



Jephthah's Vow • Daughter



Overview

- Judges 2-10
- Judges 11-12: Jephthah
- Jephthah's Vow • Jephthah's Daughter
- Conclusion



Judges 2-10

- The Cycle
- The Cycle's Downward Spiral
- The Judges' Downward Spiral



Judges 2-10

- The Cycle
 - Safety > Enticed > Sin > Enslaved
 - Appeal > God heard/responded
 - Repented > God provided judge
 - Judge delivered > Freedom/Safety
 - Repeat



Judges 2-10

- The Cycle's Downward Spiral - I
 - Israel repeatedly sinned
 - Israel repeatedly sought God's help
 - God always provided a deliverer



Judges 2-10

- The Cycle's Downward Spiral - 2
 - 10.6 - Israel's evil and "7 idols/gods"
 - 10.7 - the LORD's anger was hot
 - 10.8 - oppressed 18 years



Judges 2-10

- The Cycle's Downward Spiral - 3
 - 10.9 - Enemies invaded
 - 10.10 - Israel cries out to God
 - 10.11-12 - God recalls 7 deliveries



Judges 2-10

- The Cycle's Downward Spiral - 4
 - 10.13 - I will deliver you no more
 - 10.14 - "go ... cry out to the gods"
 - 10.15 - we sinned, do what's best, deliver us



Judges 2-10

- The Cycle's Downward Spiral - 5
 - 10.16 - Israel put away foreign gods
 - 10.17 - God could no longer endure misery
 - 10.18 - the people looked for a leader/judge



Judges 2-10

- The Cycle's Downward Spiral - 6
 - concubines • rape • dismemberment
 - immorality • vengeance • jealousy
 - greed • public/private idol worship
 - forsaking God • forsaking God's word • forsaking God's people



Judges 2-10

- The Judges' Downward Spiral
 - Ehud - secretly plunged a dagger into Eglon
 - Gideon - greed, ephod, harlotry, concubine, vengeance (destroys idol/creates new idol)
 - Abimelech - vengeance (family/nation)
 - Jephthah - Ephraimite slaughter, rash vow
 - Samson - vengeance, repeated immorality



Judges 2-10

- More/General Downward Spiral
 - Danite idolatry • Levite's concubine
 - Benjamin's sin • Benjamin's near eradication
 - "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes." (21.25, cf. 17.6)



Judges 11-12: Jephthah

- The Need For Jephthah
- The Challenges of Jephthah
- The Character of Jephthah



Judges 11-12: Jephthah

- The Need For Jephthah
 - Judges 10 - God's pledges help ... again
 - Judges 10 - Israel sought a leader



Judges 11-12: Jephthah

- The Challenges of Jephthah - I
 - 18 years of Israel's oppression
 - Israel's repeated idolatry
 - Israel: using up God's mercy
 - Israel was severely distressed (10.9)



Judges 11-12: Jephthah

- The Challenges of Jephthah - 2
 - A harlot's son • Brothers drove him out
 - No inheritance • Jephthah fled
 - Jephthah's worthless raiders



Judges 11-12: Jephthah

- The Character of Jephthah - 1
 - Listened when elders called
 - Accepted leadership
 - Patient with Ammon's king
 - given "the Spirit of the LORD"



Judges 11-12: Jephthah

- The Character of Jephthah - 2
 - Fought and defeated Ephraim
 - 42,000 Ephraimites were killed (cf. 8.1 ff)
 - Made a rash vow
 - Fulfilled his vow



The Vow & Daughter

- Jephthah **Sacrificed** His Daughter - I
 - Early interpreters' position (rabbinic/patristic)
 - Consistent linguistically (and/or debate; 2 presuppositions/2 promises; Ephraim's egocentric perspective when he saw his daughter)
 - Consistent with Jephthah's character - vengeance on Ephraim, rash vow, unnecessary vow



The Vow & Daughter

- Jephthah **Sacrificed** His Daughter - 2
 - Compare Gideon & the Ephraimites (8.1 ff) with Jephthah & the Ephraimites (11-12)
 - Consistent w/pagan influence on Gideon (idolatry), & w/pagan influence on Jephthah himself (human sacrifice) (cf. Manasseh)



The Vow & Daughter

- Jephthah **Sacrificed** His Daughter - 3
 - Consistent w/Judges overall decline (Israel & her judges)
 - No real reason for the vow - God had already made Jephthah a judge; God already promised him victory



The Vow & Daughter

- Jephthah **Did Not Sacrifice** His Daughter - I
 - 2 months bewailing virginity - if she lived she could do that the rest of her life
 - significance of childlessness vs. death in ancient cultures (cf. Sarah, Rebecca, Hannah, Elizabeth)



The Vow & Daughter

- Jephthah **Did Not Sacrifice** His Daughter - 2
 - Spirit proves he did not sacrifice her (cf. David, King Saul, Gideon, Samson, 1 Cor. 12ff, Peter)
 - Positive references in 1 Sam. 12.11 & Heb. 11.32 (Abraham, Noah, Gideon, Rahab are also there)
 - Jephthah was godly/knew biblical history (cf. above)



The Vow & Daughter

- Jephthah **Did Not Sacrifice** His Daughter - 3
 - driven by “good” motives/desires
 - positive perspective • defend God • God’s morality • God’s revelation • God’s people



Conclusion

- God Will **Always** Be Sovereign
 - Whether we are “good” • or “evil”
 - Whether we get in the way • or not
 - God’s glory will **never** be tarnished because we fail, nor will God’s word **ever** be diminished because it depicts our sins
 - Our trust **always** lies in God through Christ