

Judges

Judges One

¹ Now after the death of Joshua it happened that the sons of Israel asked Yahweh, saying, Who will be first to attack the Canaanites for us to fight against them?

² And Yahweh said, Judah will attack. Behold, I have delivered the land into his hand.

³ And Judah said to Simeon his brother, Come up with me to my allotment, and let's fight against the Canaanites; and I will also go with you to your allotment. So Simeon went with him.

⁴ And Judah attacked, and Yahweh delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand; and they struck ten thousand men at Bezek.

⁵ And they found Adoni-Bezek in Bezek, and fought against him; and they struck the Canaanites and the Perizzites.

⁶ Then Adoni-Bezek fled, and they chased him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and big toes.

⁷ And Adoni-Bezek said, Seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off used to gather scraps beneath my table. So God has repaid me as I have done. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

⁸ Now the sons of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it. They struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire.

⁹ And afterward the sons of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who lived in the mountains, in the Negev, and in the lowland.

¹⁰ Then Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (now the name of Hebron was previously Kirjath-arba.) And they struck Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.

¹¹ From there they went against the inhabitants of Debir. (The name of Debir was previously Kirjath-sepher.)

¹² Then Caleb said, Whoever strikes Kirjath-sepher and captures it, I will give to him my daughter Achsah for a wife.

¹³ And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, captured it, so he gave him his daughter Achsah for a wife.

¹⁴ Now it happened, when she came to him that she urged him to ask her father for a field. And she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, What do you want?

¹⁵ And she said to him, Give me a blessing; since you have given me land of the Negev, give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

¹⁶ Now the sons of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up from the City of Palms with the sons of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which lies South of Arad; and they went and lived with the people.

¹⁷ And Judah went with his brother Simeon, and they struck the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath, and completely destroyed it. So the name of the city was called Hormah.

¹⁸ Also Judah captured Gaza with its territory, Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory.

¹⁹ And Yahweh was with Judah. And they possessed the hill country, but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain, because they had iron chariots.

²⁰ And they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had said. Then he drove out from there the three sons of Anak.

²¹ But the sons of Benjamin did not dislodge the Jebusites who remained Jerusalem, and the Jebusites live with the sons of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

²² And the house of Joseph also attacked Bethel, and Yahweh was with them.

²³ So the house of Joseph spied out Bethel. (The name of the city was previously Luz.)

²⁴ And when the spies saw a man coming out of the city, they said to him, Please show us the entrance to the city, and we will show you kindness.

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²⁵ So he showed them the entrance to the city, and they struck the city with the edge of the sword, but they let the man and all his family go.

²⁶ And the man went to the land of the Hittites, built a city, and called its name Luz, which is its name to this day.

²⁷ However, Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shean and its suburbs,¹ or Taanach and its suburbs, or the inhabitants of Dor and its suburbs, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its suburbs, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its suburbs; for the Canaanites were determined to live in that land.

²⁸ And it happened, when Israel was strong, that they caused the Canaanites to become forced laborers, but did not completely drive them out.

²⁹ Nor did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites who were living in Gezer; so the Canaanites lived in Gezer among them.

³⁰ Nor did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron or the inhabitants of Nahalol; so the Canaanites lived among them, and became forced laborers.

³¹ Nor did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Acco or the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, or Rehob.

³² So the Asherites lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, for they did not drive them out.

³³ Nor did Naphtali drive out the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh or the inhabitants of Beth Anath; but they lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, and the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath became forced laborers for them.

³⁴ And the Amorites forced the sons of Dan into the hill country, for they would not allow them to come down to the valley,³⁵ and the Amorites wanted to live in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim. But when the hand of the house of Joseph grew heavier, they became forced laborers.

¹ Lit. "its daughters."

³⁶ Now the border of the Amorites was from the ascent of Akrabbim,² from Sela, and upward.

Judges Two

¹ Then the Angel of Yahweh came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said: I led you up from Egypt and brought you to the land concerning which I swore to your fathers; and I said, I will never break My covenant with you.

² And you will make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land. You will tear down their altars. But you have not obeyed My voice. Why have you done this?

³ Therefore I also said, I will not drive them out before you, but they will be thorns in your side, and their gods will be a trap for you.

⁴ And it happened, when the Angel of Yahweh spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept.

⁵ And they called the name of that place Bochim, and they sacrificed there to Yahweh.

⁶ And when Joshua had dismissed the people, the sons of Israel each went to his own inheritance to possess the land.

⁷ And the people served Yahweh all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of Yahweh which He had done for Israel.

⁸ And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Yahweh, died when he was one hundred and ten years old.

⁹ And they buried him within the border of his inheritance at Timnath Heres, in the mountains of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Ga'ash.

¹⁰ And so all that generation were gathered to their fathers, and another generation arose after them who knew not Yahweh nor the work which He had done for Israel.

² Lit. "scorpions."

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¹¹ And the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of Yahweh, and served the Ba'alim; ¹² and they forsook Yahweh God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods from among the gods of the people who were all around them, and they prostrated themselves to them; and they provoked Yahweh to wrath.

¹³ They forsook Yahweh and served Ba'al and the Ashtaroth.

¹⁴ And the anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and He delivered them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them, and He sold them into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand before their enemies.

¹⁵ Wherever they went out, the hand of Yahweh was against them for evil, as Yahweh had said, and as Yahweh had sworn to them. And they were greatly distressed.

¹⁶ And Yahweh raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them.

¹⁷ Yet they would not listen to their judges, but they played the prostitute with other gods, and prostrated themselves to them. They turned quickly from the way in which their fathers had walked in obeying the commandments of Yahweh. They did not do so.

¹⁸ And when Yahweh raised up judges for them, Yahweh was with the judge and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge, for Yahweh was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed them and afflicted them.

¹⁹ And it happened, when the judge was dead, that they turned back and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and prostrate themselves to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.

²⁰ And the anger of Yahweh burned against Israel; and He said, Because this nation has

transgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and has not listened to My voice, ²¹ I also will not continue to drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died, ²² so that by them I might test Israel, whether they will keep the ways of Yahweh, to walk in them as their fathers did, or not.

²³ And Yahweh let those nations remain, without driving them out quickly; nor did He deliver them into the hand of Joshua.

Judges Three

¹ And these are the nations which Yahweh left, to test Israel by them, that is, all who had not known any of the wars in Canaan, ² only in order that the generations of the sons of Israel might be taught to know war, at least those who had not previously known it), ³ five lords of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites who lived in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Ba'al Hermon to the entrance of Hamath.

⁴ And they were left, in order that He might test Israel by them, to know whether they would obey the commandments of Yahweh, which He had commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

⁵ Thus the sons of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.

⁶ And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons; and served their gods.

⁷ So the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of Yahweh. They forgot Yahweh their God, and served the Ba'alim and Asherot.

⁸ Therefore the anger of Yahweh burned against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of Cushan-Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia; and the sons of Israel served Cushan-Rishathaim eight years.

⁹ When the sons of Israel cried out to Yahweh, Yahweh raised up a deliverer for the sons of Israel, who delivered them: Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.

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¹⁰ The Spirit of Yahweh came upon him, and he judged Israel. And he went out to war, and Yahweh delivered Cushan-Rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand; and his hand prevailed over Cushan-Rishathaim.

¹¹ So the land had rest for forty years. Then Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

¹² And the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of Yahweh. And Yahweh strengthened Eglon king of Moab against Israel, because they had done evil in the sight of Yahweh.

¹³ And he gathered to himself the sons of Ammon and Amalek, went and struck Israel, and took possession of the City of Palms.

¹⁴ So the sons of Israel served Eglon king of Moab eighteen years.

¹⁵ But when the sons of Israel cried out to Yahweh, Yahweh raised up a deliverer for them: Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a left-handed man. By him the sons of Israel sent tribute to Eglon king of Moab.

¹⁶ And Ehud made himself a dagger (it was double-edged and a cubit in length) and tied it under his clothes on his right thigh.

¹⁷ And he brought the tribute to Eglon king of Moab—Eglon was a very fat man.

¹⁸ And it happened when he had finished presenting the tribute, *that* he sent away the people who had carried the tribute.

¹⁹ And he himself turned back from the stone idols that were at Gilgal, and said, I have a secret message for you, O king. He said, Keep silence! And all who attended him went out from him.

²⁰ And Ehud came to him—he was sitting upstairs in his cool private chamber. And Ehud said, I have a message from God for you. So he arose from his seat.

²¹ And Ehud reached out his left hand and took the dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly.

²² And the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the dagger out of his belly; and his feces came out.

²³ And Ehud went out through the porch and shut the doors of the upper room behind him and locked them.

²⁴ When he had gone out, the servants came to see, and behold, the doors of the upper room were locked. And they said, He is only covering his feet in the cool chamber.

²⁵ So they waited till they were ashamed, and behold, he had not opened the doors of the upper room. Therefore they took the key and opened them. And behold, there was their lord, fallen to the floor dead.

²⁶ And Ehud escaped while they delayed, and passed beyond the stone idols and escaped to Seirah.

²⁷ And it happened, when he arrived he blew the trumpet in the mountains of Ephraim, and the sons of Israel went down with him from the mountains and he before them.

²⁸ And he said to them, Chase after them for Yahweh has delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took the fords of the Jordan leading to Moab, and did not allow anyone to cross over.

²⁹ And they struck at that time about ten thousand men of Moab, all stout men of valor; not a man escaped.

³⁰ So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest for eighty years.

³¹ After him was Shamgar the son of Anath, who struck six hundred men of the Philistines with an ox goad; and he also delivered Israel.

Judges Four

¹ The sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of Yahweh after Ehud died.

² And Yahweh sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. And the captain of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth Hagoyim.

³ And the sons of Israel cried out to Yahweh; for Jabin had nine hundred chariots of iron, and for twenty years he violently oppressed the sons of Israel.

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⁴ And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time.

⁵ And she sat under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the mountains of Ephraim, and the sons of Israel came up to her for judgment.

⁶ Then she sent and called for Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, Has not Yahweh God of Israel commanded, Go and draw toward Mount Tabor; take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun; ⁷ and against you I will draw Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude at the River Kishon; and I will deliver him into your hand?

⁸ And Barak said to her, If you go with me, I will go; but if you do not go with me, I will not go!

⁹ So she said, I will certainly go with you; nevertheless for you in the journey you are taking there will be no honor, for Yahweh will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh.

¹⁰ And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; he went up with ten thousand men under his authority,³ and Deborah went up with him.

¹¹ Now Heber the Kenite, of the sons of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, divided himself from the Kenites and pitched his tent near the terebinth tree at Zaanaim, which is near Kedesh.

¹² And they told Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor.

¹³ And Sisera gathered together all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people who were with him, from Harosheth Hagoyim to the Waddy Kishon.

¹⁴ Then Deborah said to Barak, *Get up!* For this is the day in which Yahweh has given Sisera into your hand. Has not Yahweh gone out before you? So Barak descended from

Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him.

¹⁵ And Yahweh routed Sisera and all the chariots and all the army with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera alighted from his chariot and ran away on foot.

¹⁶ And Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Harosheth Hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not one was left.

¹⁷ Now Sisera had run away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; for there was peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

¹⁸ And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; fear not. And he turned aside with her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug.

¹⁹ Then he said to her, Give me please a little water to drink, for I am thirsty. So she opened a skin bottle of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him.

²⁰ And he said to her, Stand at the door of the tent, and if any man comes and asks you, and says, 'Is there any man here?' that you will say, 'No.'

²¹ Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a tent peg and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it penetrated into the ground; for he was fast asleep and tired. So he died.

²² And behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said to him, Come, I will show you the man whom you seek. And when he went into her tent, behold, Sisera was lying, dead with the tent peg in his temple.

²³ So God subdued on that day Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the sons of Israel.

²⁴ And the hand of the sons of Israel moved harshly against Jabin king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

Judges Five

¹ And Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam sang on that day, saying, ² In that

³ Lit. "under his feet."

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leaders led in Israel, in that the people volunteered themselves, You will bless Yahweh!

³ Listen, kings! Hear, ruling ones! I, to Yahweh, I will sing; I will make music to Yahweh God of Israel.

⁴ Yahweh, when You went out from Seir, When You marched from the field of Edom, The earth quaked and the heavens dropped, The clouds also dropped water, ⁵ The mountains flowed before Yahweh, This Sinai, before Yahweh God of Israel.

⁶ In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, In the days of Jael, The highways were deserted, And the travelers walked along crooked ways.

⁷ The rural population ceased, it ceased in Israel, Until I, Deborah, arose, Arose a mother in Israel.

⁸ It chose new gods; Then war was at the gates; Not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel.

⁹ My heart is toward the scribes of Israel the volunteers for the people. You will bless Yahweh!

¹⁰ Consider, you who ride on tawny female donkeys, Who sit on carpets, And who walk along the road.

¹¹ Away from the sound of the archers, between the watering places, There they will recount the righteous acts of Yahweh, The righteous acts for His rural people in Israel; At that time the people of Yahweh will go down to the gates.

¹² Awake, awake, Deborah! Awake, awake, sing a song! Arise, Barak, and hold captive your captives, son of Abinoam!⁴

¹³ At that time *the* survivor came down to the majestic ones; The people of Yahweh came down to me as strong ones.

¹⁴ Out of Ephraim came those whose root was in Amalek; following you was Benjamin with your people. Out of Machir

came down governors, and out of Zebulun they who handle the staff of the ruler.

¹⁵ And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; As was Issachar, so was Barak; into the valley they rushed at his heels; Among the divisions of Reuben were great resolves of heart.

¹⁶ Why did you sit among the sheepfolds, To hear the piping for the flocks? The divisions of Reuben have great searching of heart.

¹⁷ Gilead remained beyond the Jordan, And why did Dan remain on ships? Asher continued at the seashore, And stayed by his landing places.

¹⁸ Zebulun is a people who despised their lives unto death, Naphtali also, on the high places of the field.

¹⁹ The kings came and fought, Then the kings of Canaan fought In Taanach, beside the waters of Megiddo; They took no plunder of silver.

²⁰ The stars fought from the heavens; from their courses they fought against Sisera.

²¹ The wady of Kishon swept them away, The ancient wady, the wady of Kishon. My soul, march on in strength!

²² Then the horses' hoofs struck, The dashing, dashing of his valiant ones.

²³ Curse Meroz, said the angel of Yahweh, Curse its inhabitants completely, Because they did not come to the help of Yahweh, To the help of Yahweh against the mighty ones.

²⁴ Most blessed of women is Jael, The wife of Heber the Kenite; She is blessed among women in the tent.

²⁵ He asked for water, she gave milk; She brought out cheese in a majestic bowl.

²⁶ She stretched her hand for the tent peg, Her right hand for the workmen's mallet; She struck Sisera, she shattered his head, She split and went through his temple.

²⁷ Between her feet he bowed down, he fell, he lay down; At her feet he sank, he fell; Where he bowed down, there he fell dead.

²⁸ The mother of Sisera looked through the window, And cried out through the lattice,

⁴ Barak's father's name means literally "my father is pleasant."

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‘Why delays his chariot in coming? Why carries the hoof beats of his chariots?’

²⁹ Her wisest ladies answered her, Yes, she repeats herself,

³⁰ ‘Are they not finding and dividing the spoil: A maiden, two maidens for every warrior; For Sisera, plunder of dyed garments, Plunder of garments embroidered and dyed, Dyed work of double embroidery on the neck of the spoiler?’

³¹ Thus let all Your enemies perish, Yahweh! But let those who love Him be like the rising sun in its might.

So the land had rest for forty years.

Judges 6

¹ And the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of Yahweh. So Yahweh delivered them into the hand of Midian for seven years, ² and the hand of Midian prevailed against Israel. Because of the Midianites, the sons of Israel made for themselves the dens, the caves, and the strongholds which are in the mountains.

³ And it happened, whenever Israel had sown, Midianites came up; also Amalekites and the people of the East came up against them.

⁴ And they camped against them and destroyed the produce of the earth as far as Gaza, and left no sustenance for Israel, neither sheep nor ox nor donkey.

⁵ And they came up with their livestock and their tents, they came as locusts in number; both they and their camels were without number; and they entered the land to destroy it.

⁶ And Israel was brought very low because of the Midianites, and the sons of Israel cried out to Yahweh.

⁷ And it happened, when the sons of Israel cried out to Yahweh because of the Midianites, ⁸ that Yahweh sent a prophet to the sons of Israel, who said to them, Thus says Yahweh God of Israel: I brought you up from Egypt and brought you out of the house of slavery; ⁹ ‘and I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians and out of the

hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you and gave you their land.

¹⁰ And I said to you, I am Yahweh your God; do not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you live. But you have not obeyed My voice.

¹¹ And the Angel of Yahweh came and sat under the terebinth tree which was in Ophrah, that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite. And his son Gideon threshed wheat at the winepress, in order to secure it from the Midianites.

¹² And the Angel of Yahweh appeared to him, and said to him, Yahweh is with you, you strong man of valor!

¹³ And Gideon said to Him, O my lord, if Yahweh is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where are all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did not Yahweh bring us up from Egypt?’ But now Yahweh has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.

¹⁴ Then Yahweh turned to him and said, Go in this strength of yours, and you will save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?

¹⁵ And he said to Him, O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Behold, my family is the poorest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.

¹⁶ And Yahweh said to him, I will certainly be with you, and you will strike the Midianites as one man.

¹⁷ And he said to Him, If now I have found grace in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who talk with me.

¹⁸ Do not depart from here, I beseech you, until I come to You and bring out my offering and set it before You. And He said, I will wait until you return.

¹⁹ So Gideon went in and prepared a young goat, and unleavened cakes from an ephah of flour. The meat he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot; and he brought them

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out to Him under the terebinth tree and presented them.

²⁰ The Angel of God said to him, Take the meat and the unleavened cakes and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so.

²¹ Then the Angel of Yahweh put out the end of the staff that was in His hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened cakes; and fire rose out of the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened cakes. And the Angel of Yahweh departed out of his sight.

²² And Gideon understood that He was the Angel of Yahweh. So Gideon said, Alas, O Lord GOD! For I have seen the Angel of Yahweh face to face.

²³ Then Yahweh said to him, Peace be with you; do not fear, you will not die.

²⁴ So Gideon built an altar there to Yahweh, and called it Yahweh-Is-Peace.⁵ To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

²⁵ And it happened the same night that Yahweh said to him, Take your father's young bull, the second bull of seven years old, and tear down the altar of Ba'al that your father has, and cut down the Asherah that is beside it; ²⁶ and build an altar to Yahweh your God on top of this stronghold in an orderly way, and take the second bull and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the Asherah which you will cut down.

²⁷ And Gideon took ten men from among his servants and did as Yahweh had said to him. But because he feared his father's household and the men of the city too much to do it by day, he did it by night.

²⁸ And when the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Ba'al was torn down; and the Asherah that was beside it was cut down, and the second bull was being offered on the altar which had been built.

²⁹ And they said to one another, Who has done this thing? And when they had inquired

and asked, they said, Gideon the son of Joash has done this thing.

³⁰ Then the men of the city said to Joash, Bring out your son, that he may die, because he has torn down the altar of Ba'al, and because he has cut down the Asherah that was beside it.

³¹ And Joash said to all who stood against him, Would you plead for Ba'al? Would you save him? Let the one who would plead for him be put to death by morning! If he is a god, let him plead for himself, because his altar has been torn down!

³² So on that day he called him Jerub-ba'al,⁶ saying, Let Ba'al plead against him, because he has torn down his altar.

³³ And all the Midianites and Amalekites, the people of the East, gathered together; and they crossed over and camped in the Valley of Jezreel.

³⁴ And the Spirit of Yahweh came upon Gideon; then he blew the trumpet, and the Abiezrites gathered behind him.

³⁵ And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh, and they also gathered behind him. He also sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.

³⁶ So Gideon said to God, If You will save Israel by my hand as You have spoken ³⁷ behold, I will put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I will know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have spoken.

³⁸ And it was so. When he rose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece together, he wrung the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water.

³⁹ Then Gideon said to God, Do not be angry with me, but let me speak just once more: Let me test, I entreat, just once more with the fleece; let it now be dry only on the fleece, but on all the ground let there be dew.

⁵ Yahweh-shalom.

⁶ Let Ba'al plead.

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⁴⁰ And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, but there was dew on all the ground.

Judges Seven

¹ Then Jerub-ba'al, who is Gideon, and all the people who were with him rose early and camped beside the spring of Harod, and the camp of the Midian was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley.

² And Yahweh said to Gideon, The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, lest Israel glorify itself against Me, saying, 'My own hand saved me.'

³ Now therefore, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, 'Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him turn and depart at once from Mount Gilead.' And twenty-two thousand of the people returned, and ten thousand remained.

⁴ And Yahweh said to Gideon, The people are still too many; bring them down to the water, and I will test them for you there. Then it will be, that he of whom I say to you, 'This one will go with you,' the same will go with you; and whomever I say to you, 'This one will not go with you,' the same will not go.

⁵ So he brought the people down to the water. And Yahweh said to Gideon, Everyone who laps from the water with his tongue, like a dog laps, you will set apart by himself. Likewise, everyone who gets down on his knees to drink.

⁶ And the number of the ones who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men; but all the remainder of the people got down on their knees to drink water.

⁷ Then Yahweh said to Gideon, By the three hundred men who lapped I will save you, and deliver Midian into your hand. Let all the other people go, every man to his place.

⁸ So the people took provisions and their trumpets in their hands. And he sent away all the rest of Israel, every man to his tent,

and kept back those three hundred men. And the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

⁹ It came to pass on the same night that Yahweh said to him, Arise, go down against the camp, for I have delivered it into your hand.

¹⁰ But if you are afraid to go down, go down with Purah, your servant, to the camp, ¹¹ and you will hear what they say; and afterward your hands will be strengthened to go down against the camp. Then he went down with Purah his servant to the outer part of the armed men who were in the camp.

¹² Now the Midianites and Amalekites, all the people of the East, were lying in the valley like a multitude of locusts; and their camels were without number, like the number of the sand by the seashore.

¹³ And when Gideon had come, behold, a man was telling a dream to his friend. He said, Behold, I had a dream: Behold, a loaf of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian; it came to the tent and struck it so that it fell and overturned, and the tent fell flat.

¹⁴ And his friend answered and said, This is nothing else but the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel! God has delivered into his hand Midian and all the camp.

¹⁵ And it was that when Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he prostrated himself. He returned to the camp of Israel, and said, Arise, for Yahweh has delivered the camp of Midian into your hand.

¹⁶ And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet into every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and torches inside the pitchers.

¹⁷ And he said to them, Look at me and do likewise; behold, and when I come to the outer part of the camp you will do as I do.

¹⁸ When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then you also blow the trumpets

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on every side of the entire camp, and say, 'The sword of Yahweh and of Gideon!'

¹⁹ So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outer part of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just posted the watch; and they blew the trumpets and smashed the pitchers that were in their hands.

²⁰ Then the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the pitchers, they held the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right hands for blowing, and they cried, The sword of Yahweh and of Gideon!

²¹ And stood every man in his place all around the camp; and the entire army ran and cried out and fled.

²² When the three hundred blew the trumpets, Yahweh set every man's sword against his friend throughout the entire camp; and the army fled to Beth-shittah, toward Zererah, as far as the border of Abel Meholah, by Tabbath.

²³ And the men of Israel were called together from Naphtali, Asher, and all Manasseh, and they pursued Midian.

²⁴ Then Gideon sent messengers throughout the hill country of Ephraim, saying, Come down against Midian, and take the watering places before them as far as Beth-barah and the Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim were gathered together and they took the watering places as far as Beth-barah and the Jordan.

²⁵ And they captured two officers of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb. They had pursued Midian and brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side of the Jordan.

Judges Eight

¹ And the men of Ephraim said to him, Why have you done this to us by not calling us when you went to fight against Midian? And they argued with him forcefully.

² And he said to them, What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleanings of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?

³ God has delivered into your hands the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. And what was I able to do in comparison with you? Then their anger toward him subsided when he said that.

⁴ And Gideon came to the Jordan, he and the three hundred men who were with him crossed over, weary but still in pursuit.

⁵ And he said to the men of Succoth, Please give loaves of bread to the people who follow me, for they are weary, and I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian.

⁶ And the leaders of Succoth said, Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hand, that we should give bread to your army?

⁷ And Gideon said, For this cause, when Yahweh has delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, then I will rend your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers!

⁸ And he went up from there to Penuel and spoke to them similarly, and the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered.

⁹ And he spoke also to the men of Penuel, saying, When I come back in peace, I will tear down this tower!

¹⁰ Now Zebah and Zalmunna were at Karkor, and their armies with them, about 15,000, all who were left of all the army of the people of the East; for there fell 120,000 men who drew the sword.

¹¹ And Gideon went up by the way of those who live in tents on the east of Nobah and Jogbehah; and he struck the army while the camp was secure.

¹² And Zebah and Zalmunna fled, and he pursued them; and he took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and routed the whole army.

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¹³ And Gideon the son of Joash returned from battle, from the Ascent of Heres.

¹⁴ And he caught a young man of the men of Succoth and questioned him; and he wrote down for him the rulers of Succoth and its elders, seventy-seven men.

¹⁵ And he came to the men of Succoth and said, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you reproached me, saying, 'Are the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in your hand, that we should give bread to your weary men?'

¹⁶ And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he punished the men of Succoth.

¹⁷ And he tore down the tower of Penuel and killed the men of the city.

¹⁸ Then he said to Zebah and Zalmunna, What kind of men were they whom you killed at Tabor? So they answered, As you are, so were they; each one was resembling the son of a king.

¹⁹ Then he said, They were my brothers, the sons of my mother. As Yahweh lives, if you had let them live, I would not kill you.

²⁰ And he said to Jether his firstborn, Arise, kill them! But the youth would not draw his sword, because he was afraid, for he was still a youth.

²¹ So Zebah and Zalmunna said, Arise yourself, and kill us; for as a man is, so is his strength. So Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the moon-shaped ornaments which were on their camels' necks.

²² And the men of Israel said to Gideon, You rule over us, you and your son, and your son's son also; for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian.

²³ But Gideon said to them, I will not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you; Yahweh will rule over you.

²⁴ Then Gideon said to them, I desire a petition from you, that each of you would give me the earrings from his spoil. (For

they had gold earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.)

²⁵ So they answered, We will certainly give them. And they spread out a garment, and each man threw into it the earrings from his spoil.

²⁶ Now the weight of the gold earrings that he petitioned was 1,700 shekels of gold, besides the moon-shaped ornaments, pendants, and purple robes which were on the kings of Midian, and besides the bands that were around their camels' necks.

²⁷ Then Gideon made it into an ephod and set it up in his city, Ophrah. And all Israel played the prostitute with it there and it became a snare to Gideon and to his household.

²⁸ And Midian was subdued before the sons of Israel, so that they lifted their heads no more. And the land was quiet for 40 years in the days of Gideon.

²⁹ Then Jerub-ba'al the son of Joash went and lived in his own house.

³⁰ Gideon had 70 sons who were begotten of his loins, for he had many wives.

³¹ And his concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, and he named him Abimelech.

³² Now Gideon the son of Joash died at a good old age, and was buried in the grave of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

³³ And it happened, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the sons of Israel again played the prostitute with the Ba'alim, and made Ba'al-Berith their god.

³⁴ And the sons of Israel did not remember Yahweh their God, who had delivered them from the hands of all their enemies on every side; ³⁵ nor did they show kindness to the household of Jerub-ba'al (Gideon) according to the good he had done for Israel.

Judges Nine

¹ And Abimelech the son of Jerub-ba'al went to Shechem, to his mother's brothers, and spoke with them and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying, ²

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Speak in the hearing of all the men of Shechem: ‘Which is better for you, that all seventy of the sons of Jerub-ba’al reign over you, or that one reign over you?’ Remember that I am your bone and your flesh.

³ And his mother’s brothers spoke all these words concerning him in the hearing of all the men of Shechem; and their heart was inclined to follow Abimelech, for they said, He is our brother.

⁴ And they gave him seventy pieces of silver from the temple of Ba’al-Berith, with which Abimelech hired worthless and reckless men; and they followed him.

⁵ And he went to his father’s house at Ophrah and killed his brothers, the seventy sons of Jerub-ba’al, upon one stone. But Jotham the youngest son of Jerub-ba’al was left, for he hid himself.

⁶ And all the men of Shechem assembled together, all of Beth Millo, and they went and made Abimelech king beside the terebinth tree at the pillar which was in Shechem.

⁷ And when they told Jotham, he went and stood on top of Mount Gerizim, and lifted his voice and cried out. And he said to them: Listen to me, men of Shechem, That God may listen to you!

⁸ The trees at one time went forth to anoint a king over them. And they said to the olive tree, ‘Reign over us!’

⁹ But the olive tree said to them, ‘Should I leave my fatness, with which they honor God and men, and go to wave over trees?’

¹⁰ Then the trees said to the fig tree, ‘You come, reign over us!’

¹¹ But the fig tree said to them, ‘Should I cease my sweetness and my good fruit, and go to wave over trees?’

¹² Then the trees said to the vine, ‘Come, reign over us!’

¹³ But the vine said to them, ‘Should I leave my new wine, which cheers both God and men, and go to wave over trees?’

¹⁴ Then all the trees said to the bramble, ‘Come, reign over us!’

¹⁵ And the bramble said to the trees, ‘If in truth you anoint me as king over you, then come and take shelter in my shade; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon!’

¹⁶ Now therefore, if you acted in truth and integrity in making Abimelech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerub-ba’al and his house, and have done to him as he deserved

–

¹⁷ for my father fought for you, risked his life, and delivered you from the hand of Midian;

¹⁸ and you have risen up against my father’s house this day, and killed his seventy sons on one stone, and made Abimelech, the son of his female servant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother –

¹⁹ if then you have acted in truth and integrity with Jerub-ba’al and with his house this day, then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you.

²⁰ And if not, let fire come from Abimelech and devour the men of Shechem and Beth Millo; and let fire come from the men of Shechem and from Beth Millo and devour Abimelech!

²¹ And Jotham ran away and fled; and he went to Beer and lived there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

²² And Abimelech reigned over Israel three years.

²³ And God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech, ²⁴ so that the violence done to the seventy sons of Jerub-ba’al might come and their blood be laid on Abimelech their brother, who killed them, and on the men of Shechem, who had strengthened his hand in the killing of his brothers.

²⁵ And the men of Shechem set men waiting for him on the tops of the mountains, and

Judges

they robbed all who passed by them along that way; and it was told Abimelech.

²⁶ And Ga'al the son of Ebed came with his brothers and went over to Shechem; and the men of Shechem put their trust in him.

²⁷ And they went out into the fields, and gathered grapes from their vineyards and trod them, and had a festival. And they went into the house of their god, and ate and drank, and cursed Abimelech.

²⁸ And Ga'al the son of Ebed said, Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerubba'al, and is not Zebul his deputy? You men of Hamor serve the father of Shechem; but why should we serve him?

²⁹ Would that this people were under my authority! Then I would remove Abimelech. And he said to Abimelech, Increase your army and come out!

³⁰ And Zebul, the ruler of the city, heard the words of Ga'al the son of Ebed, and his anger was kindled.

³¹ And he sent messengers to Abimelech craftily, saying, Behold, Ga'al the son of Ebed and his brothers have come to Shechem; and behold, they are fortifying the city against you.

³² And now therefore, arise by night, you and the people who are with you, and lie in wait in the field.

³³ And it will be, in the morning as soon as the sun is up, that you will rise early and rush upon the city; and behold, when he and the people who are with him come out against you, you may then do to them as you find *an* occasion.

³⁴ And Abimelech and all the people who were with him rose by night, and lay in wait against Shechem in four companies.

³⁵ And Ga'al the son of Ebed went out and stood in the entrance to the city gate, and Abimelech and the people who were with him rose from lying in wait.

³⁶ And when Ga'al saw the people, he said to Zebul, Behold, people are coming down

from the tops of the mountains! But Zebul said to him, You see the shadows of the mountains as though they were men.

³⁷ So Ga'al spoke again and said, Behold, people are coming down from the center of the land, and another company is coming from the Soothsayer's Terebinth Tree.

³⁸ Then Zebul said to him, Where indeed is your mouth now, with which you said, 'Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?' Are not these the people whom you despised? Go out and fight with them now.

³⁹ And Ga'al went out, leading the men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech.

⁴⁰ And Abimelech chased him, and he fled from him; and many fell wounded up to the entrance of the gate.

⁴¹ And Abimelech stayed at Arumah, and Zebul drove out Ga'al and his brothers, so that they could not live in Shechem.

⁴² And it came about on the next day that the people went out into the field, and it was told to Abimelech.

⁴³ And he took his people, divided them into three companies, and lay in wait in the field. And behold, the people were coming out of the city; and he rose against them and struck them.

⁴⁴ And Abimelech and the company that was with him rushed forward and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city; and the other two companies rushed upon all who were in the fields and struck them.

⁴⁵ And Abimelech fought against the city all that day; he took the city and killed the people who were in it; and he razed the city and sowed it with salt.

⁴⁶ And when all the men of the tower of Shechem heard that, they entered the stronghold of the temple of El Berith.

⁴⁷ And it was told Abimelech that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together.

⁴⁸ So Abimelech went up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the people who were with him. And Abimelech took an ax in his hand and

Judges

cut down a bough from the trees, and took it and laid it on his shoulder. Then he said to the people who were with him, What you have seen me do, hurry and do as I have done.

⁴⁹ And all the people likewise cut down his own bough and followed Abimelech, put them against the stronghold, and set the stronghold on fire above them, so that all the people of the tower of Shechem died, about a thousand men and women.

⁵⁰ And Abimelech went to Thebez, and he camped against Thebez and took it.

⁵¹ But there was a strong tower in the city, and all the men and women and all the people of the city fled there and shut themselves in; then they went up to the top of the tower.

⁵² And Abimelech came as far as the tower and fought against it; and he came near the door of the tower to burn it with fire, ⁵³ and one woman dropped an upper millstone on Abimelech's head and crushed his skull.

⁵⁴ Then he called quickly to the young man, his armor bearer, and said to him, Draw your sword and kill me, that men not say of me, 'A woman killed him.' So his young man thrust him through, and he died.

⁵⁵ And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man to his place.

⁵⁶ Thus God repaid the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did to his father by killing his seventy brothers.

⁵⁷ And all the wickedness of the men of Shechem God returned on their own heads, and came upon them the curse of Jotham the son of Jerub-ba'al.

Judges Ten

¹ After Abimelech there arose to rescue Israel Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar. And he lived in Shamir in the mountains of Ephraim.

² He judged Israel twenty-three years; and he died and was buried in Shamir.

³ After him arose Jair, a Gileadite; and he judged Israel twenty-two years.

⁴ Now he had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkeys; they also had thirty towns, which are called Havoth Jair to this day, which are in the land of Gilead.

⁵ And Jair died and was buried in Camon.

⁶ And the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of Yahweh, and served the Ba'alim and the Ashtaroth, the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the sons of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and they deserted Yahweh and did not serve Him.

⁷ So the anger of Yahweh burned against Israel; and He sold them into the hands of the Philistines and into the hands of the sons of Ammon.

⁸ From that year they harassed and oppressed the sons of Israel for eighteen years, all the sons of Israel who were on the other side of the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, in Gilead.

⁹ Moreover the sons 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.

¹⁰ And the sons of Israel cried out to Yahweh, saying, We have sinned against You, because we have both forsaken our God and served the Ba'alim!

¹¹ And Yahweh said to the sons of Israel, Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians and from the Amorites and from the sons of Ammon and from the Philistines?

¹² The Sidonians and Amalekites and Maonites also oppressed you; and you cried out to Me, and I delivered you from their hand.

¹³ 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.

Judges

¹⁵ And the sons of Israel said to Yahweh, We have sinned! Do to us whatever seems best to You; only deliver us this day, we pray.

¹⁶ So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served Yahweh. And His soul could no longer endure the misery of Israel.

¹⁷ Then the sons of Ammon gathered together and camped in Gilead. And the sons of Israel assembled together and camped 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 sons of Ammon? He will be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

Judges Eleven

¹ Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, but he was the son of a prostitute; and Gilead begot Jephthah.

² Gilead's wife bore sons; and when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out, and said to him, You will have no inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman.

³ Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob; and worthless men banded together with Jephthah and went out raiding with him.

⁴ It happened after a time that the sons of Ammon made war against Israel.

⁵ And so it was, when the sons of Ammon made war against Israel, that the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob.

⁶ And they said to Jephthah, Come and be our commander, that we may fight against the sons of Ammon.

⁷ And Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, Did you not hate me, and drove me from my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in trouble?

⁸ And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, That is why we have turned again to you now, that you may go with us and fight

against the sons of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

⁹ And Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, If you take me back home to fight against the sons of Ammon, and Yahweh delivers them to me, will I be your head?

¹⁰ And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, Yahweh will be a witness between us, if we do not do according to your words.

¹¹ And Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and commander over them; and Jephthah spoke all his words before Yahweh in Mizpah.

¹² And Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the sons of Ammon, saying, What do you have against me, that you have come to fight against me in my land?

¹³ And the king of the sons 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.

¹⁴ And Jephthah again sent messengers to the king of the sons of Ammon, ¹⁵ and said to him, Thus says Jephthah: 'Israel did not take away the land of Moab, nor the land of the sons of Ammon; ¹⁶ 'for when Israel came up from Egypt, they 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, Please let me pass through your land. But the king of Edom would not heed. And in like manner they sent to the king of Moab, but he would not consent. So Israel remained in Kadesh.

¹⁸ And they went along through the wilderness and bypassed the land of Edom and the land of Moab, came to the east side of the land of Moab, and camped on the other side of the Arnon. But they did not enter the border of Moab, for the Arnon was the border of Moab.

¹⁹ And Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, king of Heshbon; and Israel

Judges

said to him, Please let us pass through your land into our place.

²⁰ And Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory. So Sihon gathered all his people together, camped in Jahaz, and fought against Israel.

²¹ And Yahweh, God of Israel, delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they struck them. Thus Israel gained possession of all the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country.

²² They took possession of all the borders of the Amorites, from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan.

²³ And now Yahweh God of Israel has dispossessed the Amorites from before His people Israel; should you then possess it?

²⁴ Will you not possess whatever Chemosh your god gives you to possess? So whatever Yahweh our God takes possession of before us, we will possess.

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?

²⁶ While Israel lived in Heshbon and its suburbs, in Aroer and its suburbs, and in all the cities along the banks of the Arnon, for three hundred years, why did you not recover them within that time?

²⁷ Therefore I have not sinned against you, but you wronged me by fighting against me. May Yahweh, the Judge, render judgment this day between the sons of Israel and the sons of Ammon.

²⁸ However, the king of the sons of Ammon did not heed the words which Jephthah sent him.

²⁹ And the Spirit of Yahweh 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 sons of Ammon.

³⁰ And Jephthah made a vow to Yahweh, and said, If You will indeed deliver the sons 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 sons of Ammon, will surely be Yahweh's, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering.

³² So Jephthah advanced toward the sons of Ammon to fight against them, and Yahweh delivered them into his hands.

³³ And he struck them from Aroer as far as Minnith (twenty cities) and to Abel Keramim, with a very great slaughter. Thus the sons of Ammon were subdued before the sons of Israel.

³⁴ When Jephthah came to his house at Mizpah, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and dancing; and she was his only child. Besides her he had neither son nor daughter.

³⁵ And it happened, when he saw her, that he tore his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low! You are among those who trouble me! For I have given my word to Yahweh, and I cannot go back on it.

³⁶ And she said to him, My father, if you have given your word to Yahweh, do to me according to what has gone out of your mouth, because Yahweh has avenged you of your enemies, the sons of Ammon.

³⁷ And she said to her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone for two months, that I may go and wander on the mountains and bewail my virginity, my friends and I.

³⁸ And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months; and she went with her friends, and bewailed her virginity on the mountains.

³⁹ And it was so at the end of two months that she returned to her father, and he carried out his vow with her which he had vowed. She knew no man. And it became a custom in Israel ⁴⁰ that the daughters of Israel went four days each year to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.

Judges

Judges Twelve

¹ And the men of Ephraim gathered together, crossed over toward Zaphon, and said to Jephthah, Why did you cross over to fight against the sons of Ammon, and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house down on you with fire!

² And Jephthah said to them, My people and I were in a great struggle with the sons of Ammon; and when I called you, you did not deliver me out of their hands.

³ And when I saw that you would not deliver me, I took my life in my hands and crossed over against the sons of Ammon; and Yahweh delivered them into my hand. Why then have you come up to me this day to fight against me?

⁴ And Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead and fought against Ephraim. And the men of Gilead struck Ephraim, because they said, You Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites and among the Manassites.

⁵ The Gileadites seized the fords of the Jordan before the Ephraimites arrived. And when any Ephraimite who escaped said, Let me cross over, the men of Gilead would say to him, Are you an Ephraimite? If he said, No, ⁶ then they would say to him, Then say, 'Shibboleth'! And he would say, Sibboleth, for he could not pronounce it right. Then they would take him and kill him at the fords of the Jordan. There fell at that time forty-two thousand Ephraimites.

⁷ And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried in among the cities of Gilead.

⁸ After him, Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel.

⁹ He had thirty sons. And he gave away thirty daughters in marriage, and brought in thirty daughters from elsewhere for his sons. He judged Israel seven years.

¹⁰ Then Ibzan died and was buried at Bethlehem.

¹¹ After him, Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel. He judged Israel ten years.

¹² And Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried at Aijalon in the country of Zebulun.

¹³ After him, Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel.

¹⁴ He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy young donkeys. He judged Israel eight years.

¹⁵ Then Abdon the son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and was buried in Pirathon in the land of Ephraim, in the mountains of the Amalekites.

Judges Thirteen

¹ Again the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of Yahweh, and Yahweh delivered them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years.

² 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 Yahweh appeared to the woman and said to her, Behold now you are barren and have borne no children, but you will become pregnant 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 will become pregnant and bear a son. And no razor will come upon his head, for the child will be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he will begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

⁶ So the woman came and told her husband, saying, A Man of God came to me, and His appearance was like the appearance of the Angel of God, very awesome; but I did not ask Him where He was from, and He did not tell me His name.

⁷ And He said to me, Behold, you will become pregnant and bear a son. Now drink no wine or similar drink, nor eat anything unclean, for the child will be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.

⁸ Then Manoah prayed to Yahweh, and said, O my Lord, please let the Man of God

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whom You sent come to us again and teach us what we will do for the child who will be born.

⁹ And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the Angel of God came to the woman again as she was sitting in the field; but Manoah her husband was not with her.

¹⁰ And the woman ran in haste and told her husband, and said to him, Behold, the Man has just now appeared to me who came to me the other day!

¹¹ And Manoah arose and followed his wife. When he came to the Man, he said to Him, Are You the Man who spoke to this woman? And He said, I am.

¹² And Manoah said, Now let Your words come to pass! What will be the boy's rule of life, and his work?

¹³ And the Angel of Yahweh said to Manoah, Of all that I said to the woman let her be careful.

¹⁴ She may not eat anything that comes from the vine, nor may she drink wine or similar drink, nor eat anything unclean. All that I commanded her let her observe.

¹⁵ And Manoah said to the Angel of Yahweh, Please let us detain You, and we will prepare a young goat for You.

¹⁶ And the Angel of Yahweh said to Manoah, Though you detain Me, I will not eat your food. But if you offer a burnt offering, you must offer it to Yahweh. (For Manoah did not know He was the Angel of Yahweh.)

¹⁷ And Manoah said to the Angel of Yahweh, What is Your name, that when Your words come to pass we may honor You?

¹⁸ And the Angel of Yahweh said to him, Why do you ask My name, seeing it is wonderful?

¹⁹ So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering, and offered it upon the rock to Yahweh. And He did a wondrous thing while Manoah and his wife looked on, ²⁰ it happened as the flame went up toward

heaven from the altar the Angel of Yahweh ascended in the flame of the altar! And Manoah and his wife saw this, and they fell on their faces to the ground.

²¹ And the Angel of Yahweh appeared no more to Manoah and his wife, so Manoah knew that He was the Angel of Yahweh.

²² And Manoah said to his wife, We will surely die, because we have seen God!

²³ But his wife said to him, If Yahweh had desired to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and a grain offering from our hands, nor would He have shown us all these things, nor would He have told us such things as these at this time.

²⁴ And the woman bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and Yahweh blessed him.

²⁵ And the Spirit of Yahweh began to move upon him at Mahaneh Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Judges Fourteen

¹ And Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines.

² And 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 And 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? And Samson said to his father, Get her for me, for she pleases me well.

⁴ And his father and mother knew not that it was of Yahweh – that He was seeking an occasion to move against the Philistines. For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

⁵ And Samson, with his father and mother, went down to Timnah and came to the vineyards of Timnah. Now behold, a young lion came roaring against him.

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⁶ And the Spirit of Yahweh 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.

⁷ And he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.

⁸ And after some time, when he returned to get 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 And 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.

¹⁰ And his father went down to the woman. And Samson gave a feast there, for so did the young men.

¹¹ And it happened, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him.

¹² And 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.

¹³ But if you cannot explain it to me, then you will give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing. And they said to him, Pose your riddle, that we may hear it.

¹⁴ And he said to them: Out of the eater came something to eat, And out of the strong came something sweet. Now for three days they could not explain the riddle.

¹⁵ And it happened on the seventh day that they said to Samson's wife, Entice your husband, that he may explain the riddle to us, or else we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us in order to take what is ours? Is that not so?

¹⁶ And Samson's wife wept on him, and said, You only hate me! You do not love me! You have posed a riddle to the sons of my

people, but you have not explained it to me. And he said to her, Behold, I have not explained it to my father or my mother; so *why* should I explain it to you?

¹⁷ And she had wept on him the seven days while their feast lasted. And it happened on the seventh day that he told her, because she pressed him so much. Then she explained the riddle to the sons of her people.

¹⁸ And the men of the city said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down: What is sweeter than honey? And what is stronger than a lion? And he said to them: If you had not plowed with my heifer, You would not have solved my riddle!

¹⁹ And the Spirit of Yahweh came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon and struck thirty of their men, took their apparel, and gave the changes of clothing to those who had explained the riddle. So his anger was aroused, and he went back up to his father's house.

²⁰ And Samson's wife was given to his companion, who had been his friend.

Judges Fifteen

¹ After a while, in the time of wheat harvest, it happened that Samson visited his wife with a young goat. And he said, Let me go in to my wife, into her room. But her father would not permit him to go in.

² Her father said, I really thought that you thoroughly hated her; therefore I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister better than she? Please, take her instead.

³ And Samson said to them, This time I will be blameless regarding the Philistines if I harm them!

⁴ Then Samson went and caught three hundred foxes; and he took torches, turned the foxes tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails.

⁵ When he had set the torches on fire, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up both the shocks and the standing grain, as well as the vineyards and olive groves.

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⁶ Then the Philistines said, Who has done this? And they answered, Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken his wife and given her to his companion. So the Philistines attacked and burned her and her father with fire.

⁷ Samson said to them, Since you would do a thing like this, I will surely take revenge on you, and after that I will cease.

⁸ So he struck them hip and thigh with a great slaughter; then he went down and lived in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

⁹ And the Philistines went up, camped in Judah, and deployed themselves against Lehi.

¹⁰ And the men of Judah said, Why have you come up against us? So they answered, We have come up to arrest Samson, to do to him as he has done to us.

¹¹ And three thousand men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, Do you not know that the Philistines rule over us? What is this you have done to us? And he said to them, As they did to me, so I have done to them.

¹² And they said to him, We have come down to arrest you, that we may deliver you into the hand of the Philistines. Then Samson said to them, Swear to me that you will not kill me yourselves.

¹³ And they spoke to him, saying, No, but we will bind you tightly and deliver you into their hand; and we will certainly not kill you. And they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

¹⁴ And he came as far as Lehi, and the Philistines came shouting against him. And the Spirit of Yahweh came powerfully upon him; and the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds broke loose from his hands.

¹⁵ And he found a fresh jawbone of a male donkey, and he put out his hand and took it, and struck a thousand men with it.

¹⁶ Then Samson said: With the jawbone of a male donkey, a heap, two heaps, with the

jawbone of a donkey I have struck a thousand men!

¹⁷ And it happened, when he finished speaking, he threw the jawbone from his hand, and called that place Ramath Lehi.

¹⁸ And he was very thirsty; so he cried out to Yahweh and said, You have given this great deliverance by the hand of Your servant; and now will I die of thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?

¹⁹ And God cut the hollow place that is in Lehi, and water came out, and he drank; and his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore he called its name En Hakkore, which is in Lehi to this day.

²⁰ And he judged Israel twenty years in the days of the Philistines.

Judges Sixteen

¹ And Samson went to Gaza and saw a prostitute there, and went in to her.

² And to the Gazites it was said, Samson has come here! And they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They were silent all night, saying, We will kill him in the morning, when it is daylight.

³ And Samson lay until midnight; and arose at midnight, and he took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two gateposts, and pulled them up, with the bar, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill in front of Hebron.

⁴ And it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

⁵ And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, Entice him, and find out where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, so that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred pieces of silver.

⁶ So Delilah said to Samson, Please tell me where your great strength lies, and with what you may be bound to afflict you.

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⁷ And Samson said to her, If they bind me with seven fresh cords, not yet dried, then I will become weak, and be like any other man.

⁸ And the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh cords, not yet dried, and she bound him with them.

⁹ And men were lying in wait, staying with her in the room. And she said to him, The Philistines are upon you, Samson! And he broke the cords like a strand of yarn breaks when it touches fire. So the secret of his strength was not known.

¹⁰ And Delilah said to Samson, Behold, you have mocked me and told me lies. Now, please tell me what you may be bound with.

¹¹ And he said to her, If they bind me securely with new ropes that have never been used, then I will become weak, and be like any other man.

¹² And Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said to him, The Philistines are upon you, Samson! And men were lying in wait, staying in the room. And he broke them off his arms like a thread.

¹³ Delilah said to Samson, Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me what you may be bound with. And he said to her, If you weave the seven locks of my head into the web of the loom.

¹⁴ And she tightened it with the peg of the loom, and said to him, The Philistines are upon you, Samson! But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled out the peg and the web from the loom.

¹⁵ And she said to him, How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your great strength lies.

¹⁶ And it happened, she pressed him daily with her words and urged him, so that his soul was annoyed to death, ¹⁷ and he told her all his heart, and said to her, No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If

I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I will become weak, and be like any other man.

¹⁸ When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart. So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand.

¹⁹ And she caused him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. And she began to afflict him, and his strength left him.

²⁰ And she said, The Philistines are upon you, Samson! And he awoke from his sleep, and said, I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free! But he knew not that Yahweh had departed from him.

²¹ And the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze chains, and he was grinding in the prison.

²² However, the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaven.

²³ Now the lords of the Philistines gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice. And they said: Our god has delivered Samson our enemy into our hands!

²⁴ And the people saw him, and they praised their god; for they said: Our god has delivered into our hands our enemy, The destroyer of our land, And the one who increased our dead.

²⁵ And it happened, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may amuse us. So they called for Samson from the prison, and he entertained them. And they stood him between the pillars.

²⁶ And Samson said to the lad who held him by the hand, Allow me feel the pillars which support the temple, so that I can lean on them.

²⁷ And the building was full of men and women. All the lords of the Philistines were there, about three thousand men and women

Judges

on the roof watching while Samson entertained.

²⁸ And Samson called to Yahweh, saying, O Lord GOD, remember me, please! Strengthen me, please, just this once, O God, that I may with one blow take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!

²⁹ And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars which supported the building, and he supported himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left.

³⁰ And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines! And he bent forward with all his might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life.

³¹ And his brothers and all the household of his father came down and took him, and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of his father Manoah. He judged Israel twenty years.

Judges Seventeen

¹ And there was a man from the mountains of Ephraim, whose name was Micah.

² And he said to his mother, The eleven hundred pieces of silver that were taken from you, and on which you put a curse, even saying it in my ears – Behold, the silver is with me; I took it. And his mother said, May you my son be blessed by Yahweh!

³ And when he had returned the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother, his mother said, I had wholly dedicated the silver from my hand to Yahweh for my son, to make a carved image and a molded image; now therefore, I will return it to you.

⁴ Thus he returned the silver to his mother. Then his mother took two hundred pieces of silver and gave them to the silversmith, and he made it into a carved image and a molded image; and they were in the house of Micah.

⁵ And the man Micah had a house of gods, and made an ephod and teraphim; and he

consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest.

⁶ In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

⁷ And there was a young man from Bethlehem-Judah, of the family of Judah; he was a Levite, and was staying there.

⁸ And the man departed from the city, Bethlehem-Judah, to stay wherever he could find. And as he traveled he came to the mountain of Ephraim, to the house of Micah.

⁹ And Micah said to him, From where do you come? And he said to him, I am a Levite from Bethlehem-Judah, and I am on my way to find somewhere to stay.

¹⁰ And Micah said to him, Live with me, and be a father and a priest to me, and I will give you ten pieces of silver per year, a suit of clothing, and your sustenance. And the Levite went in.

¹¹ And the Levite was content to live with the man; and the young man became to him like one of his sons.

¹² So Micah consecrated the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and abode in the house of Micah.

¹³ And Micah said, Now I know that Yahweh will do good for me, since I have a Levite as priest!

Judges Eighteen

¹ No king was in Israel in those days. And in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance for itself to abide in; for until that day their inheritance among the tribes of Israel had not been allotted to them.

² So the sons of Dan sent five men of their number from their territory, men of valor from Zorah and Eshtaol, to spy out the land and search it, and said to them, Go, search the land. So they went to the mountain of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and lodged there.

³ When they were by the house of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man, the Levite; and they turned aside there, and said unto him, Who brought you here? And what

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do you do in this place? and what do you have here?

⁴ He said to them, Thus and so has Micah done for me, and has hired me, and I am his priest.

⁵ And they said to him, Ask, please, of God, that we may know whether the way on which we go will be prosperous.

⁶ And the priest said to them, Go in peace. Yahweh be before you on your way.

⁷ And the five men departed and went to Laish. They saw the people who were there, how they lived in safety, in the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure. There were no one in the land having authority who might put them to shame for anything, and they were far from the Sidonians, and they had no dealings with any man.

⁸ And the spies returned to their brothers at Zorah and Eshtaol, and their brothers said to them, What do you say?

⁹ And they said, Arise, let us attack them. For we have seen the land, and behold, it is very good, and you are still. Do not be sluggish to go, and enter to possess the land.

¹⁰ When you enter, you will come to a secure people and a large land; for God has given it into your hands, a place where there is no lack of anything that is on the earth.

¹¹ And there went from there from the family of the Danites, from Zorah and from Eshtaol, six hundred men girded with weapons of war.

¹² And they went up and camped in Kirjath-jearim, in Judah; therefore they call that place Mahaneh-Dan to this day. Behold, it is behind⁷ Kirjath-jearim.

¹³ And they passed from there to mount Ephraim, and came to the house of Micah.

¹⁴ Then the five men who had gone to spy out the country of Laish spoke and said to their brothers, Do you know that in these houses is an ephod, and teraphim, and a

carved image, and a molten image? And now you know what to do.

¹⁵ And they turned aside there, and came to the house of the young Levite man, to the house of Micah, inquired after his welfare.

¹⁶ The six hundred men armed girded with their weapons of war, who were of the sons of Dan, stood by the entrance of the gate.

¹⁷ And the five men who had gone to spy out the land went up, entered there, and took the carved image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. And the priest stood at the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men who were girded with weapons of war.

And these went into Micah's house, and took the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. And the priest said to them, What are you doing?

¹⁹ And they said to him, Keep quiet, put your hand over your mouth, and come with us. Be for us a father and a priest. Is it better for you to be a priest to the household of one man, or that you be a priest to a tribe and a family in Israel?

²⁰ And the priest's heart was glad; and he took the ephod, the teraphim, and the carved image, and took his place among the people.

²¹ And they turned and departed, and put the little ones, the livestock, and the baggage in front of them.

They were already far from the house of Micah, when the men who were in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together, and overtook the sons of Dan.

And they cried out to the sons of Dan. And they turned their faces, and said to Micah, What ails you, that that you are gathered together with such a company?

²⁴ And he said, You took away my gods which I made, and the priest, and you went away. Now what more do I have? How can you say to me, 'What ails you?'

²⁵ And the sons of Dan said to him, Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest men

⁷ According to the custom of the day, it was "behind" when facing east. Therefore, it was to the west.

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bitter of soul fall upon you, and you lose your life, with the lives of your household!

²⁶ Then the sons of Dan went their way. And when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his house.

²⁷ And they took that which Micah had made, and the priest that he had, and came to Laish, to a people quiet and secure; and they struck them with the edge of the sword, and burned the city with fire.

²⁸ And no deliverer was there, for it was far from Sidon, and they had no ties with anyone. It was in the valley that belongs to Beth-Rehob. And they built the city and lived there.

And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel; although Laish was the name of the city at the beginning.

³⁰ Then the sons of Dan set up for themselves the carved image; and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, and his sons were priests to the tribe of Danites until the day of the captivity of the land.

³¹ And they set up for themselves Micah's carved image which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

Judges Nineteen

¹ And it happened in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite staying in the remote mountains of Ephraim. He took for himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah.

² And his concubine played the prostitute against him, and went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there four whole months.

³ And her husband arose and went after her, to speak kindly to her and bring her back, having his servant and a couple of donkeys with him. So she brought him into her father's house; and when the father of the young woman saw him, he was happy to meet him.

⁴ And his father-in-law, the young woman's father, detained him; and he remained with him three days. So they ate and drank and lodged there.

⁵ And it happened on the fourth day that they arose early in the morning, and he stood to leave; but the young woman's father said to his son-in-law, Refresh your heart with a piece of bread, and afterward go your way.

⁶ And they sat, and the two ate and drank together. And the young woman's father said to the man, Please be content to stay all night, and let your heart be merry.

⁷ And the man rose to leave, his and father-in-law urged him, and he stayed there again.

⁸ And he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to leave, but the young woman's father said, Please refresh your heart. And they waited until afternoon; and both of them ate.

⁹ And the man stood to depart, he and his concubine and his servant, and his father-in-law, the young woman's father, said to him, Behold, the day is becoming evening; please spend the night. Behold, the day is ending; lodge here, that your heart may be merry. Tomorrow go your way early, so that you may get home.

¹⁰ But the man was not willing to spend that night; so he rose and left, and came to opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). With him were the two saddled donkeys; his concubine was with him also.

¹¹ They were near Jebus, and the day was far spent; and the servant said to his master, Please, come and let us turn aside into this city of the Jebusites and stay in it.

¹² But his master said to him, We will not turn aside here into a city of a foreigner, who are not of the sons of Israel; we will go on to Gibeah.

¹³ And he said to his servant, Come and let us draw near to one of these places, and spend the night in Gibeah or in Ramah.

Judges

¹⁴ And they passed by and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin.

¹⁵ And they turned aside there to enter to stay in Gibeah. And he went in, and sat down in the open place of the city; and there was no one who received him into his house to pass the night.

¹⁶ And behold, there came an old man from his work out of the field at evening; and the man was of mount Ephraim, and he living in Gibeah; but the men of the place were Benjaminites.

¹⁷ And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the traveling man in the open place of the city; and the old man said, Where are you going? and from where do you come?

¹⁸ And he said to him, We are traveling from Bethlehem in Judah toward the far side of mount Ephraim; I am from there. I went to Bethlehem-Judah; now I am going to the house of Yahweh. But there is no one who will take me into his house, ¹⁹ although we have both straw and fodder for our donkeys, and bread and wine for myself, for your woman servant, and for the young man who is with your servant; there is no lack of anything.

²⁰ And the old man said, Peace be with you! However, let all your needs be my responsibility; only do not spend the night in the open square.

²¹ And he brought him into his house, and gave fodder to the donkeys. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

²² They were making their hearts merry, when behold, the men of the city, sons of Belial, surrounded the house, beating at the door; and they spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into your house, that we may know him!

²³ And the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, No, my brothers! I beg you, do not act so wickedly!

Seeing this man has come into my house, do not perform this wickedness.

²⁴ Behold, my daughter, who is a virgin, and his concubine. Let me bring them out, and humble them, and do to them as is good in your sight; but to this man do not so vile a thing!

²⁵ But the men would not listen to him. So the man took his concubine and brought her out to them. And they knew her and abused her all night until morning; and when the dawn began to break, they let her go.

²⁶ And the woman came at the dawn of the day, and fell down at the entrance of the man's house where her lord was, until it was light.

²⁷ And her lord rose in the morning, and opened the door of the house, and went out to go his way, and behold, there lay the woman, his concubine, at the entrance of the house, and her hands were upon the threshold.

²⁸ And he said to her, Arise and let's go, but no one answered. And he took her upon the donkey; and the man rose up, and went to his place.

²⁹ And when he was come into his house, he took the knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and divided her, according to her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the borders of Israel.

³⁰ And it happened that every one that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the sons of Israel came out of Egypt to this day. Consider it, take counsel, and speak.

Judges Twenty

¹ And all the sons of Israel went forth, and the assembly gathered together as one man unto Yahweh at Mizpah, from Dan to Beer-sheba, and the land of Gilead.

² And the leaders of all the people, even of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand footmen who drew the sword.

Judges

³ And the sons of Benjamin heard that the sons of Israel had gone up to Mizpah. And the sons of Israel said, Tell us, how did this wicked deed happen?

⁴ And the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, Judges 20:4 I came to Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to stay.

⁵ And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and surrounded the house because of me at night. They thought to kill me, but instead they humbled my concubine so that she died.

⁶ So I laid hold of my concubine, cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the territory of the inheritance of Israel, because they committed lewdness and villany in Israel.

⁷ Behold, all you are children of Israel; give here your advice and counsel!

⁸ And all the people rose as one man, saying, We will not any of us go to his tent, nor will we any of us turn unto his house.

⁹ But now this is the thing which we will do to Gibeah: we will go up against it by lot, ¹⁰ and we will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to supply food for the people, so that they, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, may do according to all the villany that they have performed in Israel.

¹¹ So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, joined together as one man.

¹² And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, What is this evil that has occurred among you?

¹³ Now therefore, give up the men, the sons of Belial, who are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and put away the evil from Israel! But the sons of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brothers, the sons of Israel.

¹⁴ Instead, the sons of Benjamin gathered together from their cities to Gibeah, to go to battle against the sons of Israel.

¹⁵ And from their cities at that time the sons of Benjamin numbered twenty-six thousand men who drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who numbered seven hundred chosen men.

¹⁶ Among all this people were seven hundred chosen men who were left-handed. Every one could sling a stone at a hair and not miss.

¹⁷ And besides Benjamin, the men of Israel numbered four hundred thousand men who drew the sword; all of these were men of war.

¹⁸ And the sons of Israel rose and went up to the house of God to inquire of God, and said, Which of us will go up first to battle against the sons of Benjamin? And Yahweh said, Judah first!

¹⁹ And the sons of Israel rose in the morning and camped against Gibeah.

²⁰ And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin, and the men of Israel put themselves in battle array to fight against them at Gibeah.

²¹ And the sons of Benjamin came out of Gibeah, and on that day destroyed down to the ground twenty-two thousand men of the Israelites.

²² And the people, that is, the men of Israel, encouraged themselves and again formed the battle line at the *same* place where they had put themselves in array on the first day.

²³ And the sons of Israel went up and wept before Yahweh until evening, and inquired of Yahweh, saying, Will I again draw near for battle against the sons of my brother Benjamin? And Yahweh said, Attack him.

²⁴ So the sons of Israel approached the sons of Benjamin on the second day.

²⁵ And Benjamin attacked them from Gibeah on the second day, and destroyed down to the ground eighteen thousand more of the sons of Israel; all these drew the sword.

²⁶ And all the sons of Israel, that is, all the people, went up and came to the house of God and wept, and sat there before Yahweh

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and fasted that day until evening. And they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before Yahweh.

²⁷ So the sons of Israel inquired of Yahweh (the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, ²⁸ and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days), saying, Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease? And Yahweh said, Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand.

²⁹ And Israel set men in ambush all around Gibeah.

³⁰ And the sons of Israel attacked the sons of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in battle array against Gibeah as at the other times.

³¹ And the sons of Benjamin attacked the people, and were drawn away from the city. They began to strike and kill some of the people, like at the other times, in the highways, one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah, and in the field, about thirty men of Israel.

³² And the sons of Benjamin said, They are struck down before us, as at first. And the sons of Israel said, Let us flee and lead them away from the city to the highways.

³³ So all the men of Israel rose from their place and put themselves in battle array at Ba'al Tamar. And Israel's men in ambush rushed forth from their position in Maareh-geba.

³⁴ And ten thousand chosen men from all Israel came against Gibeah, and the battle was fierce. But the men of Benjamin did not know that disaster was upon them.

³⁵ And Yahweh struck Benjamin before Israel, and the sons of Israel destroyed twenty-five thousand one hundred men of Benjamin that day; all these drew the sword.

³⁶ And the sons of Benjamin saw that they were struck. And the men of Israel had given ground to the Benjam, because they trusted

the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah.

³⁷ And the men in ambush hurried and rushed upon Gibeah, and the men in ambush drew out and struck the whole city with the edge of the sword.

³⁸ Now the appointed signal between the men of Israel and the men in ambush was that they would make a large cloud of smoke rise up from the city.

³⁹ And when the men of Israel turned back in the battle, Benjamin began to strike, slaying about thirty of the men of Israel; for they said, Certainly they are quite routed before us as in the first battle.

⁴⁰ And when the burning began to rise out of the city like a pillar of smoke, Benjamin looked behind, and behold, the entire city went up in smoke to the heavens.

⁴¹ And when the men of Israel turned back, the men of Benjamin were terrified, for they saw that disaster had come upon them.

⁴² And they turned before the men of Israel into the way of the wilderness. But the battle overtook them, and the ones who came out of the cities destroyed them in their midst.

⁴³ They surrounded the Benjaminites, chased them, trampled them down at the resting-place⁸ near Gibeah toward the sunrise.

⁴⁴ And there fell eighteen thousand men of Benjamin; all these were men of valor.

⁴⁵ And they turned and fled toward the wilderness unto the rock of Rimmon: and they gleaned on the highway five thousand of them, and followed closely after them unto Gidom, and struck two thousand of them.

⁴⁶ So all who fell of Benjamin that day were twenty-five thousand men who drew the sword; all these were men of valor.

⁴⁷ And six hundred men turned and fled toward the desert to the rock of Rimmon, and they stayed at the rock of Rimmon for four months.

⁸ Some translate this word "easy." The meaning of the Hebrew term is uncertain.

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⁴⁸ And the men of Israel turned back against the sons of Benjamin, and struck them with the edge of the sword, men and beasts from every city, all who were found. All the cities they came to they also set on fire.

Judges Twenty-one

¹ Now the men of Israel swore an oath at Mizpah, saying, None of us will give his daughter to Benjamin as a wife.

² And the people came to Beth-el, and sat there till even before God, and lifted up their voices, and wept terribly, ³ and said, Yahweh God of Israel, why has this happened in Israel, that today there should be one tribe lacking in Israel?

⁴ And it happened on the next morning that the people rose early and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.

⁵ The sons of Israel said, Who is there among all the tribes of Israel who did not come up with the assembly to Yahweh? For they had made a great oath concerning anyone who had not come up to Yahweh at Mizpah, saying, He will certainly be put to death.

⁶ And the sons of Israel grieved because of Benjamin their brother, and said, One tribe is cut off from Israel today.

⁷ What will we do for wives for those who remain, seeing we have sworn by Yahweh that we will not give them our daughters for wives?

⁸ And they said, What one is there from the tribes of Israel who did not come up to Mizpah to Yahweh? And behold, no one had come to the camp from Jabesh Gilead to the assembly.

⁹ For the people were numbered, and behold, none of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead were there.

¹⁰ And the assembly sent twelve thousand men of the most valiant there and commanded them, saying, Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead with the edge

of the sword, and the women and the children.

¹¹ And this is the thing that you will do: You will totally destroy every man, and every woman who has lain with a man.

¹² And they found four hundred young women who were virgins among the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead, who had known no man by lying with any male, and they brought them to the camp, to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

¹³ And the whole assembly sent word to the sons of Benjamin who were at the rock of Rimmon, and proclaimed peace to them.

¹⁴ And Benjamin came back at that time, and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh Gilead; and yet they did not have sufficient for them.

¹⁵ And the people grieved for Benjamin, because Yahweh had made a gap in the tribes of Israel.

¹⁶ Then the elders of the assembly said, What will we do for wives for those who remain, seeing that the women of Benjamin have been destroyed?

¹⁷ And they said, There must be an inheritance for those who escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe may not be destroyed from Israel.

¹⁸ But we cannot give them wives from our daughters, for the sons of Israel swore an oath, saying, Cursed is the one who gives a wife to Benjamin.

¹⁹ And they said, Behold, there is a feast of Yahweh in Shiloh from year to year, which is north of Bethel, on the east side of the highway which goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah.

²⁰ And they commanded the sons of Benjamin, saying, Go, lie in wait in the vineyards, ²¹ and behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to perform their dances, then you come out from the vineyards, and every man catch a wife for himself from the daughters of Shiloh; then go to the land of Benjamin.

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²² And it shall happen that when their fathers or their brothers come to us to complain, we will say to them, 'Give them to us graciously, for we did not take a wife for them in battle; for you did not give them unto them, so that you now would be guilty.

²³ And the sons of Benjamin did so and they took wives according to their number from those who danced, whom they caught. And they departed and returned to their inheritance, and they built the cities and dwelt in them.

²⁴ And the sons of Israel left there at that time, every man to his tribe and family; they went out from there, every man to his inheritance.

²⁵ In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes