

Book of Hebrews Part 46: 11:32-33; Champions of the Faith: Jephthah and Samson (3/14/2020)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://cornerfringe.com/media/xft4xpd/book-of-hebrews-part-46>.

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

We are in Hebrews chapter eleven, and we're getting to the very end of the list. What we saw in our last message was the writer began to lump the judges together. We covered the first two, Gideon and Barak. Today we are going to be looking at Samson and Jephthah.

Before we get into this, I think it's appropriate for us to go back to the Apocrypha. I want to look at a passage there, specifically regarding the judges. For those of you who haven't been through previous parts of the study, what we see happening in Hebrews chapter eleven is there's a structure which comes out where the writer brings all these heroes of the faith to the table. This isn't something new. The writer of Hebrews didn't invent this concept. This is something which existed long before the book of Hebrews was written. We can go back to the Apocrypha and look at the book of Sirach and we find a list of all these heroes of the faith. That is what I want to show you.

In the book of Sirach, it says something which we need to draw from before we continue today. It says, **"The judges [such as Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephthah] also, with their respective names, whose hearts did not fall into idolatry and who did not turn away from the Lord— may their memory be blessed! ¹² May their bones send forth new life from where they lie, [as in, where they lie dead] and may the names of those who have been honored live again in their children!"** (Sirach 44:11-12).

This is mind blowing! Do you understand what the writers recognizing here? He is recognizing these men, although they are long gone, they are dead, there is life they give from their story. Look at what the people have done who emulate them, to carry on with this, and listen to them. There is this kind of walk they displayed, the commitment they had to the Lord, and when they grab onto that, they are strengthened. In a sense, they spiritually become their children, and they go on and live. This is an amazing thing. This is life from the dead!

So, as we study these judges today, Samson and Jephthah, let this reality, this calling, resonate in your heart. This is why the writer of Hebrews brought this list to the table. He wants us to join the ranks. This is the precedent you need to meet. This is the level it takes. This is what it looks like. Do you want to get in the Kingdom of God? This is what you need to look like. These people are mentioned to bring us strength.

Remember what he said in Hebrews 6:11-12? **And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² that you do not become sluggish** (Meaning, don't you dare become lazy and complacent. Don't do it.) **,but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.**

What I love about this is he tells us the kind of guys he's thinking about. We are to imitate these guys we are reading about in Hebrews chapter eleven. If we emulate them, our outcome is going to be the same as theirs. We're going to inherit eternal life.

So with that said, let's take a look at Samson and Jephthah. We are going to start with Jephthah. Jephthah has a peculiar story, and you'll appreciate what I'm saying as we look at it. But what it is going to do, and I'm assured of this, is minister to many of you, if not all of you, in a very profound way. As we look at his life, we are looking at the mercy, power, and the grace of God.

I want to take you back to the Book of Judges chapter ten. We don't even see Jephthah until chapter eleven, but we need to have a little bit of context to appreciate this man, his life, his situation, and the environment. This is what we read in Judges 10:6, **Then the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Baals and the Ashtoreths, the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the people of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook the LORD and did not serve Him.**

So, understand the environment spoken about here. Israel has been completely overrun by the spirit of antichrist. They're taking on water; taking on the doctrine and ideologies of all the pagan nations around them. This was the very thing God warned them they were not to do. Israel was called to be completely separate and set apart from these nations, yet they are receiving all of this ideology unto their own destruction.

Think about all the scripture we could quote such as where Paul talks about a little leaven leavens the whole lump, or the righteous should choose his friends carefully because the way of the wicked leads them astray. Or you can think about Paul's words to the Corinthians where he asks what fellowship has lawlessness with righteousness? What communion has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Nothing! There is to be no friendship with the world.

In fact, what does James say? James 4:4 says, **“Adulterers and adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity, it is hatred, against God?”** And yet, this is what Israel has done. They're making friends with the enemies of the LORD. They're making friends with sin, with evil. And as we know, evil company will corrupt good habits.

So, here's how the LORD responds. Judges 10:7, **So the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel; and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and into the hands of the people of Ammon.** So Israel completely turned their back on God, and what does God do? He gives them completely over to the adversary.

Now, I want you to understand there is a biblical principle you need to lock down in your heart, and it will never be broken. That principle is this: If you forsake God, He is going to forsake you. This is an absolute biblical fact, and it's mentioned several times in scripture. This is not opinion. You forsake the LORD; He will forsake you.

So, when we read the beautiful passage in Deuteronomy 31:6 that says, **...He will never leave you nor forsake you**, you need to understand this is in the context that you do not rebel and turn your back on God. If you go to Him, you seek Him, you humble yourself before Him, then He will be found and He will never leave you. However, keeping this in context, you absolutely can leave Him. It can be done, and this is what Israel has done.

Moving to Judges 10:8, **From that year they harassed and oppressed the children of Israel for eighteen years** (Emphasis added). Think about that; being oppressed and in total bondage, living in hell, for eighteen years. This is interesting because it's going to be in this year they're going to receive deliverance.

I will tell you why it is interesting because the number eighteen is significant biblically speaking. If you get into that gematria, which I don't get so much into, but every Hebrew letter carries a numerical value.

The numerical value for חַיִּים (ḥay), meaning life in Hebrew, is eighteen? So it has some depth to it. It's interesting that deliverance is going to come in the eighteenth year.

If you take it a step further, when you go to the New Testament you find Yeshua is accustomed to doing something. He does this because in part He is merciful, gracious, and loving, but because it also drives the Pharisees crazy. What is it? He loves to heal on the Shabbat. He loves it.

Well, the ruler of the synagogue doesn't appreciate this so much. In Luke 13:14, it is recorded the ruler of the synagogue got so mad he told the people, **...“There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.”**

Yeshua rebukes him; and listen to what Yeshua says in Luke 13:16, **“So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?”**

It's amazing because in our story Israel is experiencing the situation of being in bondage for eighteen years. Now they are going to be set free. God is going to send them a deliverer. This is what is coming, and we see this being played out even with Yeshua. Isn't this so cool?

This even gets more intense as we continue in Judges 10:10, **And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD, saying, "We have sinned against You, because we have both forsaken our God and served the Baals!"** So right here we see Israel is broken. They come to a point of conviction. They don't just have conviction, they have confession. They are confessing not just God, but they're confessing their sin. This is total. This situation is an example of 2 Chronicles 7:14, **if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.**

Israel is now at this point, and this is critical for us to witness. They're broken. They're calling upon God.

Continuing in Judges 10:11-12, **So the LORD said to the children of Israel, "Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians and from the Amorites and from the people of Ammon and from the Philistines? ¹² Also the Sidonians and Amalekites and Maonites oppressed you; and you cried out to Me, and I delivered you from their hand.**

It is interesting to hear this. Israel, after being immersed in sin, totally forsaking the LORD, serving demons, serving the devil, come back broken and crying out to God. What is God's first responses, "Did you forget Who I was? Did you forget all the deliverance I've done for you? What has happened?" As we mentioned in the last message, one of the things that will happen when you forget what Yeshua has done in your life is you will go get married to the world. It's inevitable. We see this over and over again with Israel when they forget Who God is. This is where the problem comes in.

The first thing the LORD does is plead His case of Who He is and Who He has been. He has been totally faithful, but they were adulterous. He was the faithful husband; they were the adulterous wife.

Now it gets worse. Judges 10:13-14, "Yet you have forsaken Me and served other gods. Therefore I will deliver you no more. ¹⁴ Go and cry out to the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in your time of distress."

What would you do if you were totally broken and convicted? If you have been serving the devil and yourself, and you were convicted because you've been serving the world? Then you come back to the LORD, and you're crying out to Him, but the LORD says to you, "I'm done with you. Get out of My sight. I've had it; you've been adulterous. You've been going out with the world. So you know what? That world with which you have committed adultery, go seek help from those gods."

This is absolutely devastating. What is the LORD expressing here? Anger. He's hurt. He's broken. The LORD is hurting. This is painful for Him, and He expresses His heart to Israel. Then we read in Judges 10:15-16, ¹⁵And the children of Israel said to the LORD, "We have sinned! Do to us whatever seems best to You...." Let me ask you something. For Israel to do this, what would you have to do with the LORD? For you to say, "LORD, we put our well-being in Your hands entirely," you must trust Him. This is a statement of unwavering faith that they trust Him and only Him. They are willing to put their livelihood in His hands.

Continuing in Judges, "only deliver us this day, we pray." ¹⁶ So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD. This is absolutely mind-blowing! This is after God said, "Get away from Me. I'm done with you. I've had it. There is no more discussion." What does Israel do in response to what the LORD said to them? How many of you would have said, "Well, there's no point? I might as well go and commit adultery with the world. I might as well go live in sin. I might as well enjoy the best I can because the LORD has just totally rejected me."

Israel doesn't do that. They come back and confess again knowing they have sinned. And guess what? They put their idols away from them. They walked in righteousness. They didn't care what He did to them: "Lord, whatever You do, You are God. We trust in You."

This is an unbelievable response. This is the brokenness. This is somebody who's had true conviction and understands what repentance really looks like even when God said what He said. This is mind-blowing!

How does the LORD respond to this? This is what is amazing. Look at this, ...And His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel (Judges 10:16). They melted the heart of God by repentance and crying out. Keep in mind we could go back and read it a thousand times. I know what the LORD said. He said, "I'm done with you. You go serve your other gods. We're done here." Even after He spoke that

to them, they came back and cried out. That is true repentance and brokenness. They melted His heart so that He couldn't stay away. Think about that kind of love. Think about that grace; that kind of mercy.

These are the most breathtaking moments in scripture, and they're all over the place because all we read about is the LORD showing mercy. And with the greatest expression the world has ever seen, finally giving His son to die on the cross. This is mercy.

This is the stuff the devil doesn't want you to know. He doesn't want you to believe you can melt the heart of God. What does he want you to believe? He wants you to believe you are a dirty rascal. How you have been living your life, and the person you've always been, is the person you are always going to be. You will never be any different. Repentance is not going to change anything. Your prayers are just words. They don't mean anything. Nothing is going to change. The devil will tell you God is established; He is not going to forgive you.

All of what the devil says is a lie because repeatedly we can see God cannot deny His own character of Who He is. This speaks louder to me than anything else in Scripture. This is who Yeshua is. He's Grace. He's Mercy. You can melt His heart. I don't care what your situation. I don't care how far you've gone. I don't care what sin you've committed. You can break the Lord's heart because He can't deny Himself. He will draw to you. He is love; He doesn't know anything else. He is love. This is powerful!

I'm moving on to Judges 10:17-18, **Then the people of Ammon gathered together and encamped in Gilead. And the children of Israel assembled together and encamped in Mizpah. ¹⁸ And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said to one another, "Who is the man who will begin the fight against the people of Ammon? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."**

So Israel has been suffering. They've been oppressed, but now they're ready to go to war. This is only recorded after total brokenness before the LORD, and the LORD could no longer endure the cries of His people. It is at this point we are introduced to Jephthah.

We find the first words regarding Jephthah in Judges 11:1, **Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor.** He was a mighty man of valor! This is the first thing recorded of Jephthah. So, if you want to know who this guy is and his reputation, and why the writer of Hebrews would include him in chapter eleven as this great titan of the faith, look no further. He is a mighty man of valor.

Now look at what else is said in Judges 11:1, **but he was the son of a harlot; and Gilead begot Jephthah.** In other translations, like the Jewish translation, it says he was the son of a prostitute. This is who he was.

This is what I love about the writer of Judges. Look at the kind of people he includes in chapter eleven regarding what he calls titans of the faith. This list has harlots and the son of a harlot. What does this tell you? It shows you the mercy and grace of God. It doesn't matter what you have been or what you have done, when you melt the Lord's heart with repentance and confession, putting total trust in Yeshua, you can be counted amongst the greatest of the greats. This is the hope. This is so powerful.

Moving to Judges 11:2, **Gilead's wife bore sons; and when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out, and said to him, "You shall have no inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman."** (Emphasis added). They were telling him he was a son of a harlot, "You're the son of a prostitute. You don't belong here." They're offended and repulsed by this man. But their judgment

wasn't based on any horrible deed Jephthah did to them. They were offended because he was the son of a harlot. What do you think this does to a guy like that?

Put yourself in Jephthah's shoes. Your identity is in your family. Whether you realize it or not, so much of who you are, your identity, and what shapes you, are all in your family. And when your own family, your flesh and blood, comes to you and says, "Get out, we're done with you, we want nothing to do with you," what do you think that does to a man or woman? It's devastating!

Some of you might be able to relate to Jephthah. I don't know. I know there are Messianic Jews who can relate to Jephthah. These are people who love their mom and dad, but once it is found out they are confessing Yeshua, they are told to get out. Their family wants nothing to do with them. They are an offense to their family. It is viewed in the same light as, "Hitler treated us better than the way you're treating us. Therefore, you need to get out."

Being the recipient of this type of treatment devastates them. Their identity is wrapped in their family, and Jephthah is being stripped of this.

Now let me ask you, what kind of door does this potentially open? A door to anger, frustration, and bitterness. Maybe even unforgiveness. And not just against his own family. What about against God? Don't you think the enemy is going to come in and say, "You see? You see what happened? You see what happens when you follow God? You see how God treats you? Where was God in all of this when your own flesh and blood betrays you?"

Do you see the dangers involved here? This is what Jephthah is up against, and yet what we will see in scripture is there is not one fragment, not a syllable, dedicated to Jephthah indicating he walked away from the LORD. This is absolutely amazing!

I bring this to the table because you must feel the reality of why this man would be included in Hebrews eleven. This is a righteous man! He's an honorable man of valor.

Moving forward, I want to tell you there is a boatload of Messianic implication here. A boatload of prophetic inference. They're stacked one on top of another. First, looking at Jephthah's life, we can find he is a Messianic typology because Jephthah was rejected by his own family. And this is the narrative of Yeshua. When Yeshua came, He was rejected by His own family.

This is interesting because Yeshua tells a parable in Matthew 21 about a vineyard. The vinedresser is sending people out to the vineyard, yet they are mistreating and stoning these people who are sent. But then the vinedresser decides to send his son. And what is interesting is when the vinedresser sends his son, the people said, "Let us kill him and take his inheritance. His inheritance will be ours." It's interesting because when you read in Judges 11:2, **You shall have no inheritance in our father's house,** they are taking his inheritance or excluding him. They are cutting off his inheritance. This is a Messianic typology. We start seeing pictures, symmetry, of the Lord mysteriously coming out from the pages of scripture, and we will see more.

Moving on to Judges 11:3, **³ Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of Tob** [which ironically means good] **and worthless men banded together with Jephthah** (Emphasis added).

Now when you look at this “banded together” in the Hebrew, it is וַיִּתְּלַקְטוּ (lāqat). It literally means they gather together. Or if you read this in the Septuagint, it talks about how they went out and followed him. This is what they did.

This is mind-blowing, right? These are worthless men. This is what it says in Hebrew; they have no fruit. They're completely worthless. This is what sinners are described as. This is how the Gentiles are described: as completely worthless, but they band together. They gather together. They went out and follow Jephthah.

Continuing in Judges 11:3, **and went out raiding with him**. That word raiding is italicized because it's not even in the Hebrew text. You can go read the Hebrew text, and it simply says, “went out with him.” So they are gathering with him, and they went out with him.

Continuing in Judges 11:4, **It came to pass after a time that the people of Ammon made war against Israel**. What is amazing is when you look at this on a prophetic level, you have Jephthah being rejected by his own flesh and blood. He was cast out. They don't want him to have an inheritance. Then all of a sudden these worthless men, these Gentiles, start gathering to him. You can't make this up because when Yeshua came He was rejected by His own. But what happened out of that was the gospel went out to the world, and Gentiles started gathering to Yeshua. This is incredible!

I could give you prophecy after prophecy from Isaiah stating He would be a light to the Gentiles along with these worthless men. In fact, it gets more fascinating when you think about Jeremiah 16:19-20. At the end of the chapter, there is a prophecy stating the Gentiles come and say, ¹⁹ **...Surely our fathers have inherited lies, Worthlessness and unprofitable things**. After which God says, ²⁰ **Will a man make gods for himself, Which are not gods?** It's a prophecy of what these worthless men who serve worthless things would do. They would come to Him. They would be coming to the Jewish Messiah.

I can take it even a step further looking at Jephthah's name. His name in Hebrew is יִפְתָּח (yiptāh). Do you know what his name means? It means, “he opens”. You can go to Acts 14 where Paul and Barnabas are telling the story about how God has opened the door to the Gentiles. He literally opens the door to the Gentiles. That is what Jephthah's name means. It means he opens.

Now moving to Judges 11:5-6, **And so it was, when the people of Ammon made war against Israel, that the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob. ⁶ Then they said to Jephthah, "Come and be our commander, that we may fight against the people of Ammon."**

This is crazy when you look at this in the spiritual context. Yes, the Jewish people rejected Yeshua. Then we are told in prophecy they are going to go back to Him. And what are they going to ask Him? “Yeshua, be master over us; be our commander.” It's coming. We're living in these days. We're seeing more and more Jews coming back to the faith. The very Jews who rejected Him are coming back and saying, “Be our Messiah.” This is absolutely incredible!

So how does Jephthah respond to this? Judges 11:7, **So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “Did you not hate me, and expel me from my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?”**

It is interesting because Jephthah's response mirrors the response God gave to Israel when they came back with humility and repentance.

So Jephthah comes back and says, you hated me, and now you want me to come back? And they are like, yes, we want you to come back.

Moving on to Judges 11:9, **So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you take me back home....** Let's get on a practical level. This is such a beautiful thing because you can see the heart of Jephthah. He was broken being away and being cast out from his family, but he says, **if you take me back home.** He wants to go. This is what he wants. He's going to go home.

Continuing in Judges 11:9-10, **"If you take me back home to fight against the people of Ammon, and the LORD delivers them to me, shall I be your head?"** ¹⁰ **And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "The LORD will be a witness between us, if we do not do according to your words."** (Emphasis added).

Now, here's what I want you to see. The writer of Hebrews is talking about this man of faith, and he deserves to be included on this list of all these titans of the faith. Do you see the reason for that? It is clear as day. In other words, when Jephthah goes to them, he talks about the LORD "delivering them to me". Does Jephthah take any confidence whatsoever in his own ability to go out and win this war just to come back to his family? No. He gives that credit to the LORD. Is his trust in any other god? Is it Baal? Is it in the god of Sideons? Is it in the god of the Syrians? No. It is not in any other god. It's in Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is a man of faith, and he's proclaiming it. This is the beauty of it.

So, you know where Israel's heart is because they are proclaiming the same God. They said, the LORD Yahweh. They don't say, Baal is witness. They do not say, you can have Yahweh be one witness; we will have Baal be another. They said their God is Yahweh. So everything is in line at this moment.

Moving on to Judges 11:12-13, ¹²**Now Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon, saying, "What do you have against me that you have come to fight against me in my land?"** (Emphasis added). He is home; this is his land. ¹³ **And the king of the people of Ammon answered the messengers of Jephthah, "Because Israel took away my land when they came up out of Egypt, from the Arnon as far as the Jabbok, and to the Jordan. Now therefore, restore those lands peaceably."**

Isn't that interesting? I did a video not that long ago regarding this statement, this debate. We are 3,000 years removed from this event, and this is still happening. The people of Ammon are still going to the Jewish people, to Israel, and saying, "You're on our land. Get out. We don't want you here." What do you think is happening in Israel right now? The Palestinians are saying, "You're evil, illegal occupiers." Every time they go to build a deck, or every time they go to annex a part of the West Bank, it's almost like World War III starts to break out. They don't want the Jewish people there. They want them completely out of the land.

In fact, I watched an actual interview of this Palestinian leader. And the leader was identifying as Philistine. He said, "We are Philistines. We are the descendants of the Philistines. The Philistines were here before any Jew. This land is ours. Therefore, we have the rights. Our rights go back before the Jewish people's rights." The very situation you see happening today was the same thing that was happening with Jephthah. He's up against this. How he handles it is beyond brilliant.

He goes on in Judges 11:23-24, ²³And now the LORD God of Israel has dispossessed the Amorites from before His people Israel; should you then possess it? ²⁴Will you not possess whatever Chemosh your god gives you to possess? So whatever the LORD our God takes possession of before us, we will possess. This is absolutely brilliant.

You see, this is the argument. If you look at what's going on in Israel today, it shouldn't be about every time they do archeological digs they find evidence of a Davidic kingdom as though this is going to help their situation because this proves the Jews have a place there. Do you know archaeology is so politicized over there? Of course they don't want that because they don't want to be able to tie the Jews to the land. But I'm going to tell you right now that isn't going to cut it. That's not even the argument. That's not what we should be resting upon. The only thing we should rest upon in regard to the Jewish people being in the land is exactly what Jephthah says. He basically said, "Here's the deal, Palestinians today, whatever god you serve, you will get whatever your god will give you. And guess what? The God of Israel is going to give us whatever He gives us.

Now, with Jephthah, the argument is, "This isn't even going to be between us." Instead he says, "Let's give it to our Gods. Let our Gods start battling this out."

I love this because this is where you get into the Prophet Elijah. Elijah challenges the god of Baal. He challenges the followers of Baal. He was basically, "You put your god up against my God, and we'll settle the score." And honestly, that is the reality. There's no better way to handle and understand why the Jewish people are in the land. I don't care what anyone says, the Jewish people aren't in the land because of the UN. The Jewish people aren't even in the land because the people of the world felt sorry for them because they practically got wiped out in the Holocaust. The Jewish people are in the land because there is a God of Israel. That's why they are in the land, and He brought them there. So, our God will carry the day. This is where the argument begins, and this is where it ends.

So, as we look at Jephthah, with all due respect, this is not a man who is weak in the faith. He is not feeble in his knees. He's not wavering. He's not going to buckle from the pressure. He is in a pressure situation, and he doesn't buckle at all. He rejoices, he confesses, he believes, and he trusts in his God. It is an awesome thing!

Continuing to Judges 11:25, **And now, are you any better than Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he ever strive against Israel? Did he ever fight against them?** I find that Jephthah is kind of throwing them a bone. He's kind of being nice. He's like, "What are you thinking? You're nothing compared to even Balak, the son of Zippor. He did not mess with us. He wanted to curse us, but Balaam only came back blessing us. He didn't lift up a sword against us; he knew better. Have you not learned? Look at history."

Judges 11:26-27, ²⁶While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and its villages, in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities along the banks of the Arnon, for three hundred years, why did you not recover them within that time? ²⁷Therefore I have not sinned against you, but you wronged me by fighting against me. May the LORD, the Judge....

Jephthah knows his God. He has a reverence for Him, and he knows He's the final word. God is the final word. He is the authority; He's the Mishpat, right? He is the judge.

Continuing in verse 27-31, “render judgment this day between the children of Israel and the people of Ammon.”²⁸ However, the king of the people of Ammon did not heed the words which Jephthah sent him.²⁹ Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed through Mizpah of Gilead; and from Mizpah of Gilead he advanced toward the people of Ammon.³⁰ And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD, and said, “If You will indeed deliver the people of Ammon into my hands,³¹ then it will be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the people of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD’S, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering.”

We are not going to get into the vow Jephthah made. There is a lot of debate regarding this. What I want to focus on is verse 32.

Judges 11:32, **So Jephthah advanced toward the people of Ammon to fight against them, and the LORD delivered them into his hands.** (Emphasis added). Jephthah had faith. He called upon the LORD. He was honorable for the LORD. He trusted in Him. He didn’t waver in faith. He gave God all the glory, and God utilized him, the son of a harlot, to come in and to do the most awesome work. Look at what it says in Hebrews:

Hebrews 11:32- And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and **Jephthah** also of David and Samuel and the prophets:³³ who **through faith subdued kingdoms**

All of this makes perfect sense. I could even bring up more illustrations. We could dig into this deeper in regard to the prophetic inferences here of knowing Jephthah, the son of a harlot. Remember Miriam [Mary], Yeshua’s mother? When she first became pregnant with child, Joseph saw her as a harlot. This is why the angel had to come meet him and said, “Do not be afraid.” He was going to put her away. His plan was to divorce her because he viewed her as a harlot, but then the angel came and settles that score right away. So, there's just amazing comparatives about this story on multiple levels. It's awesome!

Now with that said, I want to move on to Samson.

When you look at Samson's name in the Hebrew, it is שִׁמְשׁוֹן (shim-shone'). The root of that word means, sun. A lot of people look at Samson's name as having something to do with the sun. Maybe he's like the sun, or something to the effect of the sun. Some other people just translate it as strong man. Samson is one who would fall into the categories of the controversial in this list in Hebrews. He is definitely a controversial character.

The commentaries that have been written on him make me want to tear my clothes and throw dust on my head because they are so bad, are miss judging, and off the mark. You will get a taste of that today.

With that said, we are going to go back to the Book of Judges 13:1, **Again the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.**

That is the longest time you'll read in the book regarding Israel being given over to the enemy.

And when you look at the number 40, it is significant because it is the number of trial, tribulation, anger, and of wrath. We can look at the 40 days and 40 nights the LORD rained down on the earth during Noah's time in the ark. His wrath came down. You can see Yeshua through the trial, tribulation, and being tempted in the desert, fasting for 40 days. I could go on and on with examples of the number 40 in scripture. There is also Israel in the wilderness for 40 years. They are in turmoil; it is a horrible, hellish experience.

So here they are in this situation. It is a mirror replica of the time of Jephthah where Israel had fallen away from God, but then there was a turnaround. Here we are going to see this play out again.

Judges 13:2-5, **Now there was a certain man from Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and had no children. ³ And the Angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Indeed now, you are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. ⁴ "Now therefore, please be careful not to drink wine or similar drink, and not to eat anything unclean. ⁵ "For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines."**

So here we get this introduction. But I am going to skip over this part about the Angel of God, which is Yeshua. There is no debate about that, but we are going to skip over that today and instead plow ahead and recognize a few things.

First, Samson, before conception, was already set apart as holy to God. So if you want to have reverence for a man, this is a good start knowing his calling. When you are dealing with men like this, and men like John the Baptist and Jeremiah, who were anointed within the womb or before conception, you know you're dealing with an epic warrior of the faith. An epic hero of the faith. This is who Samson was.

I want to give you a side note here that is really interesting. Samson and Samuel have a lot in common. Samuel's mother was totally barren just like Samson's mother was barren. It was only by the miraculous hand of God, they conceived. It was directed both these men were never to have a razor come upon their head. They were to be a Nazirite from birth. They were to be dedicated and holy to the LORD. Even the mothers could not consume anything from seed to skin in regard to the grape vine. They had to completely abstain from that. So, this Samson is a fascinating character.

Now, we're going to jump ahead here to Judges 13:24-25, **So the woman bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. [Now look at this because this is interesting] ²⁵ **And the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon him at Mahaneh Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.** (Emphasis added).**

It is important you recognize this. The Spirit of God has come upon him. The next thing we read is in Judges 14:1-3, **Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. ² So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, "I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife." ³ Then his father and mother said to him, "Is there no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?"**

Put yourself in his parent's shoes right now. It is like, "have you lost your ever-loving mind? What are you thinking?" Number one, they know Torah, and they know, as instructed in Deuteronomy 7, this cannot be done. The Israelites were not to intermarry with the uncircumcised. They were not to intermingle with the pagans around them. They were not to make marriages with them, and God warns because He knew the pagans were going to turn God's sons away from following Him. So his parents are beside themselves. None of this makes sense.

To add to this, his parents had seen Yeshua face-to-face when they had the experience with this Angel who goes up in the offering and a flame of fire. It is a mind-blowing experience! They know the call on Samson's life. This man is to be set apart. The mother abstained from wine knowing her son was destined for greatness with the LORD. He is the LORD's. And now they have their son asking the unthinkable. He has spotted one of the Philistine gals, he thinks she is amazing, and he directs his parents to get her for his wife. That is crazy to them!

This is where the commentaries get interesting because the commentators see Samson as undermining his parent's authority concerning the situation. He is also undermining the instructions given in the Torah. However, as we continue, you're going to see maybe something a little bit different is going to happen.

We have to go to Judges 14:3, **...And Samson said to his father, "Get her for me, for she pleases me well."** (Emphasis added). His parents have expressed their concern, and there was probably some other things said that were not recorded, but how does Samson respond? Does he say, "Oh, you're right mom and dad. I forgot who I was. I forgot what the Torah instructs. I forgot about the call on my life. I'm sorry. You're right. I'll try to go find another daughter?" He doesn't do that? No! He turns back and says, "no", **she pleases me.**

It is interesting when you look at this in the Hebrew, the word used for pleases is נָשָׂר! (yāšār). It is found in both old and modern Hebrew. It's a term for straight as in you would go straight. You could even translate it as, appealing to me, she's agreeable to me, she's upright, or even just.

Now let me take you to the Septuagint and show you how the sages translated this very passage from Hebrew to the Greek. This is what they do. LXX - **"Take her for me because she is right in my eyes."**

Now you think about that for a second; this kind of puts a spin on things. You might say, "Well, not really, Daniel. With all due respect he said, "right in my eyes." These could be eyes of flesh; all they care about is the lust of the flesh, and this is what is governing Samson." I would tell you, hold on a second; you have a major problem. Number one, remember that we read the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson? Then it says the very next thing he does is say, "go get this Philistine woman as a wife for me." That's the very next thing he does after being anointed, and then he says, "she is right."

What do we read as we continue? This is what matters. Judges 14:4, **But his father and mother did not know that it was of the LORD--that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.** (Emphasis added).

So before you start picking up commentaries where the commentators have no understanding whatsoever in regard to the situation, and they start dogging, if you will, on Samson as being this wild, sex crazed man who is going off with no care of the world, keep in mind nothing could be further from the truth. Let me be clear; I'm not saying Samson is perfect, but nothing could be further from the truth

in this situation. Is the fact of him going out and doing this weird? Yeah, is it weird. Does it go against the Torah? Yes. It doesn't line up with the Torah. I get that it doesn't make sense. It doesn't make sense being called as a Nazirite and then to go to the uncircumcised, but it does to the LORD.

Let me take it a step further. In fact, one could argue, it is the precedent. And what do I mean by that? Go to the Book of Hosea. Hosea, the prophet, is asked to do something none of us can wrap our head around. He is instructed to go and take a woman of harlotry and bear children of harlotry. This was an honorable, holy man set apart by God to do Godly things. And yet God tells him to take a woman of harlotry. So he does. He takes Gomer, and she bears him two sons and a daughter. The first is called Jezreel. And when you look at this, all the meanings of the names of these children are a horrible curse. Jezreel means, I'm going to scatter you. God is casting them away from Himself.

The second child is named Lo-Ruhamah. This name means, you will not have mercy. I am not going to give you mercy. The third child's name is Lo-Ammi, which means, you are not my people.

Here is what is mind-blowing. This is the context. God gets a prophet, a holy man of God, to go take a harlot as his wife. This, however, is going to bring about deliverance for His people because the very next thing you read in the passage where it says, "you are not My people," it says, "you shall be called My People." This is unbelievable! This is the mercy of God coming in and totally flipping the whole thing upside down, and this is how He is choosing to do it.

Now, does that make sense? No! However, it doesn't have to make sense to me because I know God did it. This is certainly not the way I would open a marriage counseling seminar by speaking about Hosea and Samson. That would not be a good idea.

But the thing about this is people can think they know Torah, and therefore know the ways of God. And yet they can't listen to the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of God always leads you into the Torah. But I'm going to tell you, for you to get your mind wrapped around what the Lord is doing here, you must have a total spiritual understanding of His word, His plan, and how He does these things.

You must be very, very careful because living in the day of Samson, everybody would be pointing their fingers saying, "He is anointed with the Holy Spirit. He is doing the mission of God." And everyone would be saying, "You're a total hypocrite. You're a Torah breaker. You're evil. You should be ashamed of yourself." They would be hurling insults like we see happened to King David. He faced false accusations even though David was righteous and holy. I'm not talking about his mishap with Bathsheba; I'm talking about when others were coming against him. However, we are not going to get into that right now.

All right. We have a little bit more here that I want to cover. I wasn't going to do this, but I did put this in. So, let's go to Judges 14:5-6, **So Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came to the vineyards of Timnah. Now to his surprise, a young lion came roaring against him. ⁶And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat, though he had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.**

Now look at what the writer of Hebrews said in Hebrews 11:32-33, **And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: ³³ who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.** (Emphasis added).

As the writer of Hebrews was reading the story in Judges, he was reading it with this context. He is looking at Samson as if Samson did this in faith.

It gets better as we continue in Judges 14:7-9, **Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.** ⁸ **After some time, when he returned to get her** [some manuscripts say, when he returned the following year to marry her. This was not fornication; he was intending to marry her], **he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the carcass of the lion.** ⁹ **He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.**

What a bizarre thing to even record. What a bizarre event. I mean, all the way from the Philistine to the lion. It's crazy!

Continuing in Judges 14:10-12, **So his father went down to the woman. And Samson gave a feast there,** [I want you to pay attention because the feast they are talking about is known as the wedding feast] **for young men used to do so.** ¹¹ **And it happened, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him.** [These men would have been of the local area; they were not of his dissent]. ¹² **Then Samson said to them, "Let me pose a riddle to you. If you can correctly solve and explain it to me within the seven days of the feast, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing.** (Emphasis added).

This is absolutely amazing! Samson has come to what is known as the wedding feast, and now we learn this feast is seven days long. What Feast are we coming to in a few weeks that is a wedding feast? Passover. It is the marriage supper of the Lamb. It's a wedding feast. It lasts seven days. This is an incredible thing!

So here Samson is posing a riddle based upon what he did to the lion. Okay? It wasn't just what happened to the lion. Obviously, the lion was killed. But what happened to the lion? I mean, this is absolutely mind-blowing?

Moving on to Judges 14:13-14, **But if you cannot explain it to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing.** And they said to him, "Pose your riddle, that we may hear it." ¹⁴ **So he said to them: "Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet."** [Now listen to this. This is huge!] **Now for three days they could not explain the riddle.**

Do you know what blows my mind? We know they couldn't explain it in four days. They didn't explain in five days. They didn't explain it in six days. It wasn't till the last day of the feast, not until the seventh day, they got it. Why then does it say, **Now for three days they could not explain the riddle?**

So when you read this in the text, it makes no sense. Why would they even make this statement unless the LORD is trying to draw you in and is telling you, "Hey, wait a minute. Stop! There's something here you have got to understand. Look into this deeper. There's something more about this." When was Yeshua killed? During Passover. Then He was hidden for three days. He rose on the third day. As we look at this, and we're looking at this riddle, this is all about Yeshua. It's a prophecy about Him.

In fact, I love what Paul says in Ephesians 3:4, **...the mystery of Christ**. And again, in Colossians 1:26, **the mystery which has been hidden from the ages...** It is a riddle. An enigma. This is who Christ is, and here this whole riddle is based upon the lion. A lion that was killed. And what is Yeshua called? The Lion of Judah. He's the Lion of Judah!

This gets better. When you go back to Judges 14:6, you see something mind-blowing that was said about this lion, **...and he tore the lion apart as one would have torn apart a young goat**. Why would you even compare tearing apart a lion to tearing apart a goat? This does not make sense. Unless you're drawing the illusion that just like this goes from the lion to the goat, on Passover, you could take from the lambs or the goats. Here we have the lion and the lamb, which is the very thing that is mentioned in Revelation 5 and this sacrifice.

It is even more interesting as you go and look at the words, **"torn apart a young goat"**. You can go back to Leviticus 1 and find this same Hebrew word is used in the context of sacrifice. Absolutely incredible!

So you can see how deep, profound, and prophetic this is. It's all about Yeshua. We just keep seeing this typology, these beautiful mysteries that foretell what Yeshua would do, what He would look like, and what He would accomplish.

Let's look at this honey in Judges 14:14, **Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the strong came something sweet**. Think about this riddle for a second. **Out of the eater came something to eat**. It was because of His death. Only upon the death, the death of the King, the King of the Jews [which was written above His head at His crucifixion], this is the Lion of Judah. Only upon His death did something come out for us to eat. This is amazing!

Look at this in Psalm 119:103, **How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!** His word is likened to honey. Again, in Psalm 34:8 we find, **Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!**

We are to taste Him in the sense that Samson tasted honey. We are to taste this through our faith in Yeshua. It's amazing because Peter and the writer of Hebrews both allude to this very passage of being able to taste the LORD.

Revelation 10:10, **Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth.**

This is His word. And what do we know of Yeshua? He's the word made flesh we are to eat.