

Expositional Preaching from the Authorized Version of the Holy Bible
Current Book: Judges – verse by verse

Scripture(s) for Today: Judges 10-12 – Cycle #6 – Jephthah and the dreadful vow to God

Today's Message:

"A Fatal Vow"



INTRODUCTION

Last week, we concluded the 5th of 7 cycles of sin found in Judges. The wicked, self-proclaimed deliverer Abimelech rose up, but God was not with him. This enemy from within who was hungry for power caused great confusion and harm to the people. There was no crying out of Israel and no rest. Today, we will witness the 6th cycle of sin. The corruption of Israel continues to get worse and worse; there is no king in Israel and everyone is doing that which is right in their own eyes. After **18** years of bondage and oppression, the children of Israel will cry out to God whose loving **RESPONSE** will be unexpected! Jephthah will be asked to lead God's people. After the enemy rejects his request, the Spirit of the LORD will come upon Jephthah. He will make a fatal **VOW** to God and perform it. Is God really ok with this?

LEARNING TOGETHER

A. The Text Judges 10:1-12:15

#1. The Rebellion – the children of Israel did evil **AGAIN** in God's sight. (10:6)

- **God records that His people forsook Him and served many other gods!**
 - ✓ Forsaking God is always **FIRST**; serving other gods quickly follows. **Deut 31:16-18**

NOTE The corruption of God's people was getting worse and worse; they did much evil!

#2. The Retribution – the anger of the LORD was **HOT** against Israel. (10:7)

- **God allowed two enemies to vex and oppress them for 18 years.**
 - ✓ The Philistines and the children of Ammon – both sides! "the squeeze play"

NOTE The children of Israel were *vexed* and *oppressed* and *distressed*; sound familiar??

#3. The Restoration – The children of Israel **CRIED** unto the Lord. (10:10)

- **God did not first answer their cries by immediate rescue from trouble.**
 - ✓ *Did not I deliver you from these enemies **BEFORE**?* **Jdg 2:1-3; Num 21:21-25,35**
 - ✓ God said to go and **CRY** to the gods you have chosen. **Prov 1:25-33; Jer 2:20-28**
 - ✓ Israel put **AWAY** their strange gods and served God. **Gen 35:2; Josh 24:14,23**

NOTE The soul of God was grieved for their misery; do not miss this most important truth!

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- **Jephthah's life story is similar to so many people in our world.**
 - ✓ His birth was the result of **SIN**. *Gen 38:27; Ruth 4:12; Mt 1:3; 2Ki 22:1 (Josiah)*
 - ✓ His family called him an **OUTCAST**. *Gen 21:10; 37:22; Acts 16:37*
 - ✓ He fled to a place of **ISOLATION**. *"Tob" = good, fertile land*
 - ✓ His close companions were **VAIN**. *2Chr 13:7; Ps 119:113; Pr 13:20; 1Cor 5:11*

NOTE Self-pity often causes people to isolate and surround themselves with vain people.

- **Jephthah was called upon to be Israel's captain and deliverer.**
 - ✓ He may have started with the wrong **MOTIVES**. *Ps 139:23; 26:2*
 - ✓ He uttered all his words **BEFORE** the LORD. *Num 30:6, 8; Ps 66:14*
 - ✓ He appealed to God's word for conflict **RESOLUTION**. *Ezra 4:15; 5:17; Jn 5:39*
 - ✓ The Spirit of the LORD came **UPON** him. *Jdg3:10;6:34;14:6,19;15:14; 1Sam16:13*
 - ✓ Jephthah vowed a **VOW** to God for deliverance. *Num 30:2; Ecc 5:4-5; Mt 5:37*

Jephthah's vow:

If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands,

Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.

NOTE God delivered the Ammonites into their hands! Did God know what would happen?

- **Jephthah's daughter came out to meet her father after the victory.**
 - ✓ His innocent daughter was **HAPPY** to see him. *Ex 23:7; 2Sam 12:3; Ps 127:3*
 - ✓ He blamed his daughter for **TROUBLING** him. *Gen 34:30; Josh 7:25; Acts 15:24*
 - ✓ She trusted Jephthah to **OBEDY** God's words. *Ex20:12; Lev20:2;De12:31; Jer32:35*
 - ✓ She asked for 2 months to bewail with friends. *Ps 37:23; 119:59-60; Prov 4:26*
 - ✓ Jephthah did according to his vow; he killed her. *Lev 5:4-6; Mt 18:6; Lk 17:1-2*

NOTE The killing of a child has never been in God's mind; Jephthah should have repented!

#4. The Rest – The Bible does not say they **ENJOYED** rest this cycle. (12:1s-15)

- **Jephthah judged Israel for 6 years and then died without apparent rest.**
 - ✓ The men of Ephraim came to threaten his life. *Jdg 8:1; 1Sam 14:22*
 - ✓ Jephthah gathered men to slay 42,000 of their brothers. *1John 3:14,17; 4:20,21*
 - ✓ The next 3 judges were **Ibzan** (7 years), **Elon** (10 years), **Abdon** (8 years).

B. The Lessons (How can you apply this message to your life?)

1. *It is dangerous to isolate yourself and surround yourself with **VAIN** people.*

❖ **Question:** *What kind of people do you surround yourself with? Prov 13:20; 1Sam 23:16*

2. *It is possible to do the work of the Lord with wrong or selfish **MOTIVES**.*

❖ **Question:** *Are your motives right for God? Is He in all your thoughts? Ps 10:4; Isa 65:2*

3. *It is possible to think you are obeying God and harm yourself or others in **ERROR**.*

❖ **Question:** *Are you sure you are obeying God? Stay close to Christ! Lk 16:23; Prov 9:18*

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