Scripture_background

Background Notes for Judges 6

Historical Context:
- The Book of Judges is part of the Old Testament and covers the period between Joshua's leadership and the establishment of a monarchy in Israel.
- During the time of Judges 6, the Israelites had settled in the Promised Land of Canaan but did not have a king. Instead, they were led by judges, who were leaders raised by God during times of trouble.
- The story in Judges 6 occurs after the Israelites had been oppressed by the Midianites for seven years because they had turned away from God’s commands.

Cultural Context:
- The Midianites were a nomadic tribe in the region who would invade Israel every year during harvest time, taking their produce and leaving them with little food.
- Gideon, the main character in this passage, was an Israelite from the tribe of Manasseh. He is described as being from a family that felt insignificant or weak in their society.
- The Israelites were living in fear, often hiding in caves and mountain clefts to escape the Midianites.

Theological Insights:
- The passage highlights the theme of repentance and deliverance. The Israelites cry out to God for help, and He answers by choosing Gideon to save them.
- An angel of the Lord appears to Gideon to encourage him and call him to lead the Israelites against the Midianites. This shows God uses unexpected individuals to fulfill His plans.
- The story includes tests of faith, as Gideon asks for signs to be sure that God is truly with him. These include the famous fleece test where he asks for dew on the fleece but dry ground, and vice versa.

Lesson Points for Students:
- God listens and responds when people ask for help, even if they have made mistakes.
- God often chooses unlikely people to carry out His work, showing that strength comes from God, not personal power.
- Trust and faith in God are important, even when situations seem challenging or fearful.
- God's plans are achieved through cooperation and willingness to follow His guidance.