

How did the ephod become a snare to Gideon and Israel?

The scriptures tell us that during the days of Gideon, the Judge of Israel, that an ephod became a snare to Gideon and Israel.

1. What is an “ephod”?

Exodus **25:6-8**

1 Samuel **2:18**

1 Samuel 14:3

2 Samuel 6:14

Exodus **28:4-8**

1 Samuel 2:27-28

1 Samuel 22:18

1 Chronicles 15:27

The word “ephod” is a transliterated word from the Hebrew scriptures. It is a garment that is decorated as a priestly garment.

2. What is the historical context of the statement?

Judges **6:7-10**

Judges **8:22-28**

Judges **6:24-30**

Part of the reason for the Midianites oppressing the nation of Israel was that Israel turned to idolatry or worshipping the false gods of the nations that were in the land. When Gideon was called by God to deliver Israel out from under the dominating power of the Midianites, his first command by God was to destroy the “wood of the grove” in order to being the process of reminding the nation of Israel that God hates idolatry. After delivering the nation of Israel out from under the Midianites, the people of the nation wanted him to be King, but Gideon recognized the true and rightful king of Israel was God. At the same time, Gideon desired a compensation from Israel for his work of service. Unfortunately, Gideon forgot that the reason he delivered Israel from the Midianites was because it was actually God delivering Israel. By asking for gold, Gideon was receiving a reward of money rather than give the honor and glory to God for His provision.

3. Where did it lead the nation of Israel?

Judges **8:27**

Judges **17:6**

Jeremiah **44:15-23**

Judges **8:33-35**

2 Kings **18:4**

Exodus 24:11-17

The Judge of Israel, Gideon, and his family turned to idolatry and following after the gods of the nations around them. If Gideon could follow after idolatry, and he was a chosen judge of God, then perhaps it is not that big of a deal. Perhaps they believed that in their worshipping the ephod of Gideon, the bronze serpent of Moses, or other images they have constructed that they were actually worshipping the one true God. Over time, they did begin recognize a distinction between the god they served and the God of all creation. They believed that it was the god of their choosing that would provide and protect them while in reality the only protection they had comes from the one and only God of all creation who is God by nature.

4. What do we need to keep in mind about our attention to things of this world?

1 John **2:15-17**

Hebrews **11:24-27**

2 Corinthians **4:14-18**

While the things of this world might appear to be of great value, in light of eternity, they have no value. The only thing that has real and lasting value is the relationship that is forged with God by our relationship with Jesus Christ.