

Judges 10-12 Jephthah and Other Judges

Judges 10

v1-5 Tola (of Issachar) & Jair (Gileadite, land east of Jordan, inhabited by the tribe of Manasseh Num. 32:40) provide 45 years of peace

v6-9 Israel rebels against God and is punished

* What do you know, or what can you study and learn, about the Baals and Ashtoreths?

v10-16 Israel cries out to and responds to God.

It took **18 years** of oppression before Israel was humble enough to admit their sin. God scolds them

v17-18 Israel cries out to anyone who would lead

Application Questions

1. It is easy for us to look at Israel and think “How foolish,” but all of us are tempted to imitate the foolish behavior of people around us. What factors persuaded them (and still persuade us) to imitate other people, even when the behavior is senseless and wrong?

2. What events in this chapter remind us of the importance of understanding both ancient and recent history?

(Review your answers and notes from Judges 6-8 and the questions there related to the importance of learning from history.)

Judges 11

v1-3 background on Jephthah, before Israel’s repentance described in ch 10.

- Instead of turning to God when rejected by men, his might and valor become tools for his bitterness.

v4-11 When attacked by Ammon, the elders of Gilead request Jephthah to lead them.

* What factors led the elders of Gilead to seek Jephthah as their leader?

v12-28 The cause of Ammon’s aggression, and Jephthah’s reply

* From verse 26, how long has Israel possessed this land?

* Did the people of Canaan recognize the difference between the power of Jehovah and their gods? Explain your answer

* What was Jephthah’s primary reason for refusing to return the land to the people of Ammon?

v29-33 Jephthah’s vow and victory

- Several times in the Old Testament “the Spirit of the Lord” comes upon different individuals. In Judges, we know this happened to Othniel (3:10), Gideon (6:34), Jephthah (11:29), and Samson (14:6, 19; 15:14) to aid them in the work they were doing. When the Spirit came upon Samson, it gave him miraculous strength. In these other cases, we are not told exactly what the Spirit gave.

Regarding Jephthah’s vow, see Leviticus 27 on the matter of giving* a person to the Lord, a phrase also used by Hannah (1 Sam. 1:11) [*also called devoting, sanctifying, or consecrating]. Which things given to the Lord would involve a burnt offering and which things would not?

v34-38 Jephthah arrives home

* What did Jephthah's daughter "bewail" (or mourned the loss of)?

v39-40 Jephthah fulfills his vow. Jephthah's vow teaches us the same lesson as Solomon taught in Ecclesiastes 5:2.

* What specific result is mentioned in connection with Jephthah fulfilling his vow?

Application Questions

1. What leaders do we choose today?

2. Name a lesson we learn about choosing leaders from this chapter.

Judges 12

v1-6 Jephthah's conflict with Ephraim

- Ephraim tends to be easily offended (also 8:1) and suffer for it. See Proverbs 14:29; 16:32; 18:7; 29:22

v7 Jephthah's death

v8-10 Ibzan While we learn little about his life, having this large of a family may have helped prepare him to judge Israel. God affirms that leading the home prepares us for other leadership (1 Tim. 3:4-5).

v11-12 Elon

v13-15 Abdon

Application Questions

Compare, comment on, and apply how Gideon (8:1-3) and Jephthah (12:1-4) each replied and reacted to Ephraim's complaint.