

A MESSAGE FROM THE MIDDEN⁺⁺⁺ JUDGES 6:1-2; GEN 15:16

If Israel conquered the Promised Land

and established a kingdom

and defeated all of their enemies (1400-1000)

Why can't we find Israel? Why isn't Israel found in the midden?

Why don't the surrounding nations mention Israel / fighting Israel? Why can't we find Jewish cities?

Where do we begin?

1. There was **no** widespread destruction of cities in Canaan!

Only 3 cities were destroyed:

2. There was a widespread reusing of cities, farms, homes...!

3. There was **also** a widespread assimilation to Canaanite culture!

4. There was an **even** wider-spread assimilation to pagan religion(s)!

5. The **author** believed Israel was Israel!

Common descent

Common origins

Common language

Common faith

Common history

Judges 2:10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. **Judges 2:11** And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim: **Judges 2:12** And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger. **Judges 2:13** And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.

This is confirmed by the ubiquitous use of the word Israel - in several forms!

Judges 1:1 NOW after the death of Joshua it came to pass, that the children of Israel asked the LORD, saying, Who shall go up for us against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?

Judges 1:27 Neither did Manasseh drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and her towns, nor Taanach and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and her towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and her towns: but the Canaanites would dwell in that land. **Judges 1:28** And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites to tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.

Judges 2:4 And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept.

Judges 2:6 And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

Judges 2:7 And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel.

Judges 2:10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. **Judges 2:11** And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:

Judges 2:14 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

Judges 2:20 And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and he said, Because that this people hath transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice;

Judges 2:22 That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not.

Judges 3:5 And the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebusites:

Judges 3:6 And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods. **Judges 3:7** And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and forgot the LORD their God, and served Baalim and the groves.

Judges 3:8 Therefore the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Chushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia: and the children of Israel served Chushan-rishathaim eight years.

6. The Israelites would have seen themselves as Israelites...at least secondarily

This is THE problem of distinct and separate tribes → tribalism

Judges 4:10 And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; and he went up with ten thousand men at his feet: and Deborah went up with him.

Judges 6:7 And it came to pass, when **the children of Israel cried** unto the LORD because of the Midianites, **Judges 6:8** That the LORD sent a prophet unto the children of Israel, which said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the house of bondage; **Judges 6:9** And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you, and drave them out from before you, and gave you their land; **Judges 6:10** And I said unto you, I am the LORD your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but ye have not obeyed my voice.

Judges 6:34 But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abi-ezer was gathered after him. **Judges 6:35** And he sent messengers throughout all **Manasseh**; who also was gathered after him: and he sent messengers unto **Asher**, and unto **Zebulun**, and unto **Naphtali**; and they came up to meet them.

Judges 8:1 And the **men of Ephraim** said unto him, Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him sharply.

Some (maybe many) of the groups seemed to be subgroups of tribes, oriented locally to a city, a location, or a family

7. Israel's neighbors **might** have seen Israel as Israel.

Probably more tribally → with some sort of connection

8. Israel's superpower neighbors would have seen / understood Israel as...a **nuisance / irritation** and only tribally at best!

Egypt Hatti / The Hittites Mittani & Hurrians Assyria

How would Israel have been seen by the superpowers?

- **Highly tribal**
- **Constantly fighting & squabbling**
- **Groups that move...hide...and are not permanent**

How would have Napoleon / the Ottomans / Hitler / Stalin / Putin / France / Spain / terrorists...seen us in...??? (or even how would America have seen itself?)

1600s	1776:	1865:
1918~	1940s	1960
1980	2016	2021

9. The Israelites did **not** always live a settled existence!

Judges 1:34 And the Amorites forced the children of Dan **into** the mountain: for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley:

Judges 5:6 In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, In the days of Jael, **the highways were unoccupied, And the travellers walked through byways.** **Judges 5:7** The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, **Until** that I Deborah arose, That I arose a mother in Israel.

Judges 6:2 And the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel: and because of the Midianites **the children of Israel made them the dens which are in the mountains, and caves, and strong holds.**

Judges 6:6 And Israel was **greatly impoverished** because of the Midianites; and the children of Israel cried unto the LORD.

Judges 19:10 But the man would not tarry that night, but he rose up and departed, **and came over against Jebus, which is Jerusalem;** and there were with him two asses saddled, his concubine also was with him. **Judges 19:11** And when they were by Jebus, the day was far spent; and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn in into this city of the Jebusites, and lodge in it. **Judges 19:12** And his master said unto him, **We will not turn aside hither into the city of a stranger, that is not of the children of Israel; we will pass over to Gibeah.**

1 Samuel 13:6 When the men of Israel saw that they were in a strait, (for the people were distressed,) **then the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits.**

1 Samuel 14:11 And both of them discovered themselves unto the garrison of the Philistines: **and the Philistines said, Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves.**

The Israelites lived on farms, small villages, & a few cities

Some might have been semi-nomadic

Some obviously escaped back into the remote areas

10. The Israelites lacked a Capital City, central sanctuary & other unifying factors!

They had all of these and more – in prospect / prophecy! Deuteronomy 12