

Cycle #6: Oppressed by Ammon - Delivered by Jephthah

Judges 10:6 - 12:7

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The Idolatry of the People, their Cry, and Jehovah's Response (10:6-18)

6 And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of Jehovah, and served the Baals, and the Ashtoreths, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook Jehovah, and served him not. **7** And the anger of Jehovah was hot against Israel, and he sold him into the hand of the Philistines, and into the hand of the children of Ammon. **8** And they oppressed and crushed the children of Israel in that year; eighteen years *they oppressed* all the children of Israel that were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. **9** And the children of Ammon passed over the Jordan to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; and Israel was greatly distressed. **10** And the children of Israel cried to Jehovah, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served the Baals. **11** And Jehovah said to the children of Israel, Did I not *save you* from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines? **12** The Zidonians also, and Amalek and Maon oppressed you, and ye cried to me, and I saved you out of their hand. **13** But ye have forsaken me, and served other gods; therefore I will save you no more. **14** Go and cry to the gods that ye have chosen: let them save you in the time of your trouble. **15** And the children

of Israel said to Jehovah, We have sinned. Do thou unto us according to all that is good in thy sight; only deliver us, we pray thee, this day. **16** And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served Jehovah; and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel. **17** And the children of Ammon were called together and encamped in Gilead; and the children of Israel gathered together and encamped in Mizpeh. **18** And the people, the chief men of Gilead, said one to another, Who is the man that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? he shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

Jephthah's Background (11:1-3)

CHAPTER 11

1 Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valour, and he was the son of a harlot; and Gilead had begotten Jephthah. **2** And Gilead's wife bore him sons; and when his wife's sons were grown, they expelled Jephthah, and said to him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house; for thou art the son of another woman. **3** Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob. And vain men were gathered to Jephthah, and they made expeditions with him.

Jephthah Made Captain by the Elders of Gilead (11:4-11)

4 And it came to pass after some time, that the children of Ammon fought with Israel. **5** And when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob. **6** And they said to Jephthah, Come, and be our captain, that we may fight against the children of Ammon. **7** And Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come to me now when ye are in trouble? **8** And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, Therefore we have returned to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be head over all of us the inhabitants of Gilead. **9** And Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, If ye take me back to fight against the children of Ammon, and Jehovah give them up before me, shall I be your head? **10** And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Jehovah be witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words! **11** Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them; and Jephthah

uttered all his words before Jehovah in Mizpah.

Jephthah's Warning to Ammon to Stand Down (11:12-28)

12 And Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the children of Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight against my land? **13** And the king of the children of Ammon said to the messengers of Jephthah, Because Israel took away my land, when they came up out of Egypt, from the Arnon even unto the Jabbok and unto the Jordan; and now restore it peaceably. **14** And Jephthah sent messengers again to the king of the children of Ammon, **15** and said to him, Thus saith Jephthah: Israel took not away the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon. **16** But when they came up from Egypt, then Israel walked through the wilderness as far as the Red sea, and came to Kadesh. **17** And Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land; but the king of Edom would not hearken. And they also sent to the king of Moab; and he would not. And Israel abode in Kadesh. **18** And they walked through the wilderness, and went round the land of Edom and the land of Moab, and came by the east of the land of Moab, and encamped beyond the Arnon, but came not within the border of Moab, for the Arnon is the border of Moab. **19** And Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, the king of Heshbon, and Israel said to him, Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy land unto my place. **20** But Sihon trusted not Israel, to let him pass through his border, and Sihon gathered all his people, and they encamped in Jahzah; and he fought with Israel. **21** And Jehovah the God of Israel gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they smote them; and Israel took possession of the whole land of the Amorites, who dwelt in that country. **22** And they possessed all the borders of the Amorites, from the Arnon unto the Jabbok, and from the wilderness unto the Jordan. **23** And now Jehovah the God of Israel has dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel, and shouldst thou take possession of it? **24** Dost not thou possess what Chemosh thy god puts thee in possession of? and whatever Jehovah our God has dispossessed before us, that will we possess. **25** And now art thou indeed better than Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab? did he ever strive with Israel? did he ever fight against them? **26** While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and its dependent villages, and in Aroer and its dependent villages, and in all the cities that are along the banks of the Arnon, three hundred years — why did ye not recover *them* within that time? **27** So I have not sinned against thee, but it is thou who doest me wrong in making war against me. Jehovah, the Judge, be judge this day between the children of Israel

and the children of Ammon! **28** But the king of the children of Ammon hearkened not to the words of Jephthah that he had sent him.

Jephthah's Vow, His Victory Over Ammon (11:29-40)

29 Then the Spirit of Jehovah came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed to Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over to the children of Ammon. **30** And Jephthah vowed a vow to Jehovah, and said, If thou wilt without fail give the children of Ammon into my hand, **31** then shall that which cometh forth from the door of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, be Jehovah's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering. **32** And Jephthah passed over to the children of Ammon to fight against them; and Jehovah gave them into his hand. **33** And he smote them from Aroer until thou come to Minnith, twenty cities, even unto Abel-Cheramim, with a very great slaughter; and the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel. **34** And Jephthah came to Mizpah to his house, and behold, his daughter came out to meet him with tambours and with dances; and she was an only child: besides her he had neither son nor daughter. **35** And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his garments, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me; for I have opened my mouth to Jehovah, and I cannot go back. **36** And she said to him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth to Jehovah, do to me according to that which has proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as Jehovah has taken vengeance for thee upon thine enemies, upon the children of Ammon. **37** And she said to her father, Let this thing be done for me: leave me alone two months, that I may go and descend to the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my companions. **38** And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months. And she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. **39** And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned to her father, and he performed on her the vow that he had vowed; and she had known no man. And it became a fixed custom in Israel, **40** that from year to year the daughters of Israel go to celebrate the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in the year.

The Jealousy of Ephraim - Jephthah's Victory Over Ephraim (12:1-7)

CHAPTER 12

1 And the men of Ephraim were called together, and passed over northwards, and said to Jephthah, Why didst thou pass over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee? We will burn thy house upon thee with fire. **2** And Jephthah said to them, I was at great strife, I and my people, with the children of Ammon; and I called you, but ye saved me not out of their hand. **3** And when I saw that ye would not save me, I put my life in my hand, and passed over against the children of Ammon, and Jehovah gave them into my hand. Why then are ye come up to me this day, to fight against me? **4** And Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim; and the men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye, Gilead, ye are fugitives of Ephraim in the midst of Ephraim, *and* in the midst of Manasseh. **5** And Gilead took the fords of the Jordan before Ephraim; and it came to pass that when the fugitives of Ephraim said, Let me go over, the men of Gilead said to him, Art thou an Ephraimite? and he said, No. **6** Then they said to him, Say now Shibboleth! and he said, Sibboleth, and did not manage to pronounce *it* rightly. Then they took him, and slaughtered him at the fords of the Jordan. And there fell at that time of Ephraim forty-two thousand. **7** And Jephthah judged Israel six years. And Jephthah the Gileadite died, and was buried in *one of* the cities of Gilead.