
TRIBAL CAPABILITIES AND WARFARE: THE CASE OF ANCIENT ISRAEL

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In circa 1400 BC the Hebrew tribes entered the Promised Land with a devotion and ferocity matched by an extraordinary ability to combine religious ideals with effective military art. The people collectively called Canaanites by the biblical chroniclers fell not only under the heels of this covenant society but also into the arms of a cold narrator called history, who records them as defeated peoples whom Israel surpassed during a transitional stage (1380-1050 BC) to a centralized kingdom under David—and later to endure the tests of time that allowed some civilizations to endure, and others to perish. The rich details of these events recorded in the Book of Judges, when Israel warred in order to entrench and dispossess its enemies, present a rare collection of socio-military behaviors of a tribal society, and the very reasons that allowed the Israelites to endure and their opponents to perish.

Israel's military success during this period resided not only in leadership, the heroic judges that acted as champion-saviors, but in a complementary force emanating from the population. Leadership in depth, master narratives animating the Israelites to fight, and military culture forged in a potent praxis of religious ideology and military art, all created a "bottom up" force structuring and supporting the judges. This paper will analyse these tribal capabilities, the cultural norms, values, and behaviours that shape a tribe's ability to conduct war and affect the conditions that determine the outcomes of war.

A Land That Flowed with More Than Milk and Honey

The Promised Land that the judges hoped to settle may indeed have been "a land that flowed with milk and honey," but it also flowed with blood. The divided Canaanite city-states that battled each other and deployed piecemeal to oppose the early conquests of Joshua, and the absence of large empires during his generation, were strategic advantages of a forgone era that provided little comforts to the successive generations of Israelites under the judges, who contended with more complex threats. Resurgent Canaanite forces, increasing coalitions of

enemies concentrating and massing their armies, rising regional powers, and a synergy of technology and terrain threatened to smash the Israelite tribes between the anvil of local armies and the hammer of freshly arriving invaders like the Philistines.¹

Even the effective response of the Israelites relying on religious devotion and a strong cultural identity presented the potential for exploitation by the Canaanites, for these ideological strengths were themselves targets of the weaponry of Canaanite culture and religion, enticing the Hebrew peoples not only from their God but also from their mission of conquest. Werner Keller, in *The Bible As History* (1956), observed that during the final days of Moses' leadership the Moabites adapted their tactics in reaction to the defeats suffered by regional kingdoms at the hands of the invading Israelites.²

After magic had failed to stop them, Keller asserted that religion had been used as another unconventional weapon by the Moabites who relied on their very own daughters to sexually entice the Israelites to sacrifice to the Canaanite gods and thus sap the will of these nomads to fight. Throughout the period of Judges, Canaanite religion remained both a deliberate and unintentional weapon against Israel's center of gravity: its unique cultural identity that united these tribes in a covenant relationship to each other and to Yahweh, the God who unabashedly used war as an instrument of justice in the Promised Land.³ The persistent and undulating influence of Canaanite religion, coupled with its asymmetrical appeal to abandon the moral strictures of Judaism, penetrated its cultural resistance at times and likewise eroded the resolve of the Hebrews, which was intimately intertwined with its military zeal.

The Canaanite understanding of a multi-dimensional battle space involved more than just cultural warfare, and included an understanding of the psychological, economic, and human terrains—and denial of resources such as agriculture, iron, and weapons. The Israelite prophets of the period warned their tribal nation not to fear the gods of the Amorites—even though these gods purportedly controlled the very weather and vegetation as well as fertility, and removal of their sacred altars and idols could provoke violent retaliation.⁴ Uprooting the Canaanite presence in the Promised Land therefore involved far more than military conflicts but a corresponding psychological resolve rooted in the deep cultural identity created through religion and a shared mission of conquest.

Moreover, the nomadic Midianites, one of Israel's many nemeses in the Book of Judges, demonstrated an acute understanding of economic warfare when they pressed Gideon and the tribes of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali. The Midianites used a coalition with the Amalekites in apparently sequenced military operations against these tribes to seize the harvest, control the agricultural fields, and force the Israelites into mountain positions where their ingenuity adapted to the terrain but generated little more than sustenance—an effect no doubt planned by the Midianite coalition.⁵

Deborah, in her famous Song of Deborah extolling the victory over Jabin, "King of Canaan," noted her vanquished enemy's previous dominance of the human terrain.⁶ This fourth judge of pre-monarchic Israel, and "wife of Lapidoth," called attention to restrictions on movement, the subjugation of village life, and prohibition against "spears and shields" (an obvious reference to disarmament policy used to weaken the Israelite tribes in the region).⁷ The direct challenge to the food security and very quality of life of these tribes therefore provoked the very core of its society and created a corresponding reaction supporting the role of the judges. Military technology, although in its infancy, posed yet another threat to the tribes, who relied on moral force and tactical expertise to offset these advantages. Joshua had shown little concern for the iron chariots that he burned in triumph over his enemies, offerings to Yahweh who promised such vengeance for a condemned society. The Hebrew chief's command to his followers demonstrated an equal contempt: "[You shall] hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire."⁸

But Israel under the judges found their enemy's technological advantage to be daunting but not insurmountable. The same presence of iron chariots posed an admitted obstacle to possession of the Promised Land, evident in the truncated victory of Judah, which spearheaded the military campaigns following the death of Joshua.⁹ Massing chariots in open plains where maneuver, speed, and mass posed yet another tactical challenge demanded that Barak use the weather (heavy rain) and muddy terrain in a three-staged operation to offset this capability. Finally, Gideon's account of his battle with the Midianites gives only tangential treatment to their inventive use of camels in warfare, but the domestication of these perceived wild beasts for combat must have required a tactical countermeasure to offset the increased mobility and range—as well as the psychological effects of facing the ferocity of mounted warriors using these animals.¹⁰

Thus the Israelites needed tribal capabilities that were flexible enough for broad application to meet these varied attacks on their lives and national purpose, and yet strong enough to endure prolonged periods of convulsive challenges that fluctuated in degrees of intensity and configuration. The security threats, moreover, deeply touched tribal society and therefore aroused a strong reaction that aided and supported the judges in their quest to “defend Israel” and leave their signature on the times.

The Risen

And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and saved them out of the hand of their enemies.

—Judges 2:18; Hebrew Masoretic Text

The Israelite response to the many security threats indeed centered in the emergence and military leadership of the judges, but these judges arose from deep and broad sections of the tribal populations. Hebrew Judges like Ehud, Shamgar, Tola, Deborah, and Gideon came from diverse backgrounds and classes, tribes, and even gender, and received strong support from the people, including middle and lower classes and their groups, which acted as an integrated, inseparable, and complementary force. This leadership in depth, nourished and supported from the rich skills and assets of the grassroots, allowed Israel to brandish the most talented, charismatic, and capable leaders who secured Israel's ascendancy.¹¹

However, failures of leadership and population support did occur. But in relationship to the quality of Canaanite leadership, and the need for successive strategic victories to accomplish the mission of expansion and entrenchment of the Israelite tribes, the leadership in depth proved effective, and among Israel's most valuable tribal capabilities.¹² One example of several is the invasion and conquest of Eglon, a Moabite tribal chieftan. Eglon's sweep across the tribal lands of the trans-Jordan and penetration into Israel's “garden” at Jericho in effect cut the emergent monotheistic nation in two, and threatened its national unity and long term security.¹³ Therefore, Ehud's victory over Eglon after 18 years of servitude produced more than a local victory.

Judges like Ehud were indeed a unique manifestation of the Israelite people. In fact, the very term “judge,” the Hebrew word *sopetim*, describes an individual who leads not from authority issued from family, dynasty, or class, but from popularly recognized abilities.¹⁴ The popular support base was thus critical to the

very concept of the judges as leaders, and when coupled with the fact that ancient Israel lacked national institutions such as a king and court, military classes and offices, and other state apparatus, the bottom up structure is even more evident.¹⁵

The decentralization of power in ancient Israel was not merely an abstract theological ideal based in notions of the rule of Yahweh. The ancient Israelites embraced individualism as both a personal and political expression of the times—and consequently supported their “deliverers” who defended these norms. Judges 21:25 expresses this point definitively of the Israelites and their ruling structures: “In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”¹⁶ Other social and political forces pushing power down included an assertive tribal assembly (*qahal*) comprised of military aged males,¹⁷ and the primacy of city-states and their leadership, which ruled over the resources and enterprises emanating from these areas of concentrated networks and commerce. Moreover, the destructive consequences of Israel’s first attempt at kingship under Abimelech, juxtaposed with the vehement rejection of kingship by judges like Gideon, reinforced these structures that permeated Israel’s society.¹⁸

The linchpin of the support of the judges, and thus their power base, ensued from popular recognition of their character traits—a recognition heightened during a time of crisis.¹⁹ Any of the aforementioned threats to the Israelite tribes—including menacing armies, economic exploitation, physical and psychological abuses (what today would be called human rights abuses) and subjugation—triggered popular support for Israelites who demonstrated a broad range of leadership, religious, military, organizational, and personal qualities and skills—attributes leading to deliverance from Israel's enemies. Othniel, the first judge of the period, serves as an example.

The term “spirit of the Lord came upon him” occurs seven times in the book of Judges and is noteworthy for its focus on the special character of the judges. The term is always associated with character that leads to action: movements that are not ordinary but under divine direction, leadership over the Israelites, organization of the tribes, and military preparations and combat leading to victory.²⁰ The character of the judges was so unique in its ability to overcome crisis that it endured through time and became a model for Christian faith in the New Testament.²¹

Moreover, these judges who succeeded Othniel were often similar to him in character (charismatic, skilled decision makers, and ferocious male warriors) but

quite diverse in their backgrounds. Gideon is a striking example. Rising from a poor family, not even the oldest son and thus even low in rank within his family, he arose from the tribe of Manasseh noting this state: "And he said unto him: 'Oh, my lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is the poorest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house.'"²² Jephthah arose from even lower class origins, a son of a "harlot," but a "man of valor." This harmony of lower social class and high character occurred in the minds of the narrator of the Book of Judges but not Jephthah's brothers, who along with the local elders expelled him from Gilead causing him to find refuge in the land of Tola, a decision the elders later reversed.²³

But the rise of the judges occurred not as a reaction against prominent families or tribal leadership. The people of Israel selected their leaders from a wide range of classes and backgrounds including prominent tribal families. Othniel, embraced by Israel as a capable leader, was a nephew of Caleb, the illustrious warrior who with Joshua led the entrance into Canaan. Also, the death of a particular judge did not immediately create space for a replacement from outside a family line but instead created security gaps, times when leadership was lacking and threats were emergent or pressing. In the case of the death of Joshua, an Ephraimite, the loss weakened the security of the entire group of northern tribes.²⁴

Nevertheless, moral obligation is the dominant message of the Book of Judges and therefore subsumes the effective record of population support for these deliverers. Thus losing sight of the role of popular support as an essential part of the success of the judges, and the viability of middle and lower class groups, is easy to do when reading the Book of Judges as this historical record centralizes the unfaithful responses of the Israelites to the leadership of the judges.²⁵ The theme of apostasy occurs often in the narrative and tempers the depiction of the Israelites to include their negative characteristics: slowness to follow the judges, reacting only when the threat to their security was dire, sometimes responding only to local rather than national threats (or threats to other tribes), and quickly abandoning their cultural values once the particular judge dies.²⁶

But the very opposite also holds true: the tribal populations sometimes led the calls for military action rather than followed. The Book of Judges opens with this very fact, when Joshua had died, and Israel was ruled by tribal elders. The narrator records: "[T]he children of Israel asked the LORD, saying: 'Who shall go up for us first against the Canaanites, to fight against them?'"²⁷ What follows is nothing less than a national mobilization of not just the tribe of Judah, which spearheaded the

fight, and began its consolidation of southern Israel, but a series of military campaigns (granted of mixed results) by the tribes of Joseph, Benjamin, Ephraim, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan.

The very role of the Hebrew judges appears to be flexible during the pre-monarchic period and not necessarily one of either supreme military, judicial, or government leadership—further evidence of the viability of lower level social structures. Jephthah, the ninth judge, again serves as a notable example. Exiled by his family and the elders of the mountainous area east of the Jordan called Gilead (allotted to the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the eastern half of the tribal lands of Manasseh), Jephthah returned to Gilead at the request of the same elders who were engaged in a war with the Ammonites. Jephthah had to negotiate his rights to judge the area if victory was achieved, asking the elders for this concession.²⁸

Deborah is yet another example of the diversity of Hebrew judges—neither male or from a warrior class—and complex in function of her office. She rendered judgment in Ephraim and Benjamin and was recognized by the Israelites as a national figure. In addition to being the only female judge, she played a major role in military operations but did not take command of the assembled Israelite armies, rather encouraged Barak to use the strategic terrain of Mt. Tabor to stage the tribal armies and thus separate King Jabin from his military led by Sisera.²⁹ Thus the roles of judge and military commander-in-chief were separate in this case. The diverse roles of the judges, and the division of leadership and social duties among cooperating authorities, appeared to have support in Mosaic law.³⁰

Also, the judges of ancient Israel during the period came from no singular, regional group [north or south] or coalition of tribes, a formation that could provoke the others to react to an unequal distribution of leadership and power. Of the twelve tribes of Israel, eight held the role of judge, including lesser tribes in number and military power such as the tribe of Issachar. This sharing of leadership of the tribes of Israel had the effect of lessening the possibility of internecine fighting as well as outright civil war. With the exception of the slaughter and restoration of the tribe of Benjamin, which occurred from a crime not a leadership issue, the tribes remained relatively united throughout the period.³¹

The Narratives of a Peculiar People

[A]nd the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself.

—Deuteronomy 14:2, King James Version

Leadership in depth, readily drawn from the rich character of Israel's tribal societies, was indeed a preeminent tribal capability but not the only one. Throughout the Book of Judges two master narratives animated these “peculiar people” to fight tenaciously and with purpose: *the narrative of return*, and *the narrative of the Exodus*. [Master narratives are the historically based beliefs of a particular people or a society used by these groups and sub groups to provide identity, understanding, and direction, particularly in times of crisis.] These two mutually supporting and intertwined narratives, which predate and postdate the period of the judges, were a potent ideological force invigorating and structuring Israel's resistance and mission of conquest.

The narrative of return remains the most vital to the Book of Judges. This narrative not only occurs as the central theme of the Book of Judges but also answers why military failure and foreign domination occurred during the period: a breach of the covenant relationship with Yahweh.³² Perhaps as importantly, the narrative explicitly underscores one clear path of remedial action: personal and national reform; and military action against the Canaanites.³³

The narrative of return motivated the Israelites to fight effectively by embracing a synergistic combination of doctrines stressing personal responsibility and reform, complete rejection of Canaanite culture and rule, and popular support of judges seeking to deliver Israel from oppression through military action or the use of force. Additionally, the narrative of reform used vivid and emotive language to describe the domination of Israel and its misfortunes.³⁴

Moreover, the narrative of return contained a time factor that progressively increased its relevancy and potency. Moses warned that presumption and disobedience to Yahweh would lead to Canaanite victory in battle and therefore provided a principle and a precedent for the period of the judges.³⁵ The word “again” occurs four times in the Book of Judges in relationship to the apostasy of Israel, and thus emphasized the repetition of failure to uphold the covenant with Yahweh, and by extension the narrative of return. Moreover, the narrator of Judges also asserted that the return was not merely a promise of deliverance after a period of disobedience and reform, but a cycle repeating itself particularly after the death of a

judge.³⁶

Although forty years had transpired from the Exodus of Israel from Egypt in 1445 BC to the entrance into the Promised Land, and an additional seven years of conquest of Canaan by Joshua, *the narrative of the Exodus* remained a potent message animating ancient Israel's military mission. The two times the narrative of the Exodus occurred in its basic form in the Book of Judges, the message clearly established a historical reminder that military victory over Israel's foes occurred in relationship to the covenant promise of Yahweh, and was contingent upon fidelity to that covenant—and resulted in the conquest of enemy lands.³⁷ The case of Moses' conquest of Pharaoh's armies near the Red Sea, and conquest of the Ammonites upon entry into the lands east of the Jordan, served as two historical examples used as models in the Book of Judges—examples inspiring military action against the Canaanites.

Jephthah, discussed earlier in this paper, gave the clearest application of the narrative of the Exodus when he confronted the encroaching Ammonite armies, and also demonstrated the potency of that narrative animating and mobilizing the Israelites to fight. Jephthah did not merely assert that the promised land was Israel's for the taking, but outlined a very logical argument that the lands were taken in defense of Israel against Ammonite aggression during the final stages of the Exodus, conquest itself (or outcomes) being viewed as divine judgment by both Israelites and Ammonites.³⁸ The following event included the assembled armies of Israel with Jephthah defeating the Ammonites in “a very great slaughter,” and a very important strategic effect: “the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.”³⁹

To Teach Them War

Now these are the nations which the LORD left, to prove Israel by them, even as many as had not known all the wars of Canaan. . . . to teach them war.

—Judges 3:1-2; Hebrew Masoretic Text

Leadership in depth, and potent master narratives driving the mission to conquer Canaan, combined with yet another tribal capability: comprehensive military skills rooted in socio-military values. Leadership, recruitment, intelligence gathering, planning, deployment of forces, targeting, tactics, sustainment of

operations, and proficiency in weapons were among the many military aspects used effectively by Israel in the Book of Judges. The art of war was indeed taught (and learned) well in ancient Israel.⁴⁰

As importantly, the belief in miracles and divine leadership among the tribes left nothing to chance, underestimation of opponent capabilities, or reckless adventurism when military operations occurred—a problem commonly encountered by other ancient societies relying on mystical and religious beliefs. The praxis of religious cause and military art synergistically combined to create a potent military capability embodied in the Judges and supported by the tribes.

Gideon serves as an outstanding example and case study of this fact.⁴² His battle against the Midianites demonstrated an extraordinary military skill executed within a context of religious experiences including angelic appearances, an alleged miraculous use of his fleece, and prophetic utterances during his military operations. Yet the Hebrew warrior conducted his military operations with finesse and keen awareness of the battlefield of his day—a skill of the highest order.

Gideon initiated his military operations by vetting his forces to create a powerful vanguard, tactical agility, and stealth capability to conduct a night operation against the Midianites. After rising early in the morning with his men he began to thin his ranks by relieving “whosoever is fearful and afraid.” Next he used a clever technique to further thin his ranks by observing how his warriors drank water.⁴³

Gideon followed this preparation with a pre-mission intelligence gathering operation that he personally undertook. Seeking to strengthen his own courage and that of his forces, and to assess the morale of his enemies, Gideon and his servant Phurah approached the Midianite camp and overheard their fears of an impending conquest by the Israelites, a discussion in the camp occurring from a troubling dream and corresponding interpretation. Encouraged by the finding, the Israelite judge “worshipped; and he returned into the camp of Israel, and said: ‘Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.’”⁴⁴

Gideon’s execution of the night operation against the Midianites likewise demonstrated an adroit understanding of the ancient art of war. Gideon’s mobile force of 300 men deployed in three equal units with Gideon and his detachment in the lead. His carefully contrived plan involved striking the night watch as they changed guards—a clever targeting of the opponent’s weakness, and asymmetrical use of force.⁴⁵ As Gideon’s men blew their trumpets and smashed pitchers

containing the torches, they cried out: “The sword of the Lord and Gideon.” The use of psychological operations caused a panic in the Midianite camp.⁴⁶

Gideon concluded his operations against the Midianites by aggressively pursuing their retreat and trapping them by the Jordan River. The extraordinary battle can easily be lost in the limelight of Gideon's leadership. But another aspect is salient. Gideon's forces demonstrated two important qualities: responding quickly to pursue the retreating Midianites (a spontaneous action); and additionally, deploying rapidly to the fords of Jordan to cut the Midianite retreat, undoubtedly a complex movement even with Gideon's leadership.⁴⁷

The tribal capabilities of ancient Israel accounted for much of its military success during the period. The leadership in depth, potent master narratives, and an effective praxis of religious motivated military art all combined to create a preponderance of military capabilities that endured the deliberate and persistent challenges of the Canaanites. The heroic warrior judges were certainly a critical component of Israel's victories, but these military leaders were supported and nurtured by a population animated by a vibrant socio-military culture that created notable tribal capabilities.

In the modern era the United States faces its chief security challenge in “small wars” in places like Afghanistan, Iraq, and Africa, places where tribal societies exist as both the environment and the opponent. Understanding a broad range of tribal capabilities will contribute significantly to understanding the complexities of tribal warfare, tribal engagement, and the contemporary operational environment, where tribal capabilities have the potential to shape both positive and negative outcomes.

Notes

1. Alfred Bradford, ed., *With Arrow, Sword, and Spear: A History of Warfare in the Ancient World* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2001), 35; Werner Keller, *The Bible as History: A Confirmation of the Book of Books*, trans. William Neil (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1956), 160-164.

2. Werner Keller, *The Bible as History*, 146-147. Keller's study delves into areas undervalued by other studies on the subject of ancient Israel and its military culture; Moshe Weinfeld, “Historical Facts behind the Israelite Settlement Pattern,” *Vetus Testamentum* 38, no. 3 (July 1988): 324-332.

3. Keller, *The Bible as History*, 146-147; Doyne Dawson, *The Origins of Western Warfare: Militarism and Morality in the Ancient World* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 43; Lewis Bayles

Paton, "Canaanite Influence on the Religion of Israel," *The American Journal of Theology* 8, no. 2 (April 1914): 205-224. Payton notes the opposite also occurred as Canaanite tribes were influenced and even incorporated into the Hebrew tribes and their cities.

4. Judges 6:30; Chaim Hertzog, and Mordechia Gichon, *Battles of the Bible* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1978), 55. Chaim Hertzog and Mordechai Gichon note that drought conditions compelled the Midianites to escalate their aggression from merely raiding the tribal lands of Israel to possessing and exploiting it.

5. Judges chapter 6; William J. Dumbrell, "Midian: A Land or a League?" *Vetus Testamentum* 25, no. 2a (May 1975): 323-337.

6. Although there is no official definition of the term "human terrain," generally it refers to the demographic and cultural attributes of a people that affect security in their particular location.

7. Judy Tauges Sterman, "Themes in the Deborah Narrative," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (January 2011), 15.

8. Joshua 11:6 in *The Holy Scriptures According to the Masoretic Text: A New Translation* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1917); Edward Longstreth, *Decisive Battles of the Bible* (Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1962), 61; Thomas W. Overholt, *Cultural Anthropology and the Old Testament* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 255.

9. Judges chapter 1; Chaim Hertzog, and Mordechia Gichon, *Battles of the Bible*, 51.

10. Peter Gabriel, *The Military History of Ancient Israel* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), 157.

11. Philip F. Esler, ed., *Ancient Israel: The Old Testament in Its Social Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 35-49. This leadership in depth contrasts sharply with ancient Greek notions of nobility in warfare as domain of the upper class. Michael M. Sage, *Warfare in Ancient Greece: A Sourcebook* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 4-6.

12. Gabriel, *The Military History of Ancient Israel*, 155.

13. Alfred Edersheim, *Old Testament History* online, vol. 3, Chapter 12, accessed March 13, 2013, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/>.

14. Jo Ann Hackett, "Violence and Women's Lives in the Book of Judges," *Interpretation* 58, no. 4 (October 2004), 356.

15. Gabriel, *The Military History of Ancient Israel*, 155.

16. Judges 21:25 in the Masoretic Text; Zecharia Kallai, "The Twelve-Tribe Systems of Israel," *Vetus Testamentum* 47, no. 1 (January 1997), pp. 53-90.

17. Judges chapter 1.

18. Judges chapter 6-9.

19. Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher, "Framework and Discourse in The Book of Judges," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128, no. 4 (2009): 687.

20. Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; and 15:14.

21. Hebrews 11:32.
22. Judges 6:15-16 in the Masoretic Text.
23. Judges chapter 11.
24. Judges chapter 1.
25. Gillmayr-Bucher, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128, no. 4 (2009), 687.
26. Judges 2:16-18.
27. Judges 1:1 in the Masoretic Text.
28. Judges 11:9.
29. Richard Gale, *Great Battles of Biblical History* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1968), 27.
30. Deuteronomy 16:18.
31. Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*, Vol. II. Online, Book of Judges, Chapter 10, accessed February 21, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/henry/mhc2.Jud.xi.html>.
32. Gillmayr-Bucher, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128, no. 4 (2009), 687.
33. Judges 2:16.
34. Gillmayr-Bucher, *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128, no. 4 (2009), 687.
35. Numbers 14:38-45.
36. Judges 2:19.
37. Judges 2:1; 6:8-9.
38. Judges 11:24.
39. Judges 11:33.
40. E. W. Heaton, ed., *Everyday Life in Old Testament Times* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), 144.
41. Doyne Dawson, *The Origins of Western Warfare: Militarism and Morality in the Ancient World* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1996), 40-42. Dawson argues that the God of the Hebrews played a more active role in warfare than other ancient Near Eastern deities and thus the connection to a practical military art devoid of mysticism is all the more relevant.
42. Bradford, ed., *With Arrow, Sword, and Spear*, 36; Flavius Josephus, *The Complete Works of Flavius Josephus* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Pub. Inc., 1987), 141-142. Josephus discusses Gideon's extraordinary military skills.
43. Judges 7:5-6; Gale, *Great Battles of Biblical History*, 31-32. Gale notes the activity of lapping water while crouched and holding one's weapons indicated the more vigilant Hebrew warriors who "kep[t] their eyes open for the enemy, were alert, keen and intelligent."
44. Judges 7:15 in the Masoretic Text.

45. Judges 7:19.

46. Judges 7:21-22; Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 217-218.

47. Judges 7:24-25.

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