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This **GOD'S Digital Book Of JUDGES** is given to you Free. You can Print it Up. And distribute or use it any way you want.

**Here is a brief Summary of the Book of JUDGES:**

--After Joshua dies the Israelites forsake God and serve baal and other idols. God gave them over to their enemies. After suffering awhile the people would Repent of their sins.

--Then God would raise up a Judge to rule over them and deliver them. They would obey the Judge and God--but once the Judge would die most of the nation started sinning again. So God used the evil nations around them to discipline them.

--God constantly says—"You don't Fear Me—or Obey me.”

--God raises up Gideon and he has him and 300 men go to the battlefield and watch as God has each Midianite kill each other with their swords.

--Gideon had 70 sons. After he ruled for 40 years and died--the people sinned again against God--so God gave them over to the Philistines and the Ammonites for 40 years.

--Sampson is born and God gives him supernatural strength as an adult--to kill 1,000 men with a donkey's jawbone. He makes a huge mistake by telling Delilah who was his prostitute the secret of his strength. The secret of his strength was to cut his hair off.

--So the Philistines cut his hair off, blinded his eyes, and made him grind up grain like a horse in the marketplace. Everybody laughed at him and mocked him.

--Sampson's hair grew back later on--and his strength came back. And Sampson by pulling two main pillars together--collapsed a temple roof where 3,000 high-ranking Philistines were. They all died and so did Sampson.

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# Book Of JUDGES

## CHAPTER 1

1 Now after the death of Joshua it came to pass that the children of Israel asked the Lord, saying, "Who shall be first to go up for us against the Canaanites to fight against them?"

2 And the Lord said, "Judah shall go up. Indeed I have delivered the land into his hand."

3 So Judah said to Simeon his brother, "Come up with me to my allotted territory, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I will likewise go with you to your allotted territory." And Simeon went with him. 4 Then Judah went up, and the Lord delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand; and they killed ten thousand men at Bezek. 5 And they found Adoni-Bezek in Bezek, and fought against him; and they defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites.

6 Then Adoni-Bezek fled, and they pursued 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 under my table; as I have done, so God has repaid me." Then they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.

8 Now the children of Judah fought against Jerusalem and took it; they struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire. 9 And afterward the children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who dwelt in the mountains, in the South, and in the lowland. 10 Then Judah went against the Canaanites who dwelt in Hebron. (Now the name of Hebron was formerly Kirjath Arba.) And they killed Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.

11 From there they went against the inhabitants of Debir. (The name of Debir was formerly Kirjath Sepher.)

12 Then Caleb said, "Whoever attacks Kirjath Sepher and takes it, to him I will give my daughter Achsah as wife." 13 And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it; so he gave him his daughter Achsah as 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 wish?" 15 So she said to him, "Give me a blessing; since you have given me land in the South, give me also springs of water."

And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

16 Now the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up from the City of Palms with the children of Judah into the Wilderness of Judah, which lies in the South near Arad; and they went and dwelt among the people. 17 And Judah went with his brother Simeon, and they attacked the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. So the name of the city was called Hormah. 18 Also Judah took Gaza with its territory, Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory.

19 So the Lord was with Judah. And they drove out the mountaineers, but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the lowland, because they had chariots of iron. 20 And they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had said. Then he expelled from there the three sons of Anak. 21 But the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem; so the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

22 And the house of Joseph also went up against Bethel, and the Lord was with them. 23 So the house of Joseph sent men to spy out Bethel. (The name of the city was formerly 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 mercy."

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 villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages; for the Canaanites were determined to dwell in that land. 28 And it came to pass, when Israel was strong, that they put the Canaanites under tribute/taxes, but did not completely drive them out.

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

30 Nor did Zebulun drive out the inhabitants of Kitron or the inhabitants of Nahalol; so the Canaanites dwelt among them, and were put under tribute.

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 dwelt 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 dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land. Nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth Shemesh and Beth Anath were put under tribute to them.

34 And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountains, for they would not allow them to come down to the valley; 35 and the Amorites were determined to dwell in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim; yet when the strength of the house of Joseph became greater, they were put under tribute.

36 Now the boundary of the Amorites was from the Ascent of Akrabbim, from Sela, and upward.

## CHAPTER 2

1 Now the Angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, “I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers; and I said--‘I will Never Break My Covenant with you, 2 and as for you, --you shall make--No Covenant with the evil inhabitants of this land-- you shall tear down their altars.--But you have Not Obeyed Me--

What is this you have done? 3 Therefore I also said, ‘I will not drive them out before you; but--they will become as Thorns/constant Pain and Hurt in your sides/ribs--and their gods will be a Snare to you.’

” 4 When the Angel of the Lord spoke these words to all the sons and daughters of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept. 5 So they named that place Bochim; and there they sacrificed to the Lord.

6 When Joshua had dismissed the people, the sons of Israel went each to their inheritance to possess the land. 7 The people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of the Lord which He had done for Israel.

8 Then Joshua the son of Nun--the servant of the Lord--Died--at the age of one hundred and ten.

10 All that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and --there arose Another Generation after them--who did Not Know the Lord--nor yet the work which He had done for Israel.

11 Then the people of Israel--did Evil in the sight of the Lord --and Served the Baals/Idols--and they Forsook the Lord, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt--and Followed other gods from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed themselves down to them--thus they Provoked--the Lord to Anger.

13 So they Forsook the Lord and served Baal and the Ashtaroth/idols.

14 The Anger of the Lord Burned against Israel--and He gave them into the hands of plunderers who plundered them; and He sold them into the hands of their enemies around them--so that they could no longer stand before their enemies.

15 Wherever they went, the hand of the Lord was Against them for evil, as the Lord had spoken and as the Lord had sworn to them, so that they were severely distressed.

16 Then the Lord raised up Judges --who Delivered them from the hands of those who

plundered/robbed them.

17 Yet they did Not Listen to their Judges--for they played the Whore after other gods and bowed themselves down to them.

--They Turned Aside quickly from the way in which their fathers had walked in Obeying the Commandments of the Lord--they did Not Do as their fathers.

18 When the Lord raised up Judges for them, the Lord was with the Judge and delivered them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the Judge; for the Lord was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who oppressed and afflicted them.

19 But it came about when the Judge died--

--that they would Turn Back--and act more corruptly than their fathers--

in following other gods to serve them--and bow down to them; they did not abandon their practices or their Stubborn Ways.

20 So the Anger of the Lord 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 no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died, 22 in order to--Test Israel--by them, whether they will keep/obey/serve the way of the Lord to walk in it as their fathers did, or not."

23 So the Lord allowed those nations to remain, not driving them out quickly; and He did not give them into the hand of Joshua.

### CHAPTER 3

1 Now these are the Nations which the Lord left--to Test Israel

by them (that is, all who had not experienced any of the wars of Canaan; 2 only in order that the generations of the sons of Israel might be taught war, those who had not experienced it formerly). 3 These nations are: the five lords of the Philistines and all the Canaanites and the Sidonians and the Hivites who lived in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-hermon as far as Lebo-hamath.

4 They/the nations-- were for Testing Israel--

--to find out IF--they would Obey the Commandments of the Lord, which He had Commanded their fathers through Moses.

5 The sons of Israel lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites--and they took their daughters for themselves as wives--and gave their own daughters to their sons--and Served their gods.

7 The people of Israel--did what was Evil in the sight of the Lord,

--and Forgot the Lord their God--and served the Baals and the Asheroth/Idols.

8 Then the Anger of the Lord was kindled/on fire-- against Israel--so that He sold them into the hands of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia; and the sons of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years.

9 When the people of Israel Cried to the Lord, the Lord raised up a Deliverer for the people of Israel to deliver them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. 10 The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel. When he went out to war, the Lord gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand, so that he prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

11 --Then the land had Rest/peace from wars--forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

12 Now the people of Israel--again did Evil in the sight of the Lord.

So the Lord strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel--because they had done Evil in the sight of the Lord. 13 And he gathered to himself the sons of Ammon and Amalek; and he went and defeated Israel, and they possessed the city of the palm trees. 14 The sons of Israel Served Eglon the King of Moab eighteen years.

15 But when the sons of Israel cried to the Lord, the Lord raised up a Deliverer for them, Ehud the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a left-handed man. And the sons of Israel sent tribute/takes by him to Eglon the king of Moab. 16 Ehud made himself a sword which had two edges, a cubit in length, and he bound it on his right thigh under his cloak.

17 He presented the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat/obese man. 18 It came about when he had finished presenting the tribute, that he sent away the people who had carried the tribute. 19 But he himself turned back from the idols/statues which were at Gilgal, and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king." And he said, "Keep silence." And all who attended him left him.

20 Ehud came to him while he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber. And Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." And he arose from his seat. 21 Ehud stretched out his left hand--took the sword from his right thigh and thrust it--into his obese belly.

22 The handle also went in after the blade, and the Fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out of his belly; and the refuse/guts came out. 23 Then Ehud went out into the vestibule and shut the doors of the roof chamber behind him, and locked them.

24 When he had gone out, his servants came and looked, and behold, the doors of the roof chamber were locked; and they said, "He is only relieving himself in the cool room." 25 They waited until they became anxious; but behold, he did not open the doors

of the roof chamber. Therefore they took the key and opened them--and behold, their master--had fallen to the floor dead.

26 Now Ehud escaped while they were delaying, and he passed by the idols and escaped to Seirah. 27 It came about when he had arrived, that he blew the trumpet in the hill country of Ephraim; and the sons of Israel went down with him from the hill country, and he was in front of them. 28 He said to them, "Pursue them, for the Lord has given your enemies the Moabites into your hands."

So they went down after him and seized the fords of the Jordan opposite Moab, and did not allow anyone to cross. 29 They struck down at that time about ten thousand Moabites, all robust and valiant men; and no one escaped. 30 So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel.

And the land was undisturbed/no wars--for eighty years.

## CHAPTER 4

1 Then the people of Israel Again--did Evil in the sight of the Lord, after Ehud died.

2 And the Lord-- gave them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; and the commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-hagoyim. 3 The people of Israel cried to the Lord; for he had nine hundred iron chariots, and--he oppressed the people of Israel severely--for twenty years.

17 Now Sisera fled away on foot to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. 18 Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, "Turn aside, my master, turn aside to me Do not be afraid." And he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. 19 He said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened a bottle of milk and gave him a drink; then she covered him.

20 He said to her, "Stand in the doorway of the tent, and it shall be if anyone comes and inquires of you, and says, 'Is there anyone here?' that you shall say, 'No.'" 21 But Jael, Heber's wife, took a tent peg and seized a hammer in her hand, and went secretly to him and--drove the peg into his temple--and it went through into the ground; for he was sound asleep and exhausted--So he Died.

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

23 So God subdued on that day--Jabin the king of Canaan before the people of Israel. 24 The hand of the sons of Israel pressed heavier and heavier upon Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin the king of Canaan.

## CHAPTER 5

1 Then Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam sang on that day, saying:

2 “When leaders lead in Israel,  
When the people willingly offer themselves,  
Bless the Lord

3 “Hear, O kings Give ear, O princes  
I, even I, will sing to the Lord;  
I will sing praise to the Lord God of Israel.

4 “Lord, when You went out from Seir,  
When You marched from the field of Edom,  
The earth trembled and the heavens poured,  
The clouds also poured water;  
5 The mountains gushed before the Lord,  
This Sinai, before the Lord 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 the byways.

7 Village life ceased, it ceased in Israel,  
Until I, Deborah, arose,  
Arose a mother in Israel.

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

9 My heart is with the rulers of Israel  
Who offered themselves willingly with the people.  
Bless the Lord

10 “Speak, you who ride on white donkeys,  
Who sit in judges’ attire,  
And who walk along the road.

11 Far from the noise of the archers, among the watering places,  
There they shall recount the righteous acts of the Lord,  
The righteous acts for His villagers in Israel;  
Then the people of the Lord shall go down to the gates.

12 “Awake, awake, Deborah  
Awake, awake, sing a song  
Arise, Barak, and lead your captives away,  
O son of Abinoam

13 “Then the survivors came down, the people against the nobles;



The Lord came down for me against the mighty.  
14 From Ephraim were those whose roots were in Amalek.  
After you, Benjamin, with your peoples,  
From Machir rulers came down,  
And from Zebulun those who bear the recruiter's staff.  
15 And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah;  
As Issachar, so was Barak  
Sent into the valley under his command;  
Among the divisions of Reuben  
There were great resolves of heart.  
16 Why did you sit among the sheepfolds,  
To hear the pipings for the flocks?  
The divisions of Reuben have great searchings of heart.  
17 Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan,  
And why did Dan remain on ships?  
Asher continued at the seashore,  
And stayed by his inlets.  
18 Zebulun is a people who jeopardized their lives to the point of death,  
Naphtali also, on the heights of the battlefield.  
19 "The kings came and fought,  
Then the kings of Canaan fought  
In Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo;  
They took no spoils of silver.  
20 They fought from the heavens;  
The stars from their courses fought against Sisera.  
21 The torrent of Kishon swept them away,  
That ancient torrent, the torrent of Kishon.  
O my soul, march on in strength  
22 Then the horses' hooves pounded,  
The galloping, galloping of his steeds.  
23 'Curse Meroz,' said the Angel of the Lord,  
'Curse its inhabitants bitterly,  
Because they did not come to the help of the Lord,  
To the help of the Lord against the mighty.'  
24 "Most blessed among women is Jael,  
The wife of Heber the Kenite;  
Blessed is she among women in tents.  
25 He asked for water, she gave milk;  
She brought out cream in a lordly bowl.  
26 She stretched her hand to the tent peg,  
Her right hand to the workmen's hammer;

She pounded Sisera, she pierced his head,  
She split and struck through his temple.  
27 At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still;  
At her feet he sank, he fell;  
Where he sank, there he fell dead.

28 “The mother of Sisera looked through the window,  
And cried out through the lattice,  
‘Why is his chariot so long in coming?  
Why tarries the clatter of his chariots?’

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

30 ‘Are they not finding and dividing the spoil:  
To every man a girl or two;  
For Sisera, plunder of dyed garments,  
Plunder of garments embroidered and dyed,  
Two pieces of dyed embroidery for the neck of the looter?’

31 “Thus let all Your enemies perish, O Lord  
But let those who love Him be like the sun  
When it comes out in full strength.”

So the land had rest for forty years.

## CHAPTER 6

1 Then the people of Israel did what was Evil--in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord gave them-- into the hands of Midian seven years.

2 The power of Midian prevailed against Israel. Because of Midian the sons of Israel made for themselves the dens which were in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds. 3 For it was when Israel had sown, that the Midianites would come up with the Amalekites and the sons of the east and go against them.

4 So they would camp against them and destroy the produce of the earth as far as Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel as well as no sheep, ox, or donkey. 5 For they would come up with their livestock and their tents, they would come in like locusts for number, both they and their camels were innumerable; and they came into the land to devastate it.

6 So Israel was brought very low because of Midian, and the people of Israel--Cried to the Lord.

7 Now it came about when the people of Israel cried to the Lord on account of Midian, 8 that the Lord sent a Prophet to the people of Israel, and he said to them,

**--Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel--**‘It was I who brought you up from Egypt and brought you out from the house of slavery--  
--I delivered you from the hands of the Egyptians and from the hands of all your oppressors, and dispossessed them before you--and Gave you their land,  
10 and I said to you--“I am the Lord your God;  
--you shall Not Fear the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live.  
-- But you have Not--Obeyed Me--

11 Then the Angel of the Lord came and sat under the oak that was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press in order to save it from the Midianites.

12 The Angel of the Lord appeared to him and said to him--  
--“The Lord is with you, O valiant warrior.”

13 Then Gideon said to him, “O my lord, if the Lord 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 the Lord bring us up from Egypt?’  
But now the Lord has abandoned us--and given us into the hand of Midian.”

14 The Lord looked at him and said,  
--“GO--in this your strength and Deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?” 15 He said to Him, “O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father’s house.”

16 But the Lord said to him--“Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat Midian as one man.”

17 So Gideon said to Him, “If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who speak with me. 18 Please do not depart from here, until I come back to You, and bring out my offering and lay it before You.” And He said, “I will remain until you return.”

19 Then Gideon went in and prepared a young goat and unleavened bread from an ephah of flour; he put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, and brought them out to him under the oak and presented them. 20 The Angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And he did so.

21 Then the Angel of the Lord put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and Fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread. Then the Angel of the Lord vanished from his sight. 22 When Gideon saw that he was the Angel of the Lord, he said, “Alas, O Lord God For now I have seen the Angel of the Lord face to face.”

23 The Lord said to him, “Peace to you, do Not Fear; you shall not die.” 24 Then

Gideon built an altar there to the Lord and named it The Lord is Peace. To this day it is still in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

25 Now on the same night the Lord said to him, “Take your father’s bull and a second bull seven years old, and pull down the altar of Baal which belongs to your father, and cut down the Asherah that is beside it; 26 and build an altar to the Lord your God on the top of this stronghold in an orderly manner, and take a second bull and offer a burnt offering with the wood of the Asherah which you shall cut down.”

27 Then Gideon took ten men of his servants and did as the Lord had spoken to him; and because he was too afraid of his father’s household and the men of the city to do it by day, he did it by night.

28 When the men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was torn down, and the Asherah which was beside it was cut down, and the second bull was offered on the altar which had been built. 29 They said to one another, “Who did this thing?” And when they searched about and inquired, they said, “Gideon the son of Joash did this thing.”

30 Then the men of the city said to Joash, “Bring out your son, that he may die, for he has torn down the altar of Baal, and indeed, he has cut down the Asherah which was beside it.”

31 But Joash said to all who stood against him, “Will you contend for Baal, or will you deliver him? Whoever will plead for him shall be put to death by morning. If he is a god, let him contend for himself, because someone has torn down his altar.” 32 Therefore on that day he named him Jerubbaal, that is to say, “Let Baal contend against him,” because he had torn down his altar.

33 Then all the Midianites and the Amalekites and the sons of the east assembled themselves; and they crossed over and camped in the valley of Jezreel.

34-- So the Spirit of the Lord--came upon Gideon; and he blew a trumpet, and the Abiezrites were called together to follow him. 35 He sent messengers throughout Manasseh, and they also were called together to follow him; and he sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they came up to meet them.

36 Then Gideon said to God--

“If You will Deliver Israel through me, 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 deliver Israel through me, as You have spoken.” 38 And it was so. When he arose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece, he drained the dew from the fleece, a bowl full of water.

39 Then Gideon said to God, “Do not let Your anger burn against me that I may speak once more; please let me make a Test once more with the fleece, let it now be dry only

on the fleece, and let there be dew on all the ground.” 40 God did so that night; for it was dry only on the fleece, and dew was on all the ground.

## CHAPTER 7

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

2 **The Lord said to Gideon**--“The people who are with you are too many for Me to give Midian into their hands, for Israel would become Boastful, saying, ‘My own power has delivered me.’

3 Now therefore come, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, ‘Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him return and depart from Mount Gilead.’ ” So 22,000 people returned, but 10,000 remained.

4 Then the Lord said to Gideon, “The people are still too many; bring them down to the water and I will test them for you there. Therefore it shall be that he of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall go with you,’ he shall go with you; but everyone of whom I say to you, ‘This one shall not go with you,’ he shall not go.”

5 So he brought the people down to the water. And the Lord said to Gideon, “You shall separate everyone who laps the water with his tongue as a dog laps, as well as everyone who kneels to drink.” 6 Now the number of those who lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, was 300 men; but all the rest of the people kneeled to drink water.

7 The Lord said to Gideon--I will Deliver you with the 300 men who lapped and will give the Midianites into your hands; so let all the other men go, each man to his home.” 8 So the 300 men took the people’s provisions and their trumpets into their hands. And Gideon sent all the other men of Israel, each to his tent, but retained the 300 men; and the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.

9 Now the same night it came about that --the Lord said to him--“Arise, go down against the camp--for I have given it into your hands.

10 But if you are afraid to go down, go with Purah your servant down to the camp, 11 and you will hear what they say; and afterward your hands will be strengthened that you may go down against the camp.” So he went with Purah his servant down to the outposts of the army that was in the camp.

12 Now the Midianites and the Amalekites and all the sons of the east were lying in the valley as numerous as locusts; and their camels were without number, as numerous as the sand on the seashore.

13 When Gideon came, behold, a man was relating a dream to his friend. And he said, "Behold, I had a dream; a loaf of barley bread was tumbling into the camp of Midian, and it came to the tent and struck it so that it fell, and turned it upside down so that the tent lay flat." 14 His friend replied, "This is nothing less than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel; God has given Midian and all the camp into his hand."

15 When Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation--he Bowed in Worship.

He returned to the camp of Israel and said, "Arise,--for the Lord has given the camp of Midian into your hands." 16 He divided the 300 men into three companies, and he put trumpets and empty pitchers into the hands of all of them, with torches inside the pitchers. 17 He said to them, "Look at me and do likewise. And behold, when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do.

18 When I and all who are with me blow the trumpet, then you also blow the trumpets all around the camp and say,  
-- 'For the Lord and for Gideon.' "

19 So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outskirts 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 When 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 cried, "A sword for the Lord and for Gideon"

21 Each stood in his place around the camp; and all the army ran, crying out as they fled.

22 When they blew 300 trumpets--the Lord--set the killing sword of one middianite soldier against another--even throughout the whole army--

and the army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the edge of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath. 23 The men of Israel were summoned from Naphtali and Asher and all Manasseh, and they pursued Midian.

24 Then Gideon sent messengers throughout all the mountains of Ephraim, saying, "Come down against the Midianites, and seize from them the watering places as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan." Then all the men of Ephraim gathered together and seized the watering places as far as Beth Barah and the Jordan.

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

## CHAPTER 8

1 Now the men of Ephraim said to him, “Why have you done this to us by not calling us when you went to fight with the Midianites?” And they reprimanded him sharply.

2 So he said to them, “What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleaning 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 When Gideon came to the Jordan, he and the three hundred men who were with him crossed over, exhausted but still in pursuit. 5 Then he said to the men of Succoth, “Please give loaves of bread to the people who follow me, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian.”

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

7 So Gideon said, “For this cause, when the Lord has delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, then I will tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers” 8 Then he went up from there to Penuel and spoke to them in the same way. And the men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had answered. 9 So he also spoke 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 fifteen thousand, all who were left of all the army of the people of the East; for one hundred and twenty thousand men who drew the sword had fallen. 11 Then Gideon went up by the road of those who dwell in tents on the east of Nobah and Jogbehah; and he attacked the army while the camp felt secure. 12 When Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he pursued them; and he took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and routed the whole army.

13 Then 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 interrogated him; and he wrote down for him the leaders of Succoth and its elders, seventy-seven men. 15 Then he came to the men of Succoth and said, “Here are Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you ridiculed 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/afflicted with pain the men of Succoth. 17 Then he tore down the tower of Penuel and killed the men of the city.

18 And 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 resembled the son of a king.”

19 Then he said, "They were my brothers, the sons of my mother. As the Lord lives, if you had let them live, I would not kill you." 20 And he said to Jether his firstborn, "Rise, kill them" But the youth would not draw his sword; for he was afraid, because he was still a youth.

21 So Zebah and Zalmunna said, "Rise yourself, and kill us; for as a man is, so is his strength." So Gideon arose and killed Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the crescent ornaments that were on their camels' necks.

22 Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us, both you and your son, and your grandson also; for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian."

23 But Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you."

24 Then Gideon said to them, "I would like to make a request of you, that each of you would give me the earrings from his plunder." For they had golden earrings, because they were Ishmaelites.

25 So they answered, "We will gladly give them." And they spread out a garment, and each man threw into it the earrings from his plunder. 26 Now the weight of the gold earrings that he requested was one thousand seven hundred shekels of gold, besides the crescent ornaments, pendants, and purple robes which were on the kings of Midian, and besides the chains that were around their camels' necks.

27 Then Gideon made it into a gorgeous priestly garment Statue and set it up in his city, Ophrah. And all Israel played the harlot/whore with it there. It became a snare to Gideon and to his house.

28 So Midian was subdued before the sons of Israel--and they did not lift up their heads anymore. And the land was undisturbed/no wars--for forty years in the days of Gideon.

29 Then Jerubbaal the son of Joash went and lived in his own house. 30 Now Gideon had seventy sons who were his direct descendants, for he had many wives. 31 His concubine who was in Shechem also bore him a son, and he named him Abimelech. 32 And Gideon the son of Joash died at a ripe old age and was buried in the tomb of his father Joash, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

33 Then it came about, as soon as Gideon was dead--

--that the people of Israel again played the Whore--with the Baals/idols, and made Baal-berith their god.

34 Thus the people of Israel Did Not Remember/serve--the Lord 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 Gideon in accord with all the good that he had done to Israel.



## CHAPTER 9

1 Then Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal 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 "Please speak in the hearing of all the men of Shechem: 'Which is better for you, that all seventy of the sons of Jerubbaal reign over you, or that one reign over you?' Remember that I am your own flesh and bone."

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 So they gave him seventy shekels of silver from the temple of Baal-Berith, with which Abimelech hired worthless and reckless men; and they followed him.

5 Then he went to his father's house at Ophrah and killed his brothers, the seventy sons of Jerubbaal, on one stone. But Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left, because he hid himself. 6 And all the men of Shechem gathered together, all of Beth Millo, and they went and made Abimelech king beside the terebinth tree at the pillar that was in Shechem.

7 Now 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, you men of Shechem,  
That God may listen to you

8 "The trees once 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 cease giving my oil,  
With which they honor God and men,  
And go to sway over trees?'

10 "Then the trees said to the fig tree,  
'You come and reign over us'

11 But the fig tree said to them,  
'Should I cease my sweetness and my good fruit,  
And go to sway over trees?'

12 "Then the trees said to the vine,  
'You come and reign over us'

13 But the vine said to them,  
'Should I cease my new wine,  
Which cheers both God and men,

And go to sway over trees?’

14 “Then all the trees said to the bramble,  
‘You come and 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;  
But if not, let fire come out of the bramble  
And devour the cedars of Lebanon’

16 “Now therefore, if you have acted in truth and sincerity in making Abimelech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done to him as he deserves— 17 for my father fought for you, risked his life, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian; 18 but 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 sincerity with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you. 20 But 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 dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

22 After Abimelech had reigned over Israel three years, 23 God sent a spirit of ill will between Abimelech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech, 24 that the crime done to the seventy sons of Jerubbaal might be settled and their blood be laid on Abimelech their brother, who killed them, and on the men of Shechem, who aided him in the killing of his brothers.

25 And the men of Shechem set men in ambush against him on the tops of the mountains, and they robbed all who passed by them along that way; and it was told Abimelech.

26 Now Gaal the son of Ebed came with his brothers and went over to Shechem; and the men of Shechem put their confidence in him. 27 So they went out into the fields, and gathered grapes from their vineyards and trod them, and made merry. And they went into the house of their god, and ate and drank, and cursed Abimelech.

28 Then Gaal the son of Ebed said, “Who is Abimelech, and who is Shechem, that we should serve him? Is he not the son of Jerubbaal, and is not Zebul his officer? Serve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem; but why should we serve him? 29 If only this people were under my authority Then I would remove Abimelech.” So he said to Abimelech, “Increase your army and come out”

30 When Zebul, the ruler of the city, heard the words of Gaal the son of Ebed, his anger was aroused. 31 And he sent messengers to Abimelech secretly, saying, “Take note Gaal

the son of Ebed and his brothers have come to Shechem; and here they are, fortifying the city against you.

32 Now therefore, get up by night, you and the people who are with you, and lie in wait in the field. 33 And it shall be, as soon as the sun is up in the morning, that you shall rise early and rush upon the city; and when he and the people who are with him come out against you, you may then do to them as you find opportunity.”

34 So Abimelech and all the people who were with him rose by night, and lay in wait against Shechem in four companies. 35 When Gaal the son of Ebed went out and stood in the entrance to the city gate, Abimelech and the people who were with him rose from lying in wait. 36 And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, “Look, people are coming down from the tops of the mountains”

But Zebul said to him, “You see the shadows of the mountains as if they were men.”

37 So Gaal spoke again and said, “See, people are coming down from the center of the land, and another company is coming from the Diviners’ 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, if you will, and fight with them now.”

39 So Gaal 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, to the very entrance of the gate. 41 Then Abimelech dwelt at Arumah, and Zebul drove out Gaal and his brothers, so that they would not dwell in Shechem.

42 And it came about on the next day that the people went out into the field, and they told Abimelech. 43 So he took his people, divided them into three companies, and lay in wait in the field. And he looked, and there were the people, coming out of the city; and he rose against them and attacked them.

44 Then 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 killed them. 45 So Abimelech fought against the city all that day; he took the city and killed the people who were in it; and he demolished the city and sowed it with salt.

46 Now when all the men of the tower of Shechem had heard that, they entered the stronghold of the temple of the god Berith. 47 And it was told Abimelech that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together.

48 Then Abimelech went up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the people who were with him. And Abimelech took an ax in his hand and 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, make haste and do as I have done.”

49 So each of 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 Then Abimelech went to Thebez, and he encamped against Thebez and took it. 51 But there was a strong tower in the city, and all the men and women—all the people of the city—fled there and shut themselves in; then they went up to the top of the tower. 52 So Abimelech came as far as the tower and fought against it; and he drew near the door of the tower to burn it with fire.

53 But a certain woman dropped an upper millstone on Abimelech's head and crushed his skull. 54 Then he called quickly to the young man, his armorbearer, and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, lest men 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 had done to his father by killing his seventy brothers. 57 And all the evil of the men of Shechem God returned on their own heads, and on them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal.

## CHAPTER 10

1 After Abimelech there arose to save Israel Tola the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt 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 Then the people of Israel again did Evil--in the sight of the Lord--served the Baals and the Ashtaroth, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the sons of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines;

--thus they Forsook the Lord and did Not Serve/obey Him--

7 The Anger of the Lord burned against Israel--and He gave them into the hands of the Philistines and into the hands of the sons of Ammon.

8 They afflicted and crushed the people of Israel that year--for eighteen years they afflicted/ruled over all the people of Israel who were beyond the Jordan in Gilead in the land of the Amorites. 9 The sons of Ammon crossed the Jordan to fight also against Judah, Benjamin, and the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was greatly distressed/stressed out.

10 Then the people of Israel--cried/yelled out to the Lord, saying--

--“We have Sinned against You,--or indeed, we have Forsaken our God--  
-- and served the Baals/Idols.”

11 The Lord said to the people of Israel--“Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians, the Amorites, the sons of Ammon, and the Philistines? 12 Also when the Sidonians, the Amalekites and the Maonites oppressed you--you cried out to Me--and I Delivered you from their hands.

13 Yet you have--Forsaken Me and Served other gods--therefore I will No longer deliver you.

14 Go and cry out to the gods which you have chosen--let them deliver you in the time of your distress.”

15 The people of Israel said to the Lord, “We have sinned, do to us whatever seems good to You; only please deliver us this day.” 16 So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the Lord; and He could bear the misery of Israel no longer.

17 Then the sons of Ammon were summoned and they camped in Gilead. And the sons of Israel gathered together and camped in Mizpah. 18 The people, the leaders of Gilead, said to one another, “Who is the man who will begin to fight against the sons of Ammon? He shall become head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.”

## CHAPTER 11

1 Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, but he was the son of a harlot/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 shall have no inheritance in our father’s house, for you are the son of another woman.” 3 Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of Tob; and worthless men banded together with Jephthah and went out raiding with him.

4 It came to pass after a time that the people of Ammon made war against Israel. 5 And so it was, when the people of Ammon made war against Israel, that the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob. 6 Then they said to Jephthah, “Come and be our commander, that we may fight against the people of Ammon.”

7 So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “Did you not hate me, and expel me from my father’s house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?”

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 people of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.”

9 So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “If you take me back home to fight against the people of Ammon, and the Lord delivers them to me, shall I be your head?”

10 And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “The Lord will be a witness between us, if we do not do according to your words.” 11 Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and commander over them; and Jephthah spoke all his words before the Lord in Mizpah.

12 Now Jephthah sent messengers to the King of the people 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 people 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 So Jephthah again sent messengers to the king of the people of Ammon, 15 and said to him, “Thus says Jephthah: ‘Israel did not take away the land of Moab, nor the land of the people 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 Then 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 encamped 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 Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, king of Heshbon; and Israel said to him, “Please let us pass through your land into our place.”

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

21 And the Lord God of Israel delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they defeated them. Thus Israel gained possession of all the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country. 22 They took possession of all the territory of the Amorites, from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan.

23 ‘And now the Lord 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 the Lord 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 dwelt in Heshbon and its villages, in Aroer and its villages, 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 the Lord, the Judge, render judgment this day between the children of Israel and the people of Ammon.’ ”

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

29 Then the Spirit of the Lord 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 people of Ammon. 30 And Jephthah made a vow to the Lord, and said, “If You will indeed deliver the people 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 people of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord’s, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering.”

32 So Jephthah advanced toward the people of Ammon to fight against them, and the Lord delivered them into his hands. 33 And he defeated them from Aroer as far as Minnith—twenty cities—and to Abel Keramim, with a very great slaughter. Thus the people of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

34 When Jephthah came to his house at Mizpah, there was his daughter, coming 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 came to pass, 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 the Lord, and I cannot go back on it.”

36 So she said to him, “My father, if you have given your word to the Lord, do to me according to what has gone out of your mouth, because the Lord has avenged you of your enemies, the people of Ammon.” 37 Then 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 So 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.

## CHAPTER 12

1 Then the men of Ephraim gathered together, crossed over toward Zaphon, and said to Jephthah, “Why did you cross over to fight against the people 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 people of Ammon; and when I called you, you did not deliver me out of their hands. 3 So when I saw that you would not deliver me, I took my life in my hands and crossed over against the people of Ammon; and the Lord delivered them into my hand. Why then have you

come up to me this day to fight against me?"

4 Now Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead and fought against Ephraim. And the men of Gilead defeated 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 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.

## CHAPTER 13

1 Now the people of Israel Again did Evil in the sight of the Lord--so that the Lord gave them into--the hands/bondage--of the Philistines forty years.

2 There was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and had borne no children. 3 Then the Angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold now, you are barren and have borne no children--but you shall conceive and give birth to a son.

4 Now therefore, be careful/on guard not to drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing. 5 For behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son/Samson--  
--and No razor shall come upon his head/to cut his/Samson's--hair off--for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to Deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines."

6 Then 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. And I did not ask him where he came from, nor did he tell me his name. 7 But he said to me, ‘Behold, you shall conceive and give birth to a son, and now you shall not drink wine or strong drink nor eat any unclean thing, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.’ ”

8 Then Manoah entreated the Lord and said, “O Lord, please let the man of God whom You have sent come to us again that he may teach us what to do for the boy who is to be born.” 9 God listened to the voice of Manoah; and the Angel of God came again to the woman as she was sitting in the field, but Manoah her husband was not with her. 10 So the woman ran quickly and told her husband, “Behold, the man who came the other day has appeared to me.”

11 Then Manoah arose and followed his wife, and when he came to the Man/Angel he said to him, “Are you the man who spoke to the woman?” And he said, “I am.” 12 Manoah said, “Now when your words come to pass, what shall be the boy’s mode of life and his vocation?”

13 So the Angel of the Lord said to Manoah, “Let the woman pay attention to all that I said. 14 She should not eat anything that comes from the grapevine nor drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing; let her observe all that I Commanded.”

15 Then Manoah said to the Angel of the Lord, “Please let us detain you so that we may prepare a young goat for you.” 16 The Angel of the Lord said to Manoah, “Though you detain me, I will not eat your food, but if you prepare a burnt offering, then offer it to the Lord.” For Manoah did not know--that he was the Angel of the Lord.

17 Manoah said to the Angel of the Lord, “What is your name, so that when your words come to pass, we may honor you?” 18 But the Angel of the Lord said to him, “Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful/special?” 19 So Manoah took the young goat with the grain offering and offered it on the rock to the Lord, and He performed wonders while Manoah and his wife looked on.

20 For it came about when the flame went up from the altar toward heaven, that the --Angel of the Lord ascended in the flame of the altar. When Manoah and his wife saw this,--they fell on their faces to the ground.

21 Now the Angel of the Lord did not appear to Manoah or his wife again. Then Manoah knew that he was the Angel of the Lord. 22 So Manoah said to his wife, “We will surely die, for we have seen God.” 23 But his wife said to him, “If the Lord 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 let us hear things like this at this time.”

24 Then the woman gave birth to a son--and named him Samson; and the child grew up and the Lord blessed him. 25 And the Spirit of the Lord began to Stir/arouse/trouble him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

## CHAPTER 14

1 Then Samson went down to Timnah and saw a woman in Timnah, one of the daughters of the Philistines. 2 So he came back and told his father and mother, "I saw a woman in Timnah, one of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife." 3 Then his father and his mother said to him, "Is there no woman among the daughters of your relatives, or among all our people, that you go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me--for she looks good/lustful--to me."

4 However, his father and mother did not know that it was of the Lord, for He was seeking an occasion against the Philistines. Now at that time the Philistines were ruling over Israel.

5 Then Samson went down to Timnah with his father and mother, and came as far as the vineyards of Timnah; and behold, a young lion came roaring toward him. 6 The Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily, so that he tore him as one tears a young goat though he had nothing in his hand; but he did not tell his father or mother what he had done. 7 So he went down and talked to the woman; and she looked good to Samson.

8 When he returned later to take her, he turned aside to look at the carcass of the lion; and behold, a swarm of bees and honey were in the body of the lion. 9 So he scraped the honey into his hands and went on, eating as he went. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them and they ate it; but he did not tell them that he had scraped the honey out of the body of the lion.

10 Then his father went down to the woman; and Samson made a feast there, for the young men customarily did this. 11 When they saw him, they brought thirty companions to be with him.

12 Then Samson said to them, "Let me now propound a riddle to you; if you will indeed tell it to me within the seven days of the feast, and find it out, then I will give you thirty linen wraps and thirty changes of clothes. 13 But if you are unable to tell me, then you shall give me thirty linen wraps and thirty changes of clothes." And they said to him, "Propound your riddle, that we may hear it."

14 So he said to them,  
"Out of the eater came something to eat,  
And out of the strong came something sweet."  
But they could not tell the riddle in three days.

15 Then it came about on the fourth day that they said to Samson's wife, "Entice your husband, so that he will tell us the riddle, or we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us to impoverish us? Is this not so?" 16 Samson's wife wept before him and said--"You only hate me, and you do not love me; you have propounded a riddle to the sons, and have Not told it to me."

And he said to her, "Behold, I have not told it to my father or mother; so should I tell you?" 17 However she wept before him seven days while their feast lasted. And on the seventh day he told her because she pressed him so hard.

--She then Told the Riddle to the sons of her people--

18 So 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/forced the answer out of her,  
--You would not have found out my riddle."

19 Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson mightily-- and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of them and took their spoil and gave the changes of clothes to those who told the riddle. And his anger burned, and he went up to his father's house. 20 But--Samson's wife was given to his companion who had been his friend.

## CHAPTER 15

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 shall 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.

6 Then the Philistines said, "Who has done this?"

And they answered, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he/his father in law has taken his wife and given her to his companion." So the Philistines came up 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 attacked them hip and thigh with a great slaughter; then he went down and dwelt in the cleft of the rock of Etam.

9 Then the Philistines went up and camped in Judah, and spread out in Lehi. 10 The men of Judah said, “Why have you come up against us?” And they said, “We have come up to bind Samson in order to do to him as he did to us.”

11 Then 3,000 men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam and said to Samson, “Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then is this that you have done to us?” And he said to them, “As they did to me, so I have done to them.”

12 They said to him--“We have come down to Bind You so that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines.” And Samson said to them, “Swear to me that you will not kill me.”

13 So they said to him, “No, but we will bind you fast and give you into their hands; yet surely we will not kill you.” Then they bound him with two new ropes and brought him up from the rock.

14 When he came to Lehi, the Philistines shouted as they met him. And the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson mightily so that the Ropes that were on his arms were as flax/string that is burned with fire--and his bonds dropped from his hands.

15 Samson found a fresh jawbone of a donkey--so he reached out and took it and Killed --a thousand men with it.

16 Then Samson said,  
“With the jawbone of a donkey,  
Heaps upon heaps,  
With the jawbone of a donkey  
I have killed a thousand men.”

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

18 Then he became very thirsty; so he cried out to the Lord and said, “You have given this great deliverance by the hand of Your servant; and now shall I die of thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?”

19 So God split 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 Samson judged Israel twenty years in the days of the Philistines.

## .CHAPTER 16

1 Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a whore there--and went in to her/had intercourse. 2 When it was told to the Gazites, saying, "Samson has come here," they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. And they kept silent all night, saying, "Let us wait until the morning light, then we will kill him."

3 Now Samson lay until midnight, and at midnight he arose and took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two posts and pulled them up along with the bars; then he put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the mountain which is opposite Hebron.

4 After this it came about that Samson Loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name--was Delilah.

5 The lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her--"Entice him, and see where his great strength lies and how we may overpower him that we may bind him to afflict him.

Then we will each give you eleven hundred pieces of silver." 6 So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength is and how you may be bound to afflict you." 7 Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh cords that have not been dried, then I will become weak and be like any other man." 8 Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven fresh cords that had not been dried, and she bound him with them.

9 Now she had men lying in wait in an inner room. And she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson" But he snapped the cords as a string of tow/candle wick snaps when it touches fire. So his strength was not discovered.

10 Then Delilah said to Samson, "Behold, you have deceived me and told me lies; now please tell me how you may be bound."

11 He said to her, "If they bind me tightly with new ropes which have not been used, then I will become weak and be like any other man." 12 So Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson" For the men were lying in wait in the inner room. But he snapped the ropes from his arms like a thread.

13 Then Delilah said to Samson, "Up to now you have deceived me and told me lies; tell me how you may be bound." And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my hair with the web and fasten it with a pin, then I will become weak and be like any other man." 14 So while he slept, Delilah took the seven locks of his hair and wove them into the web. And she fastened it with the pin and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson"

But he awoke from his sleep and pulled out the pin of the loom and the web.

15 Then she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when your heart is not with me? You have deceived me these three times and have not told me where your great strength is.” 16 It came about when she pressed him daily with her words and urged him, that his soul was annoyed to death.

17 So Samson-- told her all that was in his heart and said to her,--  
--“A razor has never come on my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb.--If I am shaved--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 that was in his heart, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying--“Come up once more, for he has told me all that is in his heart.”

Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hands.

19 She made him sleep on her knees, and called for a man  
--and had him--Shave Off --the seven locks of Samson's Hair--Then she began to afflict him--and his Strength--Left Him.

20 She said, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson”  
And he awoke from his sleep/stupor and said, “I will go out as at other times and shake myself free.” But Samson did Not Know that the Lord--had Departed from him.

21 Then the Philistines seized him--and Gouged/took out--Samson's Eyes,  
--and they brought him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze chains,  
--and he was a grinder in the prison.

22 However, the Hair of his head began to--grow again--after it was shaved off.

23 Now the lords of the Philistines assembled to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice/boast and get drunk--  
for they said,--“Our god--has given Samson our enemy--into our hands.”

24 When the people saw Samson, they praised their god, for they said,  
“Our god has given our enemy into our hands,  
Even the destroyer of our country,  
Who has slain many of us.”

25 It so happened when they were in high drunken spirits--that they said,  
--“Call for Samson--that he may amuse/entertain us.”

So they Called for Samson from the prison, and he entertained them. And they made him stand between the pillars. 26 Then Samson said to the boy who was holding his hand, --“Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests--that I may Lean/press hard against them.” 27 Now the house was full of men and women, and all the lords of the Philistines were there.

--And about 3,000 men and women were on the roof looking on while Samson was amusing them.

28 Then Samson called to the Lord and said,--“O Lord God, please remember me and please strengthen me just this time--O God, that I may at once be avenged/vindicated of the Philistines--for my two eyes.”

29 Samson grasped the two middle Pillars on which the house rested, and braced himself against them, the one with his right hand and the other with his left. 30 And Samson said--“Let me die with the Philistines”

--And Samson-- bent/leaned--with all his might so that the house/temple--fell down with all the nobles/lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead/3.000 people--whom he Killed at his death were more than those whom he killed in his life. 31 Then his brothers and all his father’s household came down, took him, brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. Thus Samson had Judged Israel twenty years.

## CHAPTER 17

1 Now there was a man from the mountains of Ephraim, whose name was Micah. 2 And he said to his mother, “The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from you, and on which you put a curse, even saying it in my ears—here is the silver with me; I took it.”

And his mother said, “May you be blessed by the Lord, my son.” 3 So when he had returned the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, “I had wholly dedicated the silver from my hand to the Lord 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 shekels 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 The man Micah had a shrine, and made an ephod and household idols; 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 their own eyes.

7 Now there was a young man from Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah; he was a Levite, and was staying there. 8 The man departed from the city of Bethlehem

in Judah to stay wherever he could find a place. Then he came to the mountains of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, as he journeyed. 9 And Micah said to him, “Where do you come from?”

So he said to him, “I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, and I am on my way to find a place to stay.”

10 Micah said to him, “Dwell with me, and be a father and a priest to me, and I will give you ten shekels of silver per year, a suit of clothes, and your sustenance.” So the Levite went in. 11 Then the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the young man became like one of his sons to him. 12 So Micah consecrated the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and lived in the house of Micah. 13 Then Micah said, “Now I know that the Lord will be good to me, since I have a Levite as priest.”

## CHAPTER 18

1 In those days *there was* no King in Israel. And in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance for itself to dwell in; for until that day *their* inheritance among the tribes of Israel had not fallen to them. 2 So the children of Dan sent five men of their family from their territory, men of valor from Zorah and Eshtaol, to spy out the land and search it. They said to them, “Go, search the land.” So they went to the mountains of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and lodged there.

3 While they *were* at the house of Micah, they recognized the voice of the young Levite. They turned aside and said to him, “Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What do you have here?”

4 He said to them, “Thus and so Micah did for me. He has hired me, and I have become his priest.”

5 So they said to him, “Please inquire of God, that we may know whether the journey on which we go will be prosperous.”

6 And the priest said to them, “Go in peace. The presence of the Lord be with you on your way.”

7 So the five men departed and went to Laish. They saw the people who were there, how they dwelt safely, in the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure. There were no rulers in the land who might put them to shame for anything. They were far from the Sidonians, and they had no ties with anyone.

8 Then the spies came back to their brethren at Zorah and Eshtaol, and their brethren said to them, “What is your report?”



9 So they said, “Arise, let us go up against them. For we have seen the land, and indeed it is very good. Would you do nothing? Do not hesitate to go, and enter to possess the land. 10 When you go, 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 six hundred men of the family of the Danites went from there, from Zorah and Eshtaol, armed with weapons of war. 12 Then they went up and encamped in Kirjath Jearim in Judah. (Therefore they call that place Mahaneh Dan to this day. There it is, west of Kirjath Jearim.) 13 And they passed from there to the mountains of Ephraim, and came to the house of Micah.

14 Then the five men who had gone to spy out the country of Laish answered and said to their brethren, “Do you know that there are in these houses an ephod/priestly garment, household idols, a carved image, and a molded image? Now therefore, consider what you should do.” 15 So they turned aside there, and came to the house of the young Levite man—to the house of Micah—and greeted him.

16 The six hundred men armed with their weapons of war, who were of the children of Dan, stood by the entrance of the gate. 17 Then the five men who had gone to spy out the land went up. Entering there, they took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image. The priest stood at the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men who were armed with weapons of war.

18 When these went into Micah’s house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image, the priest said to them, “What are you doing?”

19 And they said to him, “Be quiet, put your hand over your mouth, and come with us; be a father and a priest to us. 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 So the priest’s heart was glad; and he took the ephod, the household idols, and the carved image, and took his place among the people.

21 Then they turned and departed, and put the little ones, the livestock, and the goods in front of them. 22 When they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men who were in the houses near Micah’s house gathered together and overtook the children of Dan. 23 And they called out to the children of Dan. So they turned around and said to Micah, “What ails you, that you have gathered such a company?”

24 So he said, “You have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and you have gone away. Now what more do I have? How can you say to me, ‘What ails you?’ ”

25 And the children of Dan said to him, “Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest angry men fall upon you, and you lose your life, with the lives of your household” 26 Then the children 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 So they took the things Micah had made, and the priest who had belonged to him,

and went 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 There was no deliverer, because it was far from Sidon, and they had no ties with anyone. It was in the valley that belongs to Beth Rehob. So they rebuilt the city and dwelt there. 29 And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel. However, the name of the city formerly was Laish.

30 Then the children 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 Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. 31 So they set up for themselves Micah's carved image which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

## CHAPTER 19

1 And it came to pass 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 But his concubine played the whore against him, and went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there four whole months.

3 Then 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 glad to meet him.

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

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

6 So they sat down, and the two of them ate and drank together. Then the young woman's father said to the man, "Please be content to stay all night, and let your heart be merry/drink more wine." 7 And when the man stood to depart, his father-in-law urged him; so he lodged there again. 8 Then he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart, but the young woman's father said, "Please refresh your heart." So they delayed until afternoon; and both of them ate.

9 And when the man stood to depart—he and his concubine and his servant—his father-in-law, the young woman's father, said to him, "Look, the day is now drawing toward evening; please spend the night. See, the day is coming to an end; lodge here, that your heart may be merry. Tomorrow go your way early, so that you may get home."

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

concubine was also with him. 11 They were near Jebus, and the day was far spent; and the servant said to his master, “Come, please, and let us turn aside into this city of the Jebusites and lodge in it.”

12 But his master said to him, “We will not turn aside here into a city of foreigners, who are not of the children of Israel; we will go on to Gibeah.” 13 So he said to his servant, “Come, let us draw near to one of these places, and spend the night in Gibeah or in Ramah.” 14 And they passed by and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin.

15 They turned aside there to go in to lodge in Gibeah. And when he went in, he sat down in the open square of the city, for no one would take them into his house to spend the night.

16 Just then an old man came in from his work in the field at evening, who also was from the mountains of Ephraim; he was staying in Gibeah, whereas the men of the place were Benjamites. 17 And when he raised his eyes, he saw the traveler in the open square of the city; and the old man said, “Where are you going, and where do you come from?”

18 So he said to him, “We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah toward the remote mountains of Ephraim; I am from there. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; now I am going to the house of the Lord. 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 female 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 So he brought him into his house, and gave fodder to the donkeys. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

22 As they were enjoying themselves, suddenly certain men of the city, perverted men, surrounded the house and beat on the door. They spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying, “Bring out the man who came to your house, that we may know him carnally/have sex with”

23 But the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, “No, my brethren I beg you, do not act so wickedly. Seeing this man has come into my house, do not commit this outrage. 24 Look, here is my virgin daughter and the man’s concubine; let me bring them out now. Humble them, and do with them as you please; but to this man do not do such a vile thing”

25 But the men would not heed 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 day began to break, they let her go.

26 Then the woman came as the day was dawning, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her master was, till it was light.

27 When her master arose in the morning, and opened the doors of the house and went out to go his way, there was his concubine, fallen at the door of the house with her hands on the threshold. 28 And he said to her, "Get up and let us be going." But there was no answer. So the man lifted her onto the donkey; and the man got up and went to his place.

29 When he entered his house he took a knife, laid hold of his concubine, and divided her into twelve pieces, limb by limb, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. 30 And so it was that all who saw it said, "No such deed has been done or seen from the day that the children of Israel came up from the land of Egypt until this day. Consider it, confer/make plans, and speak up"

## **CHAPTER 20**

1 So all the children of Israel came out, from Dan to Beersheba, as well as from the land of Gilead, and the congregation gathered together as one man before the Lord at Mizpah. 2 And the leaders of all the people, all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand foot soldiers who drew the sword. 3 (Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.)

Then the children of Israel said, "Tell us, how did this wicked deed happen?" 4 So the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, "My concubine and I went into Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, to spend the night. 5 And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and surrounded the house at night because of me. They intended to kill me, but instead they violently raped my concubine so that she died.

6 So I took 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 outrage in Israel. 7 Look All of you are children of Israel; give your advice and counsel here and now"

8 So all the people arose as one man, saying, "None of us will go to his tent, nor will any turn back to his house; 9 but now this is the thing which we will do to Gibeah: We will go up against it by lot. 10 We will take ten men out of every hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, a hundred out of every thousand, and a thousand out of every ten thousand, to make provisions for the people, that when they come to Gibeah in Benjamin, they may repay all the vileness that they have done in Israel."

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

12 Then the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What is this wickedness that has occurred among you? 13 Now therefore, deliver up

the men, the perverted men who are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and remove the evil from Israel.” But the children of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brethren, the children of Israel.

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

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

16 Among all this people were seven hundred select men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair’s breadth and not miss. 17 Now besides Benjamin, the men of Israel numbered four hundred thousand men who drew the sword; all of these were men of war.

18 Then the children of Israel arose and went up to the house of God to inquire of God. They said, “Which of us shall go up first to battle against the children of Benjamin?”

The Lord said, “Judah first”

19 So the children of Israel rose in the morning and encamped 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 Then the children of Benjamin came out of Gibeah, and on that day cut 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 place where they had put themselves in array on the first day. 23 Then the children of Israel went up and wept before the Lord until evening, and asked counsel of the Lord, saying, “Shall I again draw near for battle against the children of my brother Benjamin?”

And the Lord said, “Go up against him.”

24 So the children of Israel approached the children of Benjamin on the second day. 25 And Benjamin went out against them from Gibeah on the second day, and cut down to the ground eighteen thousand more of the children of Israel; all these drew the sword.

26 Then all the children of Israel, that is, all the people, went up and came to the house of God and wept. They sat there before the Lord and fasted that day until evening; and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the Lord.

27 So the children of Israel inquired of the Lord (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 the Lord said, “Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand.”

29 Then Israel set men in ambush all around Gibeah. 30 And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in battle array against Gibeah as at the other times.

31 So the children of Benjamin went out against the people, and were drawn away from the city. They began to strike down and kill some of the people, as 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 children of Benjamin said, “They are defeated before us, as at first.”

But the children of Israel said, “Let us flee and draw 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 Baal Tamar. Then Israel’s men in ambush burst forth from their position in the plain of Geba.

34 And ten thousand select men from all Israel came against Gibeah, and the battle was fierce. But the Benjamites did not know that disaster was upon them. 35 The Lord defeated Benjamin before Israel. And the children of Israel destroyed that day twenty-five thousand one hundred Benjamites; all these drew the sword.

36 So the children of Benjamin saw that they were defeated. The men of Israel had given ground to the Benjamites, because they relied on the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah. 37 And the men in ambush quickly rushed upon Gibeah; the men in ambush spread 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 great cloud of smoke rise up from the city, 39 whereupon the men of Israel would turn in battle. Now Benjamin had begun to strike and kill about thirty of the men of Israel. For they said, “Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle.” 40 But when the cloud began to rise from the city in a column of smoke, the Benjamites looked behind them, and there was the whole city going up in smoke to heaven.

41 And when the men of Israel turned back, the men of Benjamin panicked, for they saw that disaster had come upon them. 42 Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them, and whoever came out of the cities they destroyed in their midst. 43 They surrounded the Benjamites, chased them, and easily trampled them down as far as the front of Gibeah toward the east. 44 And eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell; all these were men of valor.

45 Then they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon; and they cut down five thousand of them on the highways. Then they pursued them relentlessly up to Gidom, and killed 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/warriors/fighting military men.

47 But six hundred men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, and they stayed at the rock of Rimmon for four months. 48 And the men of Israel turned back against the children of Benjamin, and struck them down with the edge of the sword—from every city, men and beasts, all who were found. They also set fire to all the cities they came to.

## CHAPTER 21

1 Now the men of Israel had sworn an oath at Mizpah, saying, “None of us shall give his daughter to Benjamin as a wife.” 2 Then the people came to the house of God, and remained there before God till evening. They lifted up their voices and wept bitterly, 3 and said, “O Lord God of Israel, why has this come to pass in Israel, that today there should be one tribe missing in Israel?”

4 So it was, on the next morning, that the people rose early and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. 5 The children of Israel said, “Who is there among all the tribes of Israel who did not come up with the assembly to the Lord?” For they had made a great oath concerning anyone who had not come up to the Lord at Mizpah, saying, “He shall surely be put to death.”

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

7 What shall we do for wives for those who remain, seeing we have sworn by the Lord that we will not give them our daughters as wives?”

8 And they said, “What one is there from the tribes of Israel who did not come up to Mizpah to the Lord?” And, in fact, no one had come to the camp from Jabesh Gilead to the assembly. 9 For when the people were counted, indeed, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead was there.

10 So the congregation sent out there twelve thousand of their most valiant men, and commanded them, saying, “Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, including the women and children.

11 And this is the thing that you shall do: You shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman who has known a man intimately.” 12 So they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead four hundred young virgins who had not known a man intimately; and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

13 Then the whole congregation sent word to the children of Benjamin who were at the rock of Rimmon, and announced peace to them.

14 So 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 had not found enough for them.

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

16 Then the elders of the congregation said, “What shall we do for wives for those who remain, since the women of Benjamin have been destroyed?” 17 And they said, “There must be an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe may not be destroyed from Israel.

18 However, we cannot give them wives from our daughters, for the children of Israel have sworn an oath, saying, ‘Cursed be the one who gives a wife to Benjamin.’ ”

19 Then they said, “In fact, there is a yearly feast of the Lord in Shiloh, which is north of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah.”

20 Therefore they instructed the children of Benjamin, saying, “Go, lie in wait in the vineyards, 21 and watch; and just when the daughters of Shiloh come out to perform their dances, then 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.

22 Then it shall be, when their fathers or their brothers come to us to complain, that we will say to them, ‘Be kind to them for our sake's, because we did not take a wife for any of them in the war; for it is not as though you have given the women to them at this time, making yourselves guilty of your oath.’ ”

23 And the children of Benjamin did so; they took enough wives for their number from those who danced, whom they caught. Then they went and returned to their inheritance, and they rebuilt the cities and dwelt in them.

24 So the children of Israel departed from there at that time, every person to their tribe and family; they went out from there, every person to their inheritance.

25 In those days there was no King in Israel; everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

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