

# THE BOOK OF JUDGES

## THE DIVISIONS OF THE BOOK

Chap. 1:1-3:6 The failure of Israel to consolidate their inheritance

Chap. 3:7-16:31 The history of Israel under the Judges

Chap. 17:1-21:25 Two appendices to the book

The two appendices illustrate the spiritual state of Israel throughout the period of the Judges.

### Appendix 1

Chap. 17 & 18 CORRUPTION OF DOCTRINE

(1) Micah and his gods - Corrupt worship

(2) Failure of Dan to take their inheritance - Apostate worship established in Dan.

### Appendix 2

Chap. 19-21 CORRUPTION OF PRACTICE

(1) The Levite and his unfaithful concubine

(2) Abomination in Gibeah - Civil war in Israel

**THE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES** - "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes"

This statement occurs twice (Judges 17:6; 21:25). If the italicised words are omitted and the word "right" (yashar - straight) is understood correctly in its context ("There was no king in Israel..."), then it really means that because no authority stood to condemn or commend actions (Judges 18:7), Israelites saw no wrong in their actions and justified everything they did.

## THE TYPICAL HISTORY OF THE JUDGES

1. Moses the Lawgiver dies - replaced by Joshua (Jesus) - *The Law abolished and Grace established.*
2. Joshua destroys organised resistance - "*The prince of this world cast out*" by Christ (John 12:31).
3. Way open for the tribes to take their inheritance - nothing failed of God's promise to them - *Christ's work and triumph over death opens the way for all individuals to find life.*
4. After the death of Joshua and the elders, decline set in (Judges 2:6-10) - *Prefigured apostasy of First Century Ecclesia after the Apostles.*
5. 450 years of apostasy, chaos and darkness with brief periods of revival - *Foreshadowed the ecclesia in apostasy through the "Dark Ages" with brief periods of light.*
6. Boaz and Ruth - individuals manifest faith amidst apostasy - *Faithful Jews and Gentiles uphold the Truth amid general apostasy.*
7. Samuel introduces a new era - the schools of the prophets with organised education and sound spiritual leadership - *Prefigured the revival of the Truth in the latter days - the work of Bro. John Thomas and others to firmly establish the ecclesias.*
8. The reign of Saul produces disunity, disorganisation and apathy - indifference to the Ark - *The modern "Laodicean" ecclesia with pockets of strength amid widespread apathy and indifference.*
9. Ascension of David to the throne to establish "the Kingdom of God" - Israel's worship reformed and the nations subdued - *Type of Christ "the beloved" sitting on David's throne over a purified Israel and ruling over subject nations.*

10. Solomon builds the Temple and enjoys a reign of 40 years peace - *Type of Christ building the House of Prayer for all nations and reigning in peace for the Millennium.*

## OUTLINE OF THE JUDGES

"Judges" - Heb. shophetim - rulers; from verb: to put right and then rule.

There were **13 judges** - 12 called by God and one imposter (Abimelech).

- Numerical value of their names is a multiple of 8 and 13;
- 8 is the number of salvation (immortality) - cp. "Jesus" with a numerical value of 888 is used 888 times N.T. (excluding Revelation);
- 13 is the number of rebellion and sin (Gen. 14:4; 17:25; Mk. 7:21-22);
- "**Sin** brings suffering - Seeking God brings **salvation**";
- Foreshadowed too the 12 faithful apostles and one imposter - Judas.

JUDGE (TRIBE)	YEARS	MEANING OF NAME	REFERENCE	ADVERSARY	OPPRESSION
Othniel (Judah)	40	"The lion of God"	3:8-11	Chushan-Rishathaim	8 years
Ehud (Benjamin)	80	"To unify"	3:12-30	Eglon of Moab, Ammon and Amalek	18 years
Shamgar (Naphtali)		"Cup-bearer"	3:31	Philistines	
Deborah (Ephraim)	40	"Bee" (orderly motion)	Chaps. 4 & 5	Jabin & Sisera in north Canaan	(Canaanites) 20 years
Gideon (Manasseh)	40	"Hewer down"	Chaps. 6-8	Midian	7 years
Tola (Issachar)	23	"Crimson grub"	10:1-2		
Jair of Gilead (Manasseh)	22	"Enlightener"	10:3-5		
Jephthah of Gilead (Gad)	6	"He will open"	11:1-12:7	Ammon	18 years
Ibzan (Judah)	7	"Splendid"	12:8-10		
Elon (Zebulun)	10	"Oak grove" (Strength)	12:11-12		
Abdon (Ephraim)	8	"Slave" (Servitude)	12:13-15		
Samson (Dan)	20	"Brilliant Sunlight"	Chaps. 13-16	Philistines	40 years

## THREE DIVINE PRONOUNCEMENTS AGAINST ISRAEL

### 1. Judges 2:1-3 - Period from Othniel to Deborah and Barak

The Angel at Bochim - A warning of the consequences of failing to utterly destroy the Canaanites. There was at this time a measure of solidarity between tribes but increasing fear, lack of faith and a growing disunity.

### 2. Judges 6:8-10 - Period from Gideon to Jair

The Prophet sent to sharply rebuke Israel for failure to respond to Yahweh's guarantee of help, and for idolatry. At this time there was disunity among the tribes. They were torn by pride and ambition; there was internal decay and disintegration and a lack of resolve.

### 3. Judges 10:11-14 - Period from Jephthah to Samson

The Voice of Yahweh proclaims His abandonment of Israel to the gods they had chosen to serve.

Note how Israel's continual retrogression is matched by a progressive withdrawal by Yahweh. His presence is withdrawn progressively until "There was no open vision" in the days of Eli (1 Sam. 3:1).

## SIX CYCLES OF FAILURE AND REDEMPTION

"Sin brings suffering, and seeking God brings salvation"

	SIN	SUFFERING	SUPPLICATION	DELIVERANCE
1	Israel did evil... they served Baalim (3:7)	The anger of the LORD was hot against Israel. He sold them into the hand of Cushan-risha-thaim (3:8)	And when Israel cried unto the LORD (3:9)	The LORD raised up a deliverer even Othniel (3:9)
2	Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD (3:12)	The LORD strengthened Eglon, king of Moab (3:12)	But when the children of Israel cried to the LORD (3:15)	The LORD raised up a deliverer even Ehud (3:15)
3	Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD when Ehud was dead (4:1)	And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan (4:2)	But when Israel cried unto the LORD (4:3)	Deborah a prophetess, she judged Israel at that time... He called also Barak (4:4)
4	And the children of Israel did evil (6:1)	And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years (6:1)	And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD because of the Midianites (6:6)	And there came an angel unto Gideon (6:11)
5	And the children of Israel did evil and forsook the LORD (10:6)	And His anger was hot and He sold them into the hand of the Ammonites (10:7)	And the children of Israel cried saying, "We have sinned against thee" (10:10)	Then the spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah (11:29)
6	And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD (13:1)	And He sold them into the hand of the Philistines forty years (13:1)	Possibly included in 10:15: "And the children of Israel said unto the LORD, We have sinned..."	And the angel of the LORD said, "he (Samson) shall begin to deliver Israel (13:5)

NB - Samson began to deliver Israel from Philistines oppression. The work was continued by Samuel but not finally completed until the reign of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:8). The judgeship of Samson (which was probably contemporary with Samuel for a short time) was at the close of an era. The period of the Kings was about to commence when all the tribes would gain a cohesiveness under a central administration which had not existed during the whole period of the Judges.

## AN OUTLINE OF THE JUDGES AS TYPES OF CHRIST

### Othniel

Redemption in the Sanctuary through the power of the Word - Salvation for the Lamb's wife - Victory over Gog and Babylon the Great by the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

### Ehud

The people of God unified by "Yahweh's salvation", the Word made flesh - The Prince of this world cast out by the son of God's right hand - Eternal life brought to light by the captain of our salvation - Finally subdues all flesh.

### Deborah & Barak

The work of Atonement amplified in a typical fulfillment of Gen.3:15 - Fleshly wisdom manifested in the seed of the serpent in conflict with divine wisdom manifested in the Word made flesh - The victory of the cross - The serpent destroyed in one final conflict - Final victory over the power of the serpent foreshadowed.

## Gideon

Messiah's first advent - Purges his father's house - Makes acceptable sacrifice of Atonement for father's house - Ascends to heaven - Returns to resurrect and judge the household - Defeats the northern invader and purges the house of Israel.

## Jephthah

Rejected by his own people - Returns at time of great national crisis - Defeats northern invader - Purges house of Judah and offers it to Yahweh - Purges scattered Israel and establishes Kingdom - Reigns for Millennium and hands back the Kingdom to God.

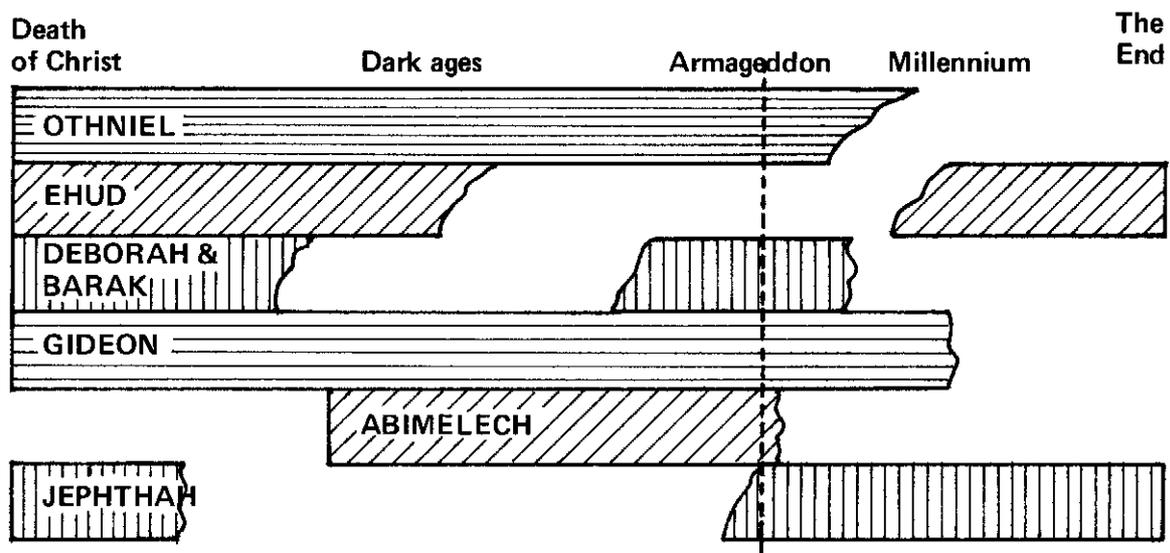
## Samson

Messiah announced by an angel as a Nazarite - Made strong by divine power - Delivers his people - Delivered up to Gentiles - Betrayed for silver - Ridiculed before death - Burst the bonds of death to vanquish foe.

*"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself"* - Luke 24:27

### MESSIAH IN THE JUDGES

The periods covered by the types in the book



## **OTHNIEL AS A TYPE OF CHRIST**

**OTHNIEL** – “The Lion of God (El)” (Gesenius) - of the tribe of Judah - Rev.5:5

- Captured DEBIR ("The shrine or innermost part of sanctuary") also known as KIRJATH-SEPPHER ("City of a book").
- Took as his bride the prize a 'sister-spouse', related to him, and secured for her an inheritance in the captured city and its environs.
- ACHSAH ("Anklet or fetter" i.e. a bonds slave) daughter of Caleb the Kenezite (Gen. 15:19) — a Gentile. Othniel's bride was therefore part Jewish and part Gentile in origin and distinguished by faith, diligence, and a conviction that inheritance can only be secured by a permanent water supply (the Word).
- Achsah secured 'eternal springs' in the 'city of the book' where 'God's sanctuary' was found — Ps. 87.
- Othniel became Israel's first judge — Yahweh's saviour to deliver Israel from their Assyro-Babylonian oppressor.
- CUSHAN-RISHA-THAIM ("Cush of double wickedness") king of Mesopotamia or Babylon. Cush = fleshly, e.g. 2 Sam. 18:21, Jer. 13:23. Hence, he was a monarch distinguished by twin fleshly corruptions:
  - Military oppressor — Latter day Assyro-Babylonian power — Gogian Russia.
  - Spiritual oppressor — "Babylon the great" — Roman Catholic system united as single head — Gogian Russia and Catholic Europe (Papacy) will comprise the antitypical Cushan-rishathaim to oppress Israel.
- Othniel imbued with Yahweh's spirit first judged (true) Israel and then went out to war as the Lion of the tribe of Judah.
- The Land had rest 40 years after a great deliverance — typical of Sabbath rest during the Millennium, which will also constitute a period of probation (40) for the mortal population.
- The life and work of Othniel provides a summary of the types portrayed in Judges of Messiah's redemptive work through to his final victory over sin and death.

## EHUD AS A TYPE OF CHRIST

### JUDGES 3

- V.12 EGLON — "like a calf". Root to be round or circular. Compare the high-priest's offering for himself on the Day of Atonement - Lev. 16:11.
- V.13 "Moab...Ammon...Amalek" — Israel's most implacable enemies - Deut. 23:3-6. Amalek Yahweh's greatest enemy - Ex. 17:16 — type of sin; cp. Gen. 3:15. "The city of palm trees" — Jericho — symbol of flesh destroyed to possess inheritance (Josh. 24:11) — now seized from Israel — dispossessed of inheritance.
- V.14 "eighteen years" – (2 x 9 = 18) 2 = double; 9 = judgement - cp. Isa. 40:2.
- V.15 "deliverer" — yasha — to be open, wide or free i.e. be safe — hence a saviour. Ehud was 'Yahweh's salvation' to Israel — cp. 'Jesus' (Matt. 1:21).  
"EHUD" - "to unify". Son of GERA - "a grain or seed" (Gal. 3:16). A summary of his mission as a type of Christ. To unify true Israel in one seed by atonement.  
"Benjamite" - "Son of the right hand" as was Christ - Ps.80: 17.  
"left-handed" — iter-yad — shut up or impeded in the right hand (strongest). Principle — Ps. 44:3, 16:8. Like Messiah put no trust in the arm of flesh.  
"by him....a present" — minchah or meal offering. The offering of acknowledgement. Israel chose to acknowledge the supremacy of 'King Sin' by appeasing him. Compare Christ and Caiaphas — John 11:49-53.
- V.16 "But" — Ehud like Christ had a different purpose to that of Israel — John 11:51-52.  
"dagger....two edges...cubit" - cp. machaira - Heb. 4:12. The word of God.  
"gird it... ..under raiment" — cp. principle 1 Pet. 1:13. Mind sublimated/fixed.  
"right thigh" — The priest's portion of sacrifices - Lev. 7:32 (best). Strongest part of body — Gen. 32:25. Represents the mind — the Word was hidden in his mind.
- Destroys flesh by the Word in a personal and deadly struggle — serpent crushed. Escapes Eglon's 'tomb' — gathers Israel to redemption at place of sin offering.
- Goes down from the mount before followers — invites them to "follow after me".
- Destroys "all flesh" in the "waters of baptism" — the fords of Jordan.
- Introduces perfect era - 80 years. 8x10 = ALL PERFECT – cp. 1 Cor. 15:24-28 where "all" (pas) occurs 10 times and hupo in the Greek occurs 8 times. 8 represents "immortality" and 10 represents all.



# DEBORAH AND BARAK

## "Victory over the Serpent through the Seed of the Woman"

### THE SERPENT AND HIS SEED - Judges 4:1-3

JABIN — "Intelligent" or "wise", i.e. fleshly wisdom — cp. the serpent Gen.3:1. See his predecessor and namesake Josh. 11:1 (cp. Rev. 20)— perceived strength in numbers and carefully developed strategy.

CANAAN — "Humiliated" root to bend the knee. Monarch of humiliation — see Phil. 3:21.

SISERA - "Warlike array" (Ges. "a field of battle").

- Warlike manifestation of serpent mind
- Battlefield of a divine struggle — the flesh

HAROSHETH — "Mechanical work" — Home of fleshly inventions — on source of Kishon ("winding").

900 CHARIOTS OF IRON - 9 = finality/judgement. Iron = Roman element of serpent's seed.

### THE WOMAN AND HER SEED - Judges 4:4-6

DEBORAH — "A bee" root orderly motion (a noun of unity) — Symbol of divine wisdom.

- Woman — Divine element in the Atonement — See Gen. 3:2-3; 15 (man excluded)

Consider the Bee — weak but wise (see Lxx. Prov. 6:8). Distinguished by diligence/singleness.

- 3 Types — Queens, drones, worker-females (actually neuter) — first two rarely fly — latter do all the work.
- The society depends for survival on pollen and nectar collected only by worker bees.
- Nectar is processed within the workers' bodies for storage in beeswax vessels.
- This activity cross-fertilizes flowering plants and trees — source of new life for "grass of the field".
- Bees nested in rocks and crevices — "with honey out of the rock" (Ps. 81:16).
- Two products — honey = the word (Ps. 19:10). Wax — for writing tablets, medicines, embalming, candles, bronze and gold casting
- Noted for swarming habit - Deut. 1:44, Ps. 118:12; and for protecting own kind (especially hive, honey, and young).
- Stings and dies — loses life to save it.

LAPIDOTH - "to shine as lightning". A divine light (truth) - shines for all to see Luke 17:24.

PALM - tamar - to be erect or upright - see Ps. 92:12, Jer. 10:5, S.S. 7:7. Noted for striking beauty and uprightness. Fruitful/evergreen — both at the head. Determined growth upwards even when weighted.

RAMAH - "a height" (i.e. heavenly places).

BETHEL - "House of God" (Ecclesia).

BARAK - "glittering", "a flashing sword" (Deut. 32:41).

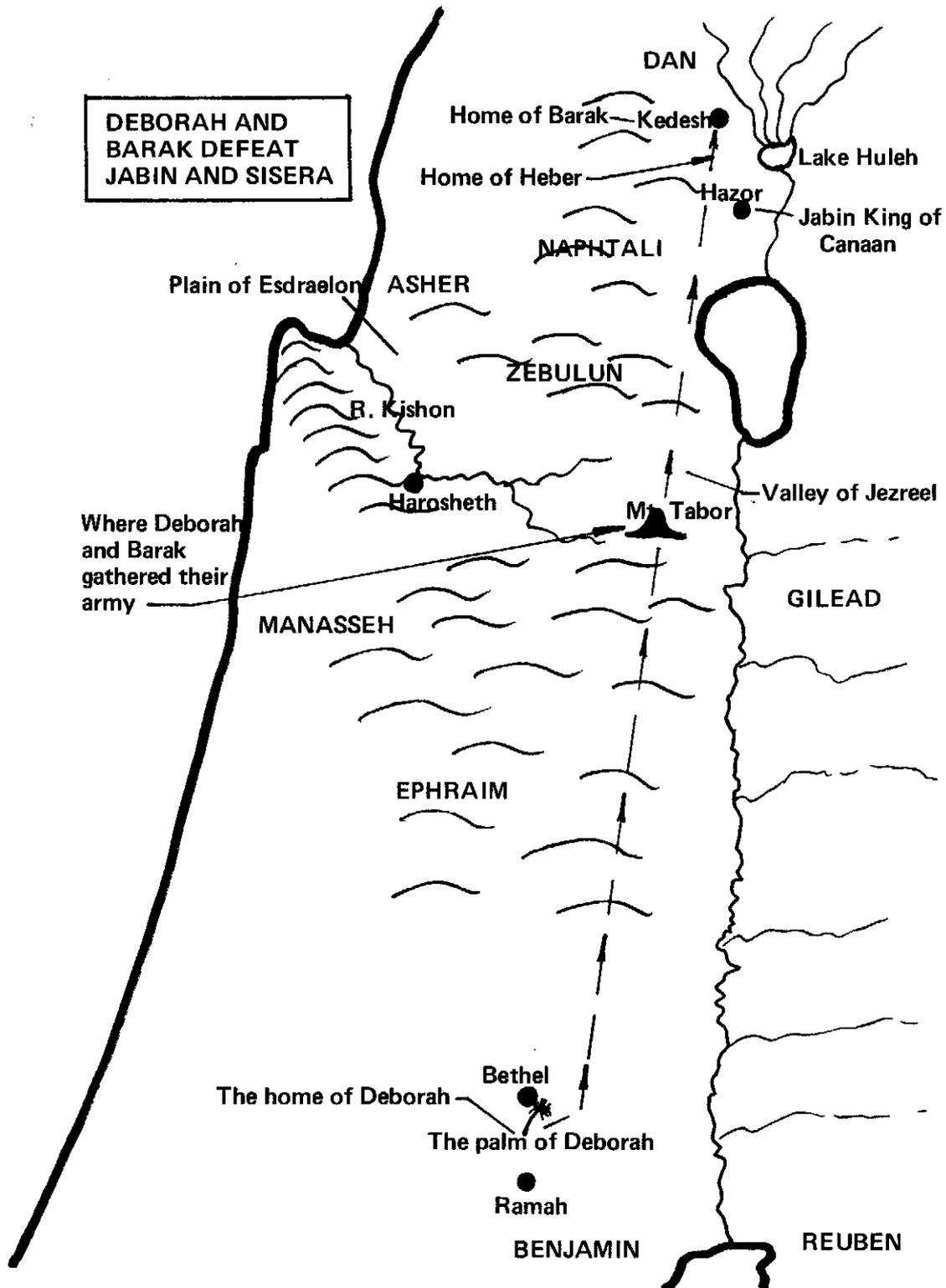
- The word of God in action — Heb. 4:12
- The word made flesh — John 1:14
- Revealed as a type of Christ — Judges 5:12 (Eph. 4:8).

ABINOAM - "Father of graciousness".

KEDESH-NAPHTALI – “The sanctuary of my wrestling”. City of refuge (Josh. 20:7), 32 kms (20 miles) from Nazareth. Cp. Christ in preparation for mission.

TABOR — "fragile, broken". Cone shaped mountain 300 metres (1000') above plain of Esdraelon — a symbol of the mount of crucifixion.

KISHON - "winding" - the territory of the serpent.



# **JEPHTHAH - A TYPE OF CHRIST**

## **A Type of Christ's First Advent and His Rejection by Israel**

1. Conceived outside of marriage 11:1 - Christ born of a virgin, Matt. 1:18-23.
2. Gilead's wife bare him sons 11:2 - God's wife, Israel (Jer. 3:14,20), bare Him sons, viz the priests, scribes, Pharisees and the Jews.
3. Through envy and jealousy Jephthah's brethren cast him out, 11:2 - For envy Christ's brethren rejected and crucified him, Mk. 15:10.
4. Jephthah fled to Tob ("goodness and fruitfulness") and gathered to himself the 'despised' of this world, 11:3 - Christ ascended to heaven and the 'foolish', 'weak', and 'despised' of this world gathered unto him, 1 Cor. 1:26-29.

## **A Type of Christ's Acceptance by Israel at His Second Advent**

1. In distress from unprovoked invasion by Ammon ("tribal" i.e. a people as a congregated unit), Israel call upon Jephthah to deliver them. 11:4 - Israel under attack by Gogian host cry to God for help, Hos. 5:15.
2. Jephthah agrees to be Israel's head and captain only if God gives him victory over Ammon, 11:5-11 - Christ will claim the throne of David and rulership over the world by divine authority and power, Ps. 2:6-9.
3. Jephthah defeats Ammon after fruitless negotiations, 11:12-33 - Christ will defeat Gog and then all nations who refuse to submit to his ultimatum, Ps. 2:10-12; Rev. 14:6-7; 11:15.
4. After defeating the invading forces Jephthah returns home and fulfils his vow by offering up his only child, a virgin daughter, 11:34-39 - After defeat of Gog, Christ will dedicate the refined third of Judah (the virgin daughter of Zion, Lam. 2:13) to God as a "whole burnt offering", Zech. 13:9; Mal. 3:2-4, cp. Isa. 66:20.
5. Jephthah's daughter spent two months in mourning before being offered, 11:37-39 - The refined third of Judah will mourn bitterly in "houses apart" before their final acceptance by Yahweh, Zech. 12:10-14.
6. Jephthah and the men of Gilead purged the proud tribe of Ephraim at the fords of Jordan, 12:4-6 - Christ will send Elijah the Gileadite to purge out the rebellious and proud from scattered "Ephraim" before their entry into the land, Ezek. 20:33-38; Mal. 4:5-6.
7. Jephthah killed all Ephraimites who were influenced by the ways of the Canaanites [42,000 – 6 x 7 = 42, i.e. the end (seven - completion) of flesh (six)], 12:6 - Christ will not permit the Canaanite or those influenced by them into the inheritance of God, Zech. 14:21.
8. Jephthah relinquished his judgeship in his seventh year and Ibzan ("splendid") succeeded him, 12:7-8 - Christ will "deliver up the kingdom to God" (the Splendid One) at the end of the seventh millennium, 1 Cor. 15:24.

## JEPHTHAH'S VOW - THE FACTS

1. A righteous and faithful man — not rash, ignorant or stupid. He was inhabited by God's spirit — the seal of divine approval.
2. He intended a human offering, but left the choice of 'whosoever' open.
3. He specified a burnt offering — thus acknowledged that he had to give all.
4. 'And' in verse 31 is not a disjunctive — it connects the thoughts.
5. The vow fell under the law of devoted things — Lev.27:28-29
  - (a) "All that he HATH" — only applied to what a man possessed.
  - (b) Man and beast "shall surely bejutt to death".
  - (c) Jephthah did not nominate any person.
  - (d) This is the only case recorded of this law being invoked for a human.
6. The objection based on Deut.12:29-32 is invalid because Jephthah:
  - (a) Repudiated Chemosh and Mo lech
  - (b) Did not vow to offer his daughter — he only had one
  - (c) Was grief-stricken when faced with that prospect
  - (d) Left the choice in God's hands.
7. Yahweh gave him a rapid and complete victory over Ammon — thus
  - (a) The vow was validated and made operative by God
  - (b) God accepted Jephthah AFTER the vow was made.
8. He performed his vow to the letter — verse 39.
9. He was fully supported in his actions by his mature and faithful daughter.
10. The suggestion that Jephthah did not kill his daughter but offered her to Tabernacle service only arose in the 12th Century A.D. through Rabbi Kimchi and others, (a) Refer the account of Josephus (Ant. Book 5, chap. 7/10)

The obvious questions that arise are: —

1. If Jephthah was a righteous and rational man, why did he feel moved to offer a human sacrifice — was there not another way?
2. Why leave the choice open and in God's hands?

The answer to these questions lies in Jephthah's astounding comprehension of the principles governing God's method of redeeming mankind. He perceived these from Gen. 22 and other scriptures.

To ask for a complete guarantee of redemption/salvation for Israel through his agency Jephthah understood that he must be prepared to make a similar sacrifice to that which Yahweh himself intended to make for the salvation of the world. It was that principle that he perceived and he was not prepared to ask Yahweh for guaranteed victory over Israel's oppressors without at least leaving the way open for God to exact the price of victory which He would later pay to redeem mankind "without fail".

