



## **Judges 11:1-11** **(Jephthah, Judge of Israel, Part I)**

In reading Adam Clarke's commentary on Judges 11:8, I couldn't help but think of the relationship between Israel and Jesus. Israel turned away from Him, spurning Him as their Messiah. That has cost them for the past two thousand years.

To this day, they still don't realize it. But a time is coming when that will change. Think of the words of the elders of Israel in the future as I read what Clarke said about the elders' words to Jephthah –

“Therefore we turn again to thee now - We are convinced that we have dealt unjustly by thee, and we wish now to repair our fault, and give thee this sincere proof of our regret for having acted unjustly, and of our confidence in thee.”  
Adam Clarke Commentary on Judges 11:8

Jephthah was driven from his father's house by his brothers so he went to the land of Tob. Jesus has been all but driven out of the house of His brothers, the Jewish people. They often won't even speak His name unless they use it as a curse.

And yet, someday, they will come before Him and admit that they regret their conduct and that they have acted unjustly toward Him. That isn't a maybe. It will happen. The Bible has prophesied it, and it is simply a matter of when it will come to pass.

**Text Verse:** *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! <sup>38</sup> See! Your house is left to you desolate; <sup>39</sup> for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’” Matthew 23:37-39*

Those who hold to replacement theology claim that Jesus' words in our text verse were fulfilled at the time of Palm Sunday when the multitudes proclaimed, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!” as they hailed Him as their Messiah.

There are two obvious problems with that. The first is that Jesus' words come chronologically after that, even if that is obscured between the gospel narratives. More importantly, He was saying this in response to what had just happened.

The multitudes, as they came to Jerusalem, hailed Jesus in this manner, but it says after that in Matthew 21:10, “And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved,

saying, ‘Who is this?’” Even if the multitudes were gladly making this proclamation, the city of Jerusalem, the seat of power in the nation, was not.

Jesus was using that event of Palm Sunday and telling Jerusalem that until they heralded Him, just as the multitudes had done, they would see Him no more. To this day, He is hidden from them. But that will change someday. The leaders of the nation will call out for Him and He will return to them.

One can see the hints of a parallel concerning that in the opening words of the narrative about Jephthah. In the end, the Lord is trying to awaken Israel, as well as the world at large, to the fact that He has come to dwell among His people and that He will return again to judge the world.

This is an absolute certainty because it is spoken of in God’s superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

### **I. Jephthah (verses 1-3)**

The narrative of Chapter 10 leads directly into the account being presented here. Israel commits “the evil,” the Lord withholds His hand of protection, Israel is oppressed, and the people cry out to the Lord. The chapter ends with the people of Ammon gathering and encamping against Israel. Then came the question of who would lead them in battle.

Whoever it was would be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead. Chapter 11 opens by naming the person who will be that leader...

#### **1 Now Jephthah**

*v’yiphtakh* – “And Jephthah.” Without yet saying it, it is the response to the question of who will lead the people. The name Jephthah comes from the verb *pathakh*, to open. Thus, it means something like He Opens, He Will Open, etc. Abarim says –

“... since the opening of lips precedes speaking, and the opening of ears precedes hearing, our verb may also mean to speak and to hear (and to see, to be hospitable, to ask for with open hands, and so on). Our verb may be applied to the opening of constricting things, which gives it the meaning of to loosen or release. This verb (or perhaps a whole separate one) may also be used to mean to engrave, although engraving and opening a surface so that the surface speaks are not that far apart.”

He is next noted as...

<sup>1 (con't)</sup> **the Gileadite**

*ha'giladi* – “the Gileadite.” These words have three distinct but possible meanings. The first is that Gilead is the name of a location, usually noted as *ha'gilad*, or “the Gilead,” as in Judges 10:8. It could also be the name of a person, a descendant of Machir as recorded Numbers 26 –

“The sons of Manasseh: of Machir, the family of the Machirites; and Machir begot Gilead; of Gilead, the family of the Gileadites.” Numbers 26:29

The third option is that this is a descendant of that Gilead who has the same name as his ancestor. In this case, it is probably either of the first two. Normally, when a person is identified by his father's name, it will specifically say he is “the son of [insert someone cool, like ‘Charlie’ here].”

Jones' Dictionary of the Old Testament Proper defines the name Gilead as coming from *gulla*, a spring or basin, and *ad*, perpetuity. Thus, it is Perpetual Fountain. Of Jephthah, he...

<sup>1 (con't)</sup> **was a mighty man of valor,**

*hayah gibor khayil* – “was mighty valor.” The words are not unlike those used to describe Gilead in Judges 6, “The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor!” The narrative has identified the protagonist, carefully describing him in advance of relaying his coming heroic leadership.

<sup>1 (con't)</sup> **but he was the son of a harlot;**

The word “but” is subjective, as in “he was this, but...” That is not a necessary contemplation. Rather, the narrative simply conveys facts: *v'hu ben ishah zonah* – “and he son woman, harlot.” The verb *zanah*, to be a harlot, is used.

Various commentaries try to diminish this, as they did with the account of Rahab, by saying she is an innkeeper or something similar. But the wording is precise and it means a woman who commits fornication as in a harlot. This then sets the tone for his life until his calling to be the leader. Concerning his parentage, however, Deuteronomy 23:2 says—

“One of illegitimate birth shall not enter the assembly of the Lord; even to the tenth generation none of his *descendants* shall enter the assembly of the Lord.”

The meaning is one born of incest or who is illegitimately generated, such as in the case of Jephthah. Exactly what “enter the assembly of the Lord” means is debated. Whatever the actual meaning, at the time, it was understood by the people.

The word *qahal*, or assembly, is not the same as *edah*, or congregation. Therefore, it may be that such a person could be a part of the congregation, but not entitled to the benefits of the assembly. Regardless, of his genealogy, it says...

<sup>1</sup> (con’t) **and Gilead begot Jephthah.**

*vayoled gilad eth yiphtakh* – “And begot Gilead Jephthah.” The words are highly debated. Is this referring to Gilead, the son of Machir, already noted in Numbers 26? Is the name of the location Gilead, taking the place of an unidentified personal name? Or is the name Gilead, like those of Tola and Puah of Judges 10, a family name being used by a later descendant of the first Gilead?

The latter seems most likely. It is certainly not the name of the location. If it was, it would say *ha’gilad*, the Gilead. However, no matter what its meaning, the account is focusing on the name itself.

<sup>2</sup> **Gilead’s wife bore sons;**

*vateled eshet gilad lo banim* – “And bore, wife Gilead, to him sons.” This refers to a legitimate wife. Jephthah was born to a harlot but lived in the house as a son. These are sons born to Gilead’s wife.

<sup>2</sup> (con’t) **and when his wife’s sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out,**

*vayigd’lu b’ne ha’ishah vay’garshu eth yiphtakh* – “And grown sons the wife. And expelled Jephthah.” The father has obviously died at this point. He raised Jephthah as a member of the family, but he was driven out by the grown sons when the father was no longer in the picture.

<sup>2</sup> (con’t) **and said to him, “You shall have no inheritance in our father’s house, for you are the son of another woman.”**

*vayomru lo lo tinkhal b’beith avinu ki ben ishah akhereth atah* – “and said to him, ‘No inheriting in house our father, for son woman another, you.’” The word *akher*, another, is obviously being used contemptuously. They were sons of the wife of Gilead while Jephthah was the son of a harlot. The same word is used in relation to false gods throughout the Old Testament, such as in the previous chapter –

“Yet you have forsaken Me and served other gods [*elohim akherim*]. Therefore I will deliver you no more.” Judges 20:13

While they had no compunction about serving other gods, these brothers were unwilling to live with a brother from another mother. Because of his expulsion by them, it next says...

**<sup>3</sup> Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of Tob;**

*va'yivrahk yiphtakh mipne ekhav vayeshv b'erets tov* – “And bolted, Jephthah, from faces his brothers, and dwelt in land Tob.” There are different words translated as fled. For example, one signifies to flee as in escaping. The word used here means to flee as in bolting. Jephthah was driven out of his house and so he simply bolted to Tob.

The name Tob means Good. It could be the name of a particular land or a person named Tob, of which the area is then identified. Even if a person, the area will later have the person's designation stamped on it –

“When the people of Ammon saw that they had made themselves repulsive to David, the people of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians of Beth Rehob and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand foot soldiers; and from the king of Maacah one thousand men, and from Ish-Tob twelve thousand men. <sup>7</sup> Now when David heard *of it*, he sent Joab and all the army of the mighty men. <sup>8</sup> Then the people of Ammon came out and put themselves in battle array at the entrance of the gate. And the Syrians of Zoba, Beth Rehob, Ish-Tob, and Maacah *were* by themselves in the field.” 2 Samuel 10:6-8

Ish-Tob means Man of Tob. Thus, he is a man from the area of Tob. It is located, according to Barnes, “to the north of Gilead, toward Damascus.” In that area, it says...

<sup>3 (con't)</sup> **and worthless men banded together with Jephthah and went out *raiding* with him.**

*vayithlaqtu el yiphtakh anashim reqim vayetsu imo* – “And gathered unto Jephthah men empties. And went out with him.” Here, the same word is seen as was used to describe the men who went out with Abimelech, *req*. It is an adjective meaning empty, coming from *ruq*, to pour out. They were men of no substance be it in their persons or in their pockets.

As for the word “raiding,” that is conjecture. If that was the intent the text probably would have said it. Rather, they simply allied with him and whatever they did, they did it

under his authority. If it was raiding or the like, unlike Abimelech, it was likely directed against Israel's foes rather than against his own people.

Because of his obvious leadership and authority in whatever ventures they undertook, notice was taken and word returned to those in Gilead.

*Who is faithful to the Lord?  
Who will lead us against the enemy?  
This One will lead us toward  
The final goal and victory*

*We will appoint Him as our Head  
And we will follow where He may lead  
No more false gods, but instead  
We will follow the One we truly need*

*Only the Lord can gain the victory  
And so, we will follow the One He has sent  
This is not at all contradictory  
This One is the Lord, one hundred percent*

## **II. Did You Not Hate Me? (verses 4-8)**

**<sup>4</sup> It came to pass after a time that the people of Ammon made war against Israel.**

*vayhi miyamim vayilakhmu b'ne amon im Yisrael* – “And was from days, and warred sons Ammon with Israel.” These words return to the narrative of Judges 10:7-9 –

“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. <sup>8</sup> From that year they harassed and oppressed the children of Israel for eighteen years—all the children of Israel who *were* on the other side of the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, in Gilead. <sup>9</sup> Moreover the people of Ammon crossed over the Jordan to fight against Judah also, against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was severely distressed.”

Probably during the time of Israel's enemies harassing and oppressing them, Jephthah was expelled. Eventually, the people realized that the other gods they served were the source of their problems and they put them away (10:16). During this time, Jephthah was establishing himself as a man of valor. As such, the Lord was raising him up to be the ruler and judge of Israel...

**<sup>5</sup> 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.**

*v’hi ka’asher nilkhamu b’ne amon im Yisrael vayelkhu ziqne gilad laqakhath eth yiphtakh meerets tov* – “And was according to which warred sons Ammon with Israel, and went elders Gilead to take Jephthah from land Tob.” This now returns to the narrative of 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. <sup>18</sup> 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.”

That is where Judges 10 ended. The leaders mentioned there are the same as the elders mentioned here in Chapter 11. Instead of mentioning them in their own position as leaders, it identifies them based on their age and sagacity.

In other words, one could see Jephthah saying, “You all are leaders of your people. Why don’t you become the commander.” However, in identifying them as elders, it is like saying, “We elders (the wise and mature) have come to you understanding you would make a great commander.”

Until this point, the first verses of Chapter 11 have provided details left unstated from Chapter 10. Now the two harmoniously join together to continue the narrative. These leaders, who are the elders went to Tob...

**<sup>6</sup> Then they said to Jephthah, “Come and be our commander, that we may fight against the people of Ammon.”**

The final verb is cohortative: *vayomru l’yiphtakh l’khah v’hayitah lanu l’qatsin v’nilakhamah bivne amon* – “And said to Jephthah, ‘Come, and be to us to ruler, and we are fighting in sons Ammon.’” In other words, “We want you to be our ruler. Once you agree, we are going to fight against the sons of Ammon.”

In their request, they use the word *qatsin*, a chief or ruler. They are not asking for a king. It is the Lord who appoints a judge, something Jephthah will later be designated as in Judges 12:7.

In verse 10:18, the elders had asked who the man would be who would begin to fight against the people of Ammon. It seems that nobody volunteered. Because of this,

someone suggested they go retrieve Jephthah whom they had heard about. With their surprising proposal set before him, Jephthah naturally questions their reasoning...

**<sup>7</sup> So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “Did you not hate me, and expel me from my father’s house?”**

*va’yomer yiphtakh l’ziqne gilad ha’lo atem s’nethem othi vatgarshuni mibeith avi* – “And said, Jephthah, to elders Gilead, ‘Not you hated me, and expelling me from house my father?’” The similarity to what the people did to the Lord is not to be missed.

In the previous chapter, the people essentially kicked the Lord out of their lives. But in their distress, they came back to Him looking for deliverance. Now they are doing the same thing with Jephthah.

The tenor of the Lord’s question in Judges 10:11 is the same as that of Jephthah here. Both begin with the same negative particle. It is notable that Jephthah places the actions of his brothers upon the elders of the land.

In essence, what his brothers did to him was condoned by, and thus the responsibility of, these leaders, the elders of the land. Their hatred of him led to his expulsion by them.

<sup>7 (con’t)</sup> **Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?”**

*u-madua batem elay atah kaasher tsar lakhem* – “And why you come now according to which distressed you?” Again, there is similarity to the response of the Lord in the previous chapter –

“Go and cry out to the gods which you have chosen; let them deliver you in your time of distress.” 10:14

“Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?” 11:7

The uncaring or belligerent attitude of the people is highlighted and contrasted to the logical, rational response to their actions.

**<sup>8</sup> And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “That is why we have turned again to you now,**

*vayomru ziqne gilad el yiphtakh laken atah shavnu elekha* – “And said, elders Gilead, unto Jephthah, ‘Thus, now turned unto you.’” The distress is the reason for their coming

to him. “Because of the distress, we have turned to you.” As such, there is a need which is next stated...

<sup>8 (con't)</sup> **that you may go with us and fight against the people of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.”**

Rather than “that,” as if the following words are the reason they came, the distress led to them to search out a deliverer. Only after he is identified is the note concerning his leadership in battle stated.

Keil says, “Therefore (לִכְן, because we have formerly done thee wrong) we have now come to thee again to make thee our head, if thou comest with us and fightest against the Ammonites.” He is right that it is something formerly stated, but he misidentifies what it is. It isn’t that the people did Jephthah wrong, even though that is true. Instead, it refers to the distress they are facing from their enemies.

The verbs are in the perfect aspect: *v’halkhta imanu v’nilkhamta bivne amon v’hayitha lanu l’rosh l’khol yoshve gilad* – “And gone with us, and fought in sons Ammon. And are to us to head to all inhabiting Gilead.”

The fighting isn’t the reason (that you may...). Rather, the distress (Thus) is the reason. Once the turning is accomplished, their words about the fighting are also as if it is accomplished. Compare the two:

“Thus, now turned unto you. And gone with us, and fought in sons Ammon. And are to us to head to all inhabiting Gilead.” CGT

“We are turning to you now because we want you to go with us and fight the Ammonites and lead all the people of Gilead.” GNT

What is being seen here is the same as what was seen in the previous chapter –

“And said, sons Israel, unto Yehovah, ‘Sinned!’ Do, You, to us, according to all the good in Your eyes. Only, deliver us, we pray, the day the this.” Judges 10:15

The people turned to the Lord. They then petition the Lord to deliver them. The Lord sends distress in order to show their need for Him. In identifying the need, they can then rightly ask Him to deliver them.

The elders noted their need. They turned to Jephthah because he is the one the Lord has provided to accomplish the delivery. As a result, they are confident he has met the need, and he is their commander. Because of this Jephthah affirms the matter...

*The Lord shall be hearing this day  
The words that we have spoken  
May He judge accordingly, so we say  
If our oath, we have broken*

*We shall trust in the Lord  
Who has set You before us  
We shall be obedient to the word  
We shall forever follow Jesus*

*Yes, the Lord has heard what we have said  
He is witness to the commitment made by us  
With the Lord, we shall always tread  
As we walk together with Jesus*

### **III. I, I Shall Be Your Head (verses 9-11)**

**<sup>9</sup> So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead,**

*vayomer yiphtakh el ziqne gilad* – “And said, Jephthah, unto elders Gilead.” The men have acknowledged that they are in distress. It is the reason why they have come to Jephthah. They have stated that Jephthah will fight for them and he will be their head. As such, an acknowledgment is made...

<sup>9 (con't)</sup> **“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?”**

Charles Ellicott says, “We must not be surprised if Jephthah does not display a disinterested patriotism. He was only half an Israelite; he had been wronged by his father’s kin; he had spent long years of his manhood among heathens and outlaws, who gained their livelihood by brigandage or mercenary warfare.”

He has misread the entire passage. Jephthah is not at all disinterested. Nothing in the account says his mother was not an Israelite. It says she was a harlot. And we have no idea what he did with his time away from Israel. Not a word about it is provided.

Jephthah’s words are not a question, but an emphatic statement: *im m’shivim atem othi l’hilakhem bivne amon v’nathan Yehovah otham l’phanai anokhi ehyeh lakhem l’rosh* – “If taking you, me, to fight in sons Ammon, and has delivered Yehovah, them, to my face, I, I am, to you to head.”

The “if” is not a question but an assertion based on what they have just said. Essentially, he responds, “As you are taking me to fight against Ammon. Once Yehovah has delivered them, then I will certainly be your head.”

Not only is this an assertion, but it is based on his reliance in the covenant keeping Lord, Yehovah, not merely “God” which could be misconstrued. Israel has been faithfully unfaithful to Yehovah, pursuing other gods. Jephthah is calling their attention to the Lord alone.

John Lange, supporting the view of Keil that this is not a question but an affirmation, says –

“The position of affairs has altogether erroneously been so apprehended, as if Jephthah were fearful lest, after victory achieved, they would then no longer recognize him as head, and wished to assure himself on this point beforehand. This view originates in the failure to perceive the spiritual background on which the action is projected. Jephthah is not a man who will be their head at any cost. There is no trace of ambition in his language. He is willing to be their head, if they are such members as will insure the blessing of God. Whoever knows his countrymen as he knew them, and has himself turned to God, will not be willing to be their leader, unless they have become other than they were. For that reason he says: If you bring me back, in order truly and unitedly to fight Ammon, and be worthy of God’s blessing,—in that case, I will be your head. The guaranty of victory is sought by this valiant man, not in his own courage, but in the worthiness of the warriors before God.”

To sum up Lange’s thought, we can look to a parallel in Jesus. Jesus came. His disciples know that He is the Messiah for their state of distress. There is a need to be relieved from that distress as they cannot save themselves. They come to Him to relieve that distress because they know He is the Lord’s instrument of delivery. In coming to Him, they say, “You have gone with us. You have fought the enemy. You are our Head.”

Based on that, the response is, “If you will take Me to fight this battle, I, I will certainly be your Head.” What did Peter say to Him in John 6? –

“But Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.’” John 6:68

Peter identified the need, knowing he did not possess eternal life but that Jesus did. He needed to be relieved. He went to Jesus to be relieved because he knew that Jesus was the Lord’s instrument of delivery. He acknowledges that Jesus will go with them, He will defeat the enemy, and He is their Head.

Jesus' response is, "If you will trust me with this, I will certainly be your Head." Jephthah understands their need and he knows his position. He is affirming their words, not questioning them. Therefore...

<sup>10</sup> **And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "The Lord will be a witness between us,**

*vayomru ziqne gilad el yiphtakh Yehovah yihyeh shomea benotenu* – "And said, elders Gilead, unto Jephthah, 'Yehovah shall be hearing between us.'" They acknowledge Yehovah's presence, and they state that He will be a witness to what they commit to. By saying "hearing," it is as if He is the Judge of a case set before Him.

Understanding this, we can remember that in Chapter 10, it said –

"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!' Judges 10:10

Again, after Yehovah chided them, they spoke further –

"'We have sinned! Do to us whatever seems best to You; only deliver us this day, we pray.' <sup>16</sup> So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the Lord. And His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel." Judges 10:15, 16

After acknowledging their state, recognizing their appointed leader, and hearing his words, they call the Lord as a Judge between them...

<sup>10</sup> (con't) **if we do not do according to your words."**

*im lo kidbarkha ken naaseh* – "if not according to your word, thus we do." The words "according to your word" confirm that what Jephthah said was not a question but an affirmation. If he had questioned them, they would have said something like, "Surely we will do as you have asked."

Rather, they respond with "You have spoken, we will act accordingly." What Jephthah has said, they have committed to. Therefore...

<sup>11</sup> **Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead,**

*vayelekh yiphtakh im ziqne gilad* – "And walked, Jephthah, with rulers Gilead." There is a three-step process involved in the matter. The first step was for the elders to petition Jephthah and wait on his reply. After a favorable reply, Jephthah went with them to the second step, which involved all of the people who had gathered as detailed in verse 10:17...

11 (con't) **and the people made him head and commander over them;**

*vayasimu ha'am oto alehem l'rosh u-l'qatsin* – “and set the people, him, over them to head to ruler.” Nothing is said about how this came about, but it is a formal acknowledgment of their acceptance of Jephthah as their head and ruler. With that, the third step of the process is...

11 (fin) **and Jephthah spoke all his words before the Lord in Mizpah.**

*vaydaber yiphtakh eth kal d'varav liphne Yehovah bamitspah* – “And spoke, Jephthah, all his words to face Yehovah, in the Mizpah.” The words “to face Yehovah” are rightly paraphrased “before the Lord.” This is an acknowledgment that Jephthah spoke the agreement between the people and himself in the presence of the Lord.

There is no need to assume that this was done in the presence of the ark, the high priest, or any other such thing. It is just a way of acknowledging that the Lord is included in the proclamation and that He was a witness to the agreement.

The elders confirmed their words were heard by the Lord, witnessing to what they had said to Jephthah. In like manner, he now speaks his words before all the people in the presence of the Lord.

As for the name the Mizpah, it means The Watchtower.

With the verses of the passage complete for today, we can remember the parallel that was noted at the beginning of the sermon. Jephthah was driven out from among his brothers, but the leaders of his people came to be reconciled to him and to recognize him as their head.

Israel will someday do just the same with Jesus. With them back in the land, and with the animosity of the great alliance of those mentioned in Ezekiel 38 shaping up, it probably won't be long until the time when they face that battle, known as Gog/Magog.

With that, the end times will begin on a global scale. The lack of faith and trust in the Lord that Israel now displays will come to an end. Whatever will direct them to seek out Jesus, it will have its intended effect.

They will respond by acknowledging Him as their ruler and He will be there to rescue them from the woes that would otherwise seem impossible to overcome.

As for us, that is already realized. Jesus Himself said that to His apostles, and it is a truth that belongs to us as well, “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have

peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

Have faith in this as you go through those times of tribulation that you are certain to face. It is not always an easy life, but we possess a certain hope. Hold fast to it and don't let the world bring you down. As for the ongoing narrative, more about Jephthah lies ahead. Stay tuned.

**Closing Verse:** *“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” 1 John 5:4, 5*

**Next Week:** Judges 11:12-28 *Hoorah, as a judge, he is really swell, it is true..* (Jephthah, Judge of Israel, Part II) (34<sup>th</sup> Judges sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who judges His people according to their deeds. So, follow Him, live for Him, and trust Him, and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

### **Jephthah, Judge of Israel, Part I**

Now Jephthah the Gileadite  
Was a mighty man of valor, yes suh!  
But he was the son of a harlot  
And Gilead begot Jephthah

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, to us that's grim

Then Jephthah fled from his brothers  
And dwelt in the land of Tob  
And worthless men banded together with Jephthah  
And went out raiding with him, raiding places they did probe

It came to pass after a time, as the record does tell  
That the people of Ammon made war against Israel

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, they needed him for a spell

Then they said to Jephthah, yes to him they did moan  
Come and be our commander, that we may fight against  
-----the people of Ammon

So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead  
“Did you not hate me, and expel me? Oh such a mess!  
From my father’s house?  
Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?

And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah  
“That is why we have turned again to you now, a deal not so bad  
That you may go with us and fight against the people of Ammon  
And be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead

So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead  
“If you take me back home to fight instead  
Against the people of Ammon  
And the LORD delivers them to me, shall I be your head?

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  
Just come quickly, no more fuss!

Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead  
And the people made him head, oohrah!  
And commander over them  
And Jephthah spoke all his words before the LORD in Mizpah

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word  
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You  
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard  
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone  
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise  
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown  
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...