor in your eyes, then show me a sign that it is you who speak with me.” (17)

Gideon wavers -

“If now I have found favor in your eyes, then show me a sign that it is you who speak with me.” (17)

“Peace be to you. Do not fear; you shall not die.” (23)

Episode #2 -

God **comes**, and Gideon **wavers relationally**.

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“That night the Lord said to him ...” (25)

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God **comes**, and Gideon **wavers relationally**.

“That night the Lord said to him ...” (25)

* Gideon, tear down your father’s altar of Baal -

“But because he was too afraid of his family and the men of the town to do it by day, he did it by night.” (27)

Episode #3 -

God **comes**, and Gideon **wavers militarily**.

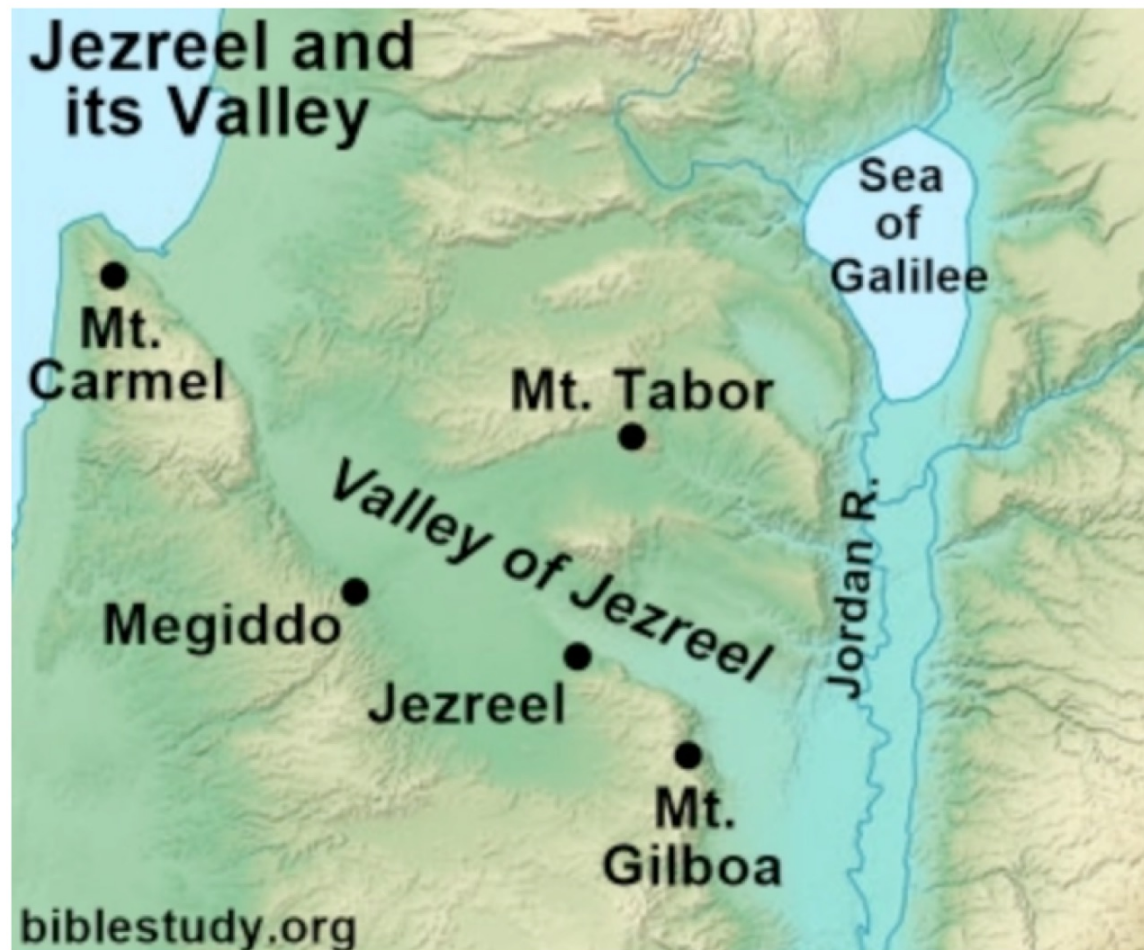
Episode #3 -

God **comes**, and Gideon **wavers militarily**.

“Now all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the people of the East came together, and they crossed the Jordan and encamped in the Valley of Jezreel.” (33)







“But the Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon.” (34)

Two-Stage Test

Two-Stage Test

First night -

Fleece is wet and ground is dry.

Two-Stage Test

First night -

Fleece is wet and ground is dry.

Second night -

Fleece is dry and ground is wet.

How should we think about this?

How should we think about this?

We must not think **presumptively**!

- We need God more than we need **security**.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.”

Psalm 46:1-3

- We need God more than we need **certainty**.

- YAHWEH LORD -
God the Father (14, 16, 23, 25)

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- Angel of the Lord -
Preincarnate appearance of Jesus? (11, 12, 20)

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God the Father (14, 16, 23, 25)
- Angel of the Lord -
Preincarnate appearance of Jesus? (11, 12, 20)
- Spirit of the Lord -
Clothing Gideon (34)

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

“And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.”

Galatians 4:4-7

“For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.”

Romans 5:6