### Judges

## Chapter 11

1Well, [Judge #8] JephThah (the GileAdite) was a mighty man who was the son of GileAd by a whore. 2Meanwhile, GileAd’s wife had also given birth to sons, and when they grew up, they drove JephThah out of the house, saying:  
  
 ‘You aren’t going to receive an inheritance in the house of our father, because you’re the son of [his] mistress.’  
  
3So JephThah left his brothers and went to live in the land of So JephThah left his brothers and went to live in the land of <span class="placename">TobSo JephThah left his brothers and went to live in the land of <span class="placename">Tob</span>, where a lot of worthless men started following him and traveling with him.  
  
4Then later, when the sons of AmMon were preparing to fight against IsraEl, 5the elders at GileAd sent [messengers] to call JephThah from the land of Tob, 6saying:  
  
 ‘Come and lead us in our fight against the sons of AmMon.’  
  
7And JephThah replied:  
  
 ‘Aren’t you the ones who disliked me, drove me out of my father’s house, and banished me? So, why are you calling for me now?’  
  
8And the elders of GileAd said:  
  
 ‘Well, we’re turning to you because we’re asking you to lead us in our war against the sons of AmMon. If you’ll do this, you can be the head over all the inhabitants of GileAd.’  
  
9So JephThah told the elders of GileAd that if they’d bring him back to fight against the sons of AmMon, and if Jehovah would hand them over to him, he would become their leader.  
  
10And the elders of GileAd replied:  
  
 ‘Jehovah is our witness that we’ll do just as you said.’  
  
11As a result, JephThah returned to GileAd, and the elders made him the head [of their army and their] ruler.  
  
Well, JephThah first prayed to Jehovah about this (at MasSepha). 12And after that, he sent messengers to the king of the sons of AmMon to ask:  
  
 ‘What have I done to you that you’ve come to fight against me and against my land?’  
  
13And the king of the AmMonites told JephThah’s messengers:  
  
 ‘[We’re doing this because] IsraEl took all our land from the Arnon, to the JaBoc, and to the JorDan after they came from Egypt.  
  
 ‘But now, if you’ll return it peacefully, we’ll withdraw.’  
  
14Then JephThah sent messengers to the king of AmMon again, who told him:  
  
 15‘JephThah says that IsraEl didn’t just take the land of MoAb or the land of the sons of AmMon. 16For when we left Egypt, IsraEl traveled through the desert along the Red Sea until we got to Cades. 17And there, IsraEl sent messengers to the king of Edom and asked if [he’d let us] to pass through their land. But the king of And there, IsraEl sent messengers to the king of Edom and asked if [he’d let us] to pass through their land. But the king of <span class="placename">EdomAnd there, IsraEl sent messengers to the king of Edom and asked if [he’d let us] to pass through their land. But the king of <span class="placename">Edom</span> wouldn’t let us do that.  
  
 ‘And IsraEl asked the same thing of the king of MoAb, and he wouldn’t allow us [to cross his land] either; so, we stayed in ‘And IsraEl asked the same thing of the king of MoAb, and he wouldn’t allow us [to cross his land] either; so, we stayed in <span class="placename">Cades ‘And IsraEl asked the same thing of the king of MoAb, and he wouldn’t allow us [to cross his land] either; so, we stayed in <span class="placename">Cades</span>.  
  
 18‘Thereafter, we traveled through the desert and went around the lands of Edom and MoAb. Then when we got to the east side of MoAb, we camped in the country on the other side of the ‘Thereafter, we traveled through the desert and went around the lands of Edom and MoAb. Then when we got to the east side of MoAb, we camped in the country on the other side of the <span class="placename">Arnon‘Thereafter, we traveled through the desert and went around the lands of Edom and MoAb. Then when we got to the east side of MoAb, we camped in the country on the other side of the <span class="placename">Arnon</span>; So, we never crossed the borders of MoAb (for the Arnon is their border).  
  
 19‘Then IsraEl sent messengers to SeOn (the king of the Amorites and the king of HeshBon) to say:  
  
 ‘Please allow us to cross your land so that we may get to our land.’  
  
 20‘But SeOn didn’t trust IsraEl to just pass through his land, so he gathered all of his people, then he set up camp at Jasa and formed battle lines against IsraEl... 21However, IsraEl’s God Jehovah gave SeOn and all of his people into the hands of IsraEl, and they cut them all down.  
  
 ‘Thereafter, we inherited all the land of the Amorites that lived there, 22from the from the <span class="placename">Arnonfrom the <span class="placename">Arnon</span> to the from the <span class="placename">Arnon</span> to the <span class="placename">JaBocfrom the <span class="placename">Arnon</span> to the <span class="placename">JaBoc</span>, and from the desert to the from the <span class="placename">Arnon</span> to the <span class="placename">JaBoc</span>, and from the desert to the <span class="placename">JorDanfrom the <span class="placename">Arnon</span> to the <span class="placename">JaBoc</span>, and from the desert to the <span class="placename">JorDan</span>. 23So, now that Jehovah the God of IsraEl has removed the Amorites [and given their land to] His people IsraEl, are you trying to take it back?  
  
 24‘Why not accept the land that your god CheMosh has given to you as your inheritance and allow us to inherit all the land that our God Jehovah has taken from you?  
  
 25‘Are you any better than Balak (the son of SepPhor) the king of MoAb… Didn’t he start a war and fight with IsraEl? 26And after IsraEl had been living in And after IsraEl had been living in <span class="placename">HeshBonAnd after IsraEl had been living in <span class="placename">HeshBon</span> and its suburbs, and in And after IsraEl had been living in <span class="placename">HeshBon</span> and its suburbs, and in <span class="placename">AroErAnd after IsraEl had been living in <span class="placename">HeshBon</span> and its suburbs, and in <span class="placename">AroEr</span> and its suburbs, as well as in the cities around the JorDan for some 300 years… What [land] did he recover then?  
  
 27‘So, I haven’t sinned against you, and you’re doing me wrong by preparing to war against me. Therefore, may Jehovah serve as the judge between the sons of IsraEl and the sons of AmMon today!’  
  
28Nevertheless, the king of the sons of AmMon refused to listen to the words that JephThah had sent to him… 29And then the Breath of Jehovah came over JephThah, so he went up to GileAd (in ManasSeh), passed by its watchtower and the sons of AmMon, and he went to the other side of the city.  
  
30There he made a vow to Jehovah. He said:  
  
 ‘If you’ll give the sons of AmMon into my hands, 31whoever is the first to come out of the door of my house to meet me when I return in peace after [conquering] the sons of AmMon must belong to Jehovah… I’ll offer him as a whole burned offering!’  
  
32So thereafter, JephThah advanced to meet the sons of AmMon in battle, and Jehovah gave them into his hands. 33He cut them down all the way from He cut them down all the way from <span class="placename">AroErHe cut them down all the way from <span class="placename">AroEr</span> to the He cut them down all the way from <span class="placename">AroEr</span> to the <span class="placename">ArnonHe cut them down all the way from <span class="placename">AroEr</span> to the <span class="placename">Arnon</span>… 20 of their cities as far as He cut them down all the way from <span class="placename">AroEr</span> to the <span class="placename">Arnon</span>… 20 of their cities as far as <span class="placename">Ebel CharmimHe cut them down all the way from <span class="placename">AroEr</span> to the <span class="placename">Arnon</span>… 20 of their cities as far as <span class="placename">Ebel Charmim</span>.  
  
It was a huge destruction and the sons of AmMon were conquered by the sons of IsraEl.  
  
  
34Well, when JephThah returned to his home in Well, when JephThah returned to his home in <span class="placename">MasSephaWell, when JephThah returned to his home in <span class="placename">MasSepha</span>, it was his daughter whom he first saw coming out to meet him, dancing and shaking a tambourine! [She was] his only child… He didn’t have any other sons or daughters.  
  
35And when he saw her, he ripped his clothes and shouted:  
  
 ‘Oh no, my daughter! You’ve ruined me!  
  
 ‘I’m so sad, because I made a promise about you to Jehovah, and now I can’t change it.’  
  
36But she said:  
  
 ‘Father, do to me whatever you’ve promised to Jehovah, for He’s given you vengeance on our enemies, the sons of AmMon.’  
  
37And she went on to say:  
  
 ‘Father, I know that you must do this thing, so allow me to have 2 months with my friends as we travel through the mountains to wail over my virginity.’  
  
38And he replied:  
  
 ‘Then go.’  
  
So he allowed her to leave for 2 months, as she and her friends went into the mountains to weep over her virginity. 39And after 2 months, she returned to her father so that he could keep his vow concerning her… And she never [had sex with] a man.  
  
40As a result, it became a rule for the daughters of IsraEl to go and cry over the daughter of JephThah (the GileAdite) for 4 days each year.