

Judges

Judges 1

- ¶1. Now, it came to pass after the death of Joshua that the children of Israel inquired of Jehovah, saying, “Who should go up for us first against the Canaanites to fight against them?”
2. And Jehovah said, “Judah shall go up. Behold, I have given the land into his hand.”
3. Then Judah said to Simeon his brother, “Come up with me in my lot, and let us fight the Canaanites, and I will also go with you in your lot.” And so, Simeon went with him.
4. Then Judah went up, and Jehovah gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand, and they killed of them 10,000 men at Bezek.
5. And in Bezek, they found Adoni-Bezek and fought against him, and they killed the Canaanites and the Perizzites.
6. And Adoni-Bezek fled, but they pursued after him and caught him, and they cut off his thumbs and big toes.
7. Then 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.” And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died.
8. And the sons of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it, and they struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire.
9. And afterward, the sons of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites living in the hill country, and the Negev, and the Shephelah.
10. And Judah went against the Canaanites who dwelt in Hebron. (The former name of Hebron was Kirjath-Arba.) And they slew Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai.
11. And from there, he went against the inhabitants of Debir. (The former name of Debir was Kirjath-Sepher.)
12. And Caleb said, “Whoever strikes Kirjath-Sepher and takes it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter as a wife.”
13. And Othniel, the son of Caleb’s younger brother, Kenaz, took it. So, he gave him Achsah his daughter for a wife.
14. And it came to pass that when she came, she urged him to ask her father for the field. And she came down from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you want?”
15. And she said to him, “Give me a blessing, for you gave me territory in the south. Give me pools of water, too.” And Caleb gave her the upper pools and lower pools.
- ¶16. And then sons of the Kenite, Moses’ father-in-law, came up from the City of Palms¹ with the sons of Judah to the Judean wilderness, which lies south of Arad, and they went and dwelt with the people.
17. And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they struck the Canaanites dwelling in Zephath and utterly destroyed it, and he called the name of that city Hormah.
18. Judah also took Gaza and its border, and Ashkelon and its border, and Ekron and its border.

¹ That is, Jericho (Dt. 34:3).

19. And Jehovah was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, though he did not dispossess the inhabitants of the lowland because they had chariotry of iron.
20. And they gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses said, and he dispossessed three sons of Anak.
21. And the Jebusites that live in Jerusalem, the sons of Benjamin did not dispossess, but the Jebusites dwell in Jerusalem with sons of Benjamin to this day.
22. And as for the house of Joseph, they went up to Bethel. And Jehovah was with them.
23. And the house of Joseph reconnoitered Bethel. (The former name of the city was Luz.)
24. And the scouts saw a man coming out of the city, and they said to him, "If you show us a way into the city, we will show you mercy."
25. And he showed them a way into the city, and they destroyed the city with the edge of the sword, but the man and all his family, they let go.
26. And the man went to the land of the Hittites and built a city, and he named it Luz. This is its name to this day.
27. And Manasseh did not dispossess 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 live in that land.
28. And it came to pass when Israel was strong that they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but as for taking possession, they did not do so.
29. And Ephraim did not dispossess the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer, but the Canaanites dwelt in his midst, in Gezer.
30. Zebulun did not dispossess the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol, but the Canaanites dwell in his midst, though he did put them under forced labor.
31. Asher did not dispossess the inhabitants of Accho, or the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Ahlab, or of Achzib, or of Helbah, or of Aphik, or of Rehob,
32. but the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, because they did not dispossess them.
33. Naphtali did not dispossess the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, or the inhabitants of Beth-anath, but he dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land. Yet, the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath were under forced labor to them.
34. And the Amorites forced the children of Dan to the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down into the lowland,
35. but the Amorites were determined to dwell on the hill of Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim. Still, the hand of the house of Joseph was strong, and they were forced into labor.
36. And the border of the Amorites was from the Ascent of Akrabbim, from the Rock, and upward.

Judges 2

- ¶1. Now, a messenger from Jehovah went up from Gilgal to Bochim, and he said, "I brought you up from Egypt, and I led you to the land which I promised to your fathers. And I said, 'I will not break my covenant with you forever.
2. Do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of this land! Tear down their altars!' But you did not heed my voice. What is this that you have done?
3. So, I also said, 'I will not drive them out from before you, but they will be at your side, and their gods will be a snare to you.'"
4. And it came to pass when the messenger from Jehovah spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept.

5. And they called the name of that place Bochim,² and they sacrificed there to Jehovah.
6. And Joshua sent the people away, and the children of Israel went, each one, to his inheritance to possess the land.
7. And the people served Jehovah all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua who had seen all the great work of Jehovah which He had done for Israel.
8. And Joshua ben-Nun, the servant of Jehovah, died, being one hundred and ten years old.
9. And they buried him within the border of his inheritance, in Timnath-heres in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.
10. Moreover, all that generation was also gathered to their fathers, and there arose another generation after them that did not know Jehovah, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel.
11. And the children of Israel did evil in the eyes of Jehovah and served the Baals.
12. And they forsook Jehovah, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt, and they went after other gods, gods of the peoples who were around them, and they worshipped them, and they provoked Jehovah to anger.
13. Yea, they forsook Jehovah and served Baal and Ashtaroth.
14. Then Jehovah's wrath burned against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of plunderers, and they plundered them. And He sold them into the hand of their enemies all around, so that they were no longer able to withstand their enemies.
15. Wherever they went out, the hand of Jehovah would be against them for evil, according to what Jehovah had spoken, even according to what Jehovah had sworn to them, and He brought great distress upon them.
16. Then Jehovah would raise up judges, and they would deliver them out of the hand of those who plundered them.
17. But then, they would not listen to their judges, but would go whoring after other gods and bow down to them. They would quickly turn from the way in which their fathers walked who obeyed the commandments of Jehovah. They did not do the like.
18. And when Jehovah raised up judges for them, then Jehovah would be with that judge, and He would rescue them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of that judge. For Jehovah was moved to pity by their groaning because of their tormenters and their oppressors.
19. Then, when the judge died, they would turn back and be more corrupt than their fathers in going after other gods, to serve them and to bow down to them. They would not cease from their deeds or from their stubborn way.
20. And so, the anger of Jehovah 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 will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died,
22. in order to prove Israel by them, whether they will keep the way of Jehovah while walking among them, as their fathers kept it, or not."
23. And so, Jehovah gave those nations rest. He did not quickly dispossess them; nor did He give them into the hand of Joshua.

Judges 3

- ¶1. Now, these are the nations to whom Jehovah gave rest, by whom He would try Israel, as many as had not gone through all the wars for Canaan

² Weeping.

2. (only to teach them, so that the generations of the children of Israel might understand war, as many as had not previously experienced such things):
 3. five Philistine lords, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baal-Hermon to the Entrance of Hamath.
 4. And they remained that He might try Israel by them, to know whether they would obey the commandments of Jehovah which He commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.
 5. And so, the children of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites: the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.
 6. And they took their daughters to be their wives, and they gave their daughters to their sons, and they served their gods.
- ¶7. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of Jehovah, and they forgot Jehovah their God and served the Baals and the Asherahs.
8. And the anger of Jehovah burned against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim, king of Aram-naharaim, and the children of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years.
 9. And the children of Israel cried out to Jehovah, and Jehovah raised up a savior for the children of Israel, Othniel ben-Kenaz, kinsman of Caleb's younger *brother*.
 10. And the Spirit of Jehovah was upon him, and he judged Israel and went out to battle, and Jehovah gave Cushan-rishathaim, king of Aram, into his hand, and his hand prevailed against Cushan-rishathaim,
 11. and the land was quiet forty years. And Othniel ben-Kenaz died.
- ¶12. Then, again, the children of Israel did what was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and Jehovah strengthened Eglon, the king of Moab, against Israel because they had done what was evil in the sight of Jehovah.
13. And he gathered to himself the children of Ammon and Amalek, and he went and attacked Israel, and he took possession of the City of Palms.
 14. And the children of Israel served Eglon, king of Moab, eighteen years.
 15. And the children of Israel cried out to Jehovah, and Jehovah raised up a savior for them, Ehud ben-Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed man. And by him, the children of Israel sent tribute to Eglon, king of Moab.
 16. But Ehud made for himself a sword, and it was double-edged, a cubit in length, and he girded it underneath his clothes on his right thigh.
 17. And he presented the tribute to Eglon, king of Moab. (Now, Eglon was a very fat man.)
 18. And it came to pass that when he finished presenting the tribute that he sent away the people who had carried the tribute,
 19. but at the idols which are at Gilgal, he himself turned back. Then he said, "I have a private message for you, O king." And he said, "Silence!" And all that stood by him left him.
 20. And Ehud came to him as he was sitting alone in his cool upper chamber. And Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." And he arose from his seat.
 21. And Ehud reached with his left hand, and took the sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into his belly.
 22. And the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed in over the blade so that he could not draw the sword out of his belly, and his excrement came out.
 23. And Ehud went out to the vestibule³, and he closed and locked the doors of the upper chamber behind him.

³ Hebrew uncertain.

24. And when he was gone out, his servants went in and saw that, behold, the doors of the upper chamber were locked. And they said, "Surely, he is relieving himself in his cool room."
25. And they waited until they were ashamed, for behold, no one opened the doors of the upper chamber. So, they took the key and opened them, and behold, their lord was fallen to the earth, dead.
26. But Ehud had slipped away while they delayed, and he passed beyond the idols and escaped to Seirath.
27. And it came to pass that when he arrived, he blew a shofar in the hill country of Ephraim, and the children of Israel went down with him from the hill country, and he at their forefront.
28. And he said to them, "Follow me! For Jehovah has given your enemies, the Moabites, into your hand!" And they went down after him and took the fords of the Jordan against Moab, and they allowed no one to cross.
29. And they killed of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, all of them stout, and all, men of valor. And not one escaped.
30. So, Moab was humbled that day under the hand of Israel. And the land was quiet eighty years.
- ¶31. And after him was Shamgar ben-Anath, and he killed six hundred Philistine men with a cattle prod, and he also delivered Israel.

Judges 4

- ¶1. Then, when Ehud died, the children of Israel again did what was evil in the eyes of Jehovah.
2. And so, Jehovah sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. And the leader of his army was Sisera, and he lived in Harosheth-hagoiim.
3. And the children of Israel cried out to Jehovah, for he had nine hundred chariots of iron, and he cruelly oppressed the children of Israel twenty years.
- ¶4. Now, a woman, Deborah the prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time.
5. And she used to sit under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the children of Israel would go up to her for judgment.
6. And she sent and summoned Barak ben-Abinoam from Kedesh-Naphtali, and she said to him, "Has not Jehovah, God of Israel, commanded, 'Go, and march to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun,
7. and at the river Kishon, I will draw out to you Sisera, the leader of Jabin's army, with his chariot and his multitude, and I will deliver him into your hand?'"
8. And Barak said to her, "If you go with me, then I will go, but if you do not go with me, I will not go."
9. And she said, "I will certainly go with you; howbeit, the journey you take will not be for your glory, for Jehovah will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." And Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh.
10. And at Kedesh, Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali, and at his feet went up ten thousand men, and Deborah went up with him.
11. Now, Heber the Kenite was separated from the Kenites, the children of Hobab, Moses' father-in-law, and he pitched his tent as far as the Oak of Zaanannim, which is near Kedesh.
12. And they reported to Sisera that Barak ben-Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor.
13. And Sisera summoned all his chariots, nine hundred iron chariots, and all the people who were with him, from Harosheth-hagoiim to the river Kishon.
14. And Deborah said to Barak, "Rise up! For this is the day in which Jehovah has given Sisera into your hand. Has not Jehovah gone out before you?" And so, Barak went down from Mount Tabor, with ten thousand men behind him.

15. And Jehovah discomfited Sisera before Barak, and all his chariots, and all his army, by the edge of the sword, and Sisera alighted from his chariot and fled on foot.
16. But Barak pursued after the chariots and after the army unto Harosheth-hagoiim, and all the host of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword, and not even one was left.
- ¶17. And Sisera fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin, king of Hazor, and the house of Heber the Kenite.
18. And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and she said to him, "Turn in, my lord! Turn in to me! Don't be afraid!" And so, he turned in to her, into the tent, and she covered him with the rug.
19. And he said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." And she opened the skin of milk and gave him a drink, and covered him up.
20. And he said to her, "Stand at the door of the tent, and it shall be that if any man comes and asks you and says, 'Is there a man here?' then you say, 'No.'"
21. Then Jael, wife of Heber, took a tent-peg, and took the hammer in her hand, and went softly in to him, and drove the tent-peg into his temple, and it went down into the ground, for he was fast asleep and exhausted, and he died.
22. And behold, when Barak pursued Sisera, Jael went out to meet him, and she said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man that you are looking for." And he went in with her, and behold, Sisera was fallen down dead, with the tent-peg in his temple.
23. And so, on that day, God subdued Jabin, king of Canaan, before the children of Israel.
24. And the hand of the children of Israel pressed harder and harder against Jabin, king of Canaan, until they destroyed Jabin, king of Canaan.

Judges 5

- ¶1. And Deborah sang with Barak ben-Abinoam on that day, saying,
 2. "For that the leaders of Israel acted like leaders, for that the people freely offered themselves, bless the LORD!
 3. Hear, O kings! Give ear, O princes! I will sing to Jehovah. I will play music to Jehovah, the God of Israel.
 4. O Jehovah, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the field of Edom, the earth shook, the heavens poured, yea, dark clouds poured down water.
 5. The mountains melted at the presence of Jehovah, even Sinai at the presence of Jehovah, the God of Israel.
 6. In the days of Shamgar ben-Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were empty, and travelers took to byways.
 7. The villages were abandoned in Israel; they were abandoned until I, Deborah, arose. I arose as a mother to Israel.
 8. When God chose new men, bread was in *our* gates, though neither shield nor spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel.
 9. My heart is toward the lawgivers of Israel who offered themselves willingly with the people. Bless the LORD!
 10. You who ride on light brown donkeys! You who sit on cloth! And you who walk on the road! Tell it
 11. louder than the voice of dividers *of herds* at watering places! Let them rehearse the righteous acts of Jehovah, righteous acts for His villages in Israel. Then, Jehovah's people came down to the gates.
 12. 'Awake! Awake, O Deborah! Awake! Awake! Sing a song! Rise, O Barak! Lead your captives away, O son of Abinoam!'

13. Then, the remnant of noble men came down; the people of Jehovah came down for me against the mighty men,
14. down from Ephraim, their root, against Amalek, behind you, Benjamin, with your people! From Machir, the commanders came down, and from Zebulun, those who draw out the staff of a scribe,
15. the rulers of Issachar also with Deborah (and so, Issachar was with Barak). Into the valley, at his heels, were they sent. The clans of Reuben had many resolutions of heart.
16. Why did you tarry between two camps? to hear noises of the flocks? The clans of Reuben had great deliberations of heart.
17. Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan. And O Dan! Why did he stay by ships? Asher sat on the seashore and remained by his landings.
18. Zebulun is a people whose soul scorned death, as well as Naphtali, on the heights of the field.
19. Kings came; they joined in battle. Yea, kings of Canaan fought at Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo. They took no spoil of silver.
20. From heaven, the stars went to war; from their courses, they fought against Sisera.
21. The Brook Kishon swept them away, the brook of ancient times, the Brook Kishon. March on, O my soul, in strength!
22. How the hooves of the horse pounded at the gallop, the galloping of his powerful *legs*!
23. Curse Meroz! says the messenger of Jehovah. Curse its inhabitants bitterly because they did not come to the aid of Jehovah, to the aid of Jehovah against the mighty!
24. Blessed among women is Jael, wife of Heber the Kenite! Among tent-dwelling women, she is blessed.
25. He asked for water; she gave him milk. She brought curds in a bowl fit for nobles.
26. She stretched out her hand for the tent-peg and her right hand for the workmen's hammer. Then she hammered Sisera; she smashed his head, and struck through and pierced his temple.
27. Between her feet, he bowed down; he fell; he lay. Between her feet, he bowed down; he fell where he bowed. There he fell down, slain.
28. Through the window, she peered; the mother of Sisera wailed through the lattice, 'Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why is the rumble of his chariots delayed?'
29. Her cunning noblewomen replied (indeed, she said to herself),
30. 'Are they not finding and dividing spoil? A girl – two girls! – for every man; spoil of dyed stuffs for Sisera; spoil of embroidered dyed stuffs; dyed stuff of double embroidery for necks as a spoil.'
31. Thus may all your enemies perish, O Jehovah! But may those who love Him be as the sun rising in its strength!" And the land had rest forty years.

Judges 6

- ¶1. Then the children of Israel did what was evil in the eyes of Jehovah, and Jehovah gave them into the hand of Midian seven years,
2. and the hand of Midian prevailed over Israel. Because of Midian, the children of Israel made hiding places for themselves that were in the mountains, caves, and strongholds.
3. And it came to pass, whenever Israel sowed seed, Midian would come up with Amalek and the sons of the east, and they would come up against him.
4. And they would encamp against them and destroy the crops of the land to the entrance of Gaza, and they would leave no sustenance in Israel, or sheep, or ox, or ass.
5. For they would come up with their livestock, and they would come in with their tents like a massive swarm of locusts; there was no numbering of them and their camels. And they came into the land to destroy it.

6. And Israel was brought very low because of Midian. Then, the children of Israel cried out to Jehovah.

- ¶7. And it came to pass, when the children of Israel cried out to Jehovah on account of Midian,
8. that Jehovah sent a man, a prophet, to the children of Israel, and he said to them, “Thus says Jehovah, God of Israel: I led you up out of Egypt and brought you out of the house of slaves.
9. And I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and then out of the hand of all who resisted you, and I drove them out from before you and gave you their land.
10. And I said to you, ‘I am Jehovah your God. Do not fear the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell.’ But you have not heeded my voice!”

- ¶11. And an angel of Jehovah came and sat under the terebinth tree that is in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite. And his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress, so as to hide from Midian.
12. And the angel of the LORD appeared to him, and he said to him, “Jehovah is with you, O mighty man of valor!”
13. And Gideon said to him, “Bear with me, my lord, but if Jehovah is with us, then why has all this befallen us? And where are all His miraculous works which our fathers recounted to us, saying, ‘Did not Jehovah bring us up out of Egypt?’ But now, Jehovah has forsaken us and given us into the hand of Midian.”
14. And Jehovah turned to him and said, “Go in this strength of yours, and you will deliver Israel out of the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?”
15. But he said to Him, “Bear with me, my lord, but how can I deliver Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s house.”
16. And Jehovah said to him, “*You can deliver* Israel because I will be with you. Yea, you will strike down Midian as one man!”
17. And he said to Him, “If I have now found favor in your eyes, then give me a sign that it is you speaking with me.
18. Don’t leave this place, I beg you, until I come to you and bring out my gift and set it before you.” And He said, “I will stay until you return.”
19. And Gideon went in and prepared a kid of the goats, and unleavened cakes from an ephah of flour. The meat he put in a basket, and the broth, he put in a pot. Then he went out to him beneath the terebinth tree and presented it.
20. And the angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened cakes, and place them on this rock. And pour out the broth.” And he did so.
21. And the angel of Jehovah reached out the tip of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened cakes, and fire came up out of the stone and consumed the flesh and the cakes, and the angel of Jehovah vanished from his sight.
22. And Gideon perceived that he was an angel of Jehovah, and Gideon said, “Alas, my Lord Jehovah! For I have actually seen an angel of Jehovah face-to-face!”
23. But Jehovah said to him, “Shalom to you. Don’t be afraid. You are not going to die.”
24. And Gideon built there an altar to Jehovah, and he called it, “Jehovah Shalom”. To this day, it stands in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

- ¶25. And it came to pass during that night, that Jehovah said to him, “Take one bull that belongs to your father, even the second bull that is seven years old, and tear down your father’s altar for Baal, and cut down the Asherah that is beside it,

26. and build an altar to Jehovah your God atop this citadel, in the proper order, and take the second bull, and with the wood of the Asherah that you cut down, offer it up as a burnt offering.
 27. And Gideon took ten men from among his slaves and did just as Jehovah said to him. But it came to pass that he feared his father's house and the men of the city, to do it by day, and so, he did it by night.
 28. And the men of the city rose early in the morning, and, behold, the altar of Baal was torn down, and the Asherah that was by it was cut down, and the second bull had been offered up on the altar that was built.
 29. And the men said to one another, "Who did this thing!" And they made search and inquired, and they said, "Gideon ben-Joash did this deed!"
 30. And the men of the city said to Joash, "Bring your son out, that he die, because he tore down the altar of Baal and because he cut down that Asherah that was by it."
 31. But Joash said to all who stood against him, "Are you pleading for Baal? Or will you save him? Whoso pleads for him, let him be put to death by morning! If he is a god, let him plead his own case, since it was his altar he pulled down."
 32. And he was called in that day, "Jerubbaal", which means, "Let Baal contend with him," since he tore down his altar.
- ¶33. Now, all Midian, and Amalek, and the sons of the east gathered together, and they crossed over and made camp in the Valley of Jezreel.
34. Then the Spirit of the LORD covered Gideon, and he gave a blast with the shofar, and Abiezer was summoned to follow him.
 35. And he sent messengers to all Manasseh, and he, too, was summoned to follow him. And he sent messengers to Asher, and to Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they went up to meet them.
 36. And Gideon said to God, "If you are going to deliver Israel by my hand, as you said,
 37. behold, I am going to put this woolen fleece on the threshing floor. If dew is only on the fleece, and all the ground is dry, then will I know that you will deliver Israel by my hand, as you said."
 38. And it was so. When he rose early the next day, he squeezed the fleece, and drained dew from the fleece, a bowl full of water.
 39. And Gideon said to God, "Do not let your anger burn against me, and I will speak but once more. Let me, if you will, only this once make trial with the fleece. Let it be, if you please, dry on the fleece alone, but on all the ground, let there be dew."
 40. And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece alone, and on all the ground, there was dew.

Judges 7

- ¶1. And Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) rose early, and all the people who were with him, and they camped by the spring of Harod. And the camp of Midian was north of that, near the Hill of Moreh, in the valley.
2. And Jehovah said to Gideon, "There are too many people with you for me to give Midian into your hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, thinking, 'My own hand has saved me.'
3. So, declare this now, if you will, in the hearing of the people, saying, 'Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him turn back and depart from Mount Gilead!'" And 22,000 of the people turned back, and 10,000 were left.
4. Then Jehovah said to Gideon, "The people are still too many. Bring them down to the water, and I will test them for you there. And it shall be that when I say to you, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go with you. And every one of whom I say to you, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go."

5. And so, he brought the people down to the water. And Jehovah said to Gideon, "Everyone who laps up the water with his tongue the way a dog laps, set him apart; likewise, everyone who kneels down on his knees to drink."
6. And the number of those who lapped, with their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men. But all the rest of the people knelt down on their knees to drink water.
7. Then Jehovah said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men who lapped will I deliver you and give Midian into your hand. And let all the *other* people go, each to his place."
8. Then the people took provisions in their hand, and their shofars, and he sent all the men of Israel away to their tents. But he retained the three hundred men. And the camp of Midian was below him in the valley.
- ¶9. And it came to pass that same night that Jehovah said to him, "Get up! Go down against the camp, for I have given it into your hand!"
10. But if you are afraid to go down, go down with your servant Purah to the camp,
11. and you will hear what they say, and afterward, your hands will be strengthened so that you will go down against the camp." And he went down with Purah his servant to an outpost of the armed men who belonged to the host.
12. And Midian, and Amalek, and all the children of the east were sprawled out in the valley like a swarm of locusts for multitude, and their camels were beyond counting, like the sand on the seashore for multitude.
13. And Gideon arrived, and behold, a man was telling his companion a dream. And he said, "Behold, I dreamed a dream, and behold, a cake of barley bread came tumbling into the camp of Midian, and when it reached the tent, it struck it so that it fell, and it turned it upside down, and the tent lay flat."
14. And his friend answered and said, "This is nothing else but the sword of Gideon ben-Joash, a man of Israel; his God has given Midian and this whole camp into his hand."
- ¶15. And it came to pass, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, that he worshipped and then returned to the camp of Israel, and he said, "Get up! For Jehovah has given the camp of Midian into your hand!"
16. And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put shofars in the hand of them all, and empty pitchers with torches inside the pitchers.
17. And he said to them, "Watch me, and do what I do. And behold, when I come to the edge of the camp, then you do just as I do.
18. And when I blow on the shofar, I and all who are with me, then you also blow on the shofars all around the camp and say, 'For Jehovah and for Gideon!'"
- ¶19. Then Gideon and the hundred men who were with him went to the edge of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just set the watch. Then they blew the shofars and smashed the pitchers that were in their hand.
20. So, the three companies blew on the shofars and shattered their pitchers. And they held the torches in their left hand, and in their right hand were the shofars to blow. And they cried out, "The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon!"
21. And they stood, every man, in his place around the camp. And the whole camp started running, and cried out, and fled.
22. And they blew the three hundred shofars, and Jehovah set each man's sword against his neighbor throughout the camp. And the camp fled to Beth-shittah, toward Zererah, to the border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath.

23. And the men of Israel were summoned from Naphtali, and from Asher, and from all Manasseh, and they pursued after Midian.
24. And Gideon sent messengers through all the hill country of Ephraim, saying, "Go down and engage Midian, and take the waters before them, as far as Beth-barah and the Jordan. And all the men of Ephraim were summoned, and they took the waters as far as Beth-barah and the Jordan.
25. And they caught two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb. And they killed Oreb at the Rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the winepress of Zeeb. Then they pursued Midian. And they brought the head of Oreb and the head of Zeeb across the Jordan to Gideon.

Judges 8

1. And the men of Ephraim said to him, "What is this that you have done to us, failing to call us when you went to fight against Midian!" And they strove bitterly with him.
2. But he said to them, "What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleanings of Ephraim better than the harvest of Abiezer?"
3. God has given into your hand the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb! So, what have I been able to do in comparison to you?" Then, when he made this statement, their anger against him subsided.
4. Then Gideon went to the Jordan in pursuit, he and the three hundred men who were with him, weary but pursuing,
5. and he said to the men of Succoth, "I beseech you, give loaves of bread to the people who are following me, for they are weary, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, kings of Midian."
6. But the rulers of Succoth said, "Is the power of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hand, that we should give bread to your army?"
7. And Gideon said to them, "When Jehovah has given Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, I will flail your flesh with thorns of the wilderness, and with briars."
8. And he went on up from there to Penuel, and said the same to them, and the men of Penuel answered him just as the men of Succoth had done.
9. And he spoke also to the men of Penuel, saying, "When I return in peace, I will tear down this tower."
- ¶10. And Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor, and their hosts were with them, about fifteen thousand – all who remained of all the camp of the children of the east, for there had fallen one hundred twenty thousand men who drew the sword.
11. And Gideon went up by way of the tent-dwellers, east of Nobah and Jogbehah. And he struck the camp, though the camp felt secure.
12. And Zebah and Zalmunna fled, and he pursued after them. And he captured the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and routed the whole camp.
13. And Gideon ben-Joash returned from the battle by the Ascent of Heres,
14. and he caught a young man of the men of Succoth, and he questioned him, and he wrote down for him *the names of* the rulers of Succoth and its elders, seventy-seven men.
15. Then he went to the men of Succoth and said, "Behold, Zeba and Zalmunna, concerning whom you mocked me, saying, 'Is the power of Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hand, that we should give your weary men bread?'"
16. And he took the elders of the city, and thorns and briars of the wilderness, and with them, he taught the men of Succoth.
17. And he tore down the tower of Penuel and killed the men of the city.
18. And he said to Zeba and Zalmunna, "What kind of men were they that you killed at Tabor?" And they said, "As you are, so were they. Each of them resembled sons of a king."

19. And he said, "They were my brothers, sons of my mother. As Jehovah lives, if you had let them live, I would not kill you."
20. And he said to Jether, his firstborn, "Get up and kill them." But the young man did not draw his sword because he was afraid, for he was still a youth.
21. And Zeba and Zalmunna said, "You get up and fall upon us, for as a man is, so is his strength." Then Gideon arose and killed Zeba and Zalmunna. And he took the crescent-shaped ornaments that were on the necks of their camels.
22. And the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us, you and your son, and your son's son, because you have delivered us out of the hand of Midian."
23. And Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, and my son will not rule over you. Jehovah will rule over you."
24. But Gideon did say to them, "Let me ask for something from you. Let each of you give me a ring from his spoil." (They had rings of gold because they were Ishmaelites.)
25. And they said, "We will gladly give them!" And they spread out a cloak, and each man threw a ring from his spoil onto it.
26. And the weight of the rings of gold for which he asked was 1,700 *shekels of gold*, besides the ornaments, and pendants, and purple garments that were on the kings of Midian, and besides the bands that were on the necks of their camels.
27. And Gideon made an ephod out of it, and set it up in his city, in Ophrah, and all Israel committed whoredom with it there, and it became a snare for Gideon and for his house.
28. So, Midian was subdued before the sons of Israel, and they did not lift their head again. And the land was quiet forty years in the days of Gideon.

- ¶29. And Jerubbaal ben-Joash went and dwelt in his own house,
30. and Gideon had seventy sons who came out of his loins, for he had many wives.
 31. And his concubine that was in Shechem also bore him a son, and he called his name Abimelech.
 32. And Gideon ben-Joash died at a good old age and was buried in the tomb of Joash his father in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

- ¶33. And it came to pass when Gideon died that the children of Israel turned and went whoring after the Baals, and made Baal-berith⁴ their God,
34. and the children of Israel did not remember Jehovah their God, who had delivered them from all their enemies round about.
 35. Nor did they deal faithfully with the house of Jerubbaal (Gideon) for all the good that he had done in Israel.

Judges 9

- ¶1. And Abimelech ben-Jerubbaal went to Shechem, to his mother's kinsmen, and spoke to them and to the whole clan of the house of his mother's father, saying,
2. "Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the leaders of Shechem, 'What will be better for you, that seventy men should rule over you, all the sons of Jerubbaal, or that one man should reign over you? And remember that I am your bone and your flesh.'"

⁴ That is, "Baal of the Covenant".

3. And his mother's kinsmen spoke all these words on his behalf in the ears of all the leaders of Shechem, and their hearts were inclined to follow Abimelech because, they said, "He is our kinsman."
 4. And they gave him seventy pieces of silver out of the house of Baal-berith, with which Abimelech hired worthless and unscrupulous men, and they followed him.
 5. And he went to his father's house at Ophrah and killed his brothers, the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, upon a single rock. But Jotham, the youngest son of Jerubbaal, survived, for he hid himself.
- ¶6. Then all the leaders of Shechem and all Beth-millo assembled, and they went and made Abimelech king beside the oak of the pillar that was in Shechem.
7. And when they told Jotham, he went and stood on top of Mount Gerizim, and he lifted up his voice and cried out, and said to them, "Listen to me, you leaders of Shechem, for God has been listening to you!
 8. The trees set out to anoint a king for themselves, and they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us!'
 9. But the olive tree said to them, 'Should I cease from my fatness, in which God and men glory, and go sway over the trees?'
 10. So the trees said to the fig-tree, 'You come reign over us!'
 11. But the fig-tree said to them, 'Should I leave my sweetness and my wonderful fruit, and go sway over the trees?'
 12. So the trees said to the vine, 'You come reign over us!'
 13. But the vine said to them, 'Should I leave my new wine, which cheers God and men, and go sway over the trees?'
 14. So the trees said to the bramble, 'You come reign over us!'
 15. And the bramble said to the trees, 'If you really are anointing me to be king over you, then come, take refuge in my shade. But if not, let fire come out from the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon!'
 16. So then, if you acted truly and blamelessly when you made Abimelech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerubbaal and with his house, and if you have done to him as his deeds deserve –
 17. for my father fought for you, and risked his life, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian,
 18. but you have risen up this day against the house of my father and have killed his sons, seventy men on one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his slave woman, king of the leaders of Shechem because he is your kinsman –
 19. if, then, you have dealt truly and blamelessly this day with Jerubbaal and with his house, then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you!
 20. But if not, then let a fire come out of Abimelech and devour the leaders of Shechem and Beth-millo! And let a fire come out from the leaders of Shechem and Beth-millo and devour Abimelech!"
 21. Then Jotham escaped and fled, and he went to Beer and dwelt there, away from Abimelech his brother.
- ¶22. And Abimelech ruled over Israel three years.
23. Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the leaders of Shechem, and the leaders of Shechem began to deal treacherously with Abimelech,
 24. so that the violence that befell the seventy sons of Jerubbaal might come and their blood-guilt be laid upon their brother Abimelech who killed them, and upon the leaders of Shechem, who strengthened his hands to kill his brothers.
 25. And the leaders of Shechem set men in ambush against him on the tops of mountains, and they started robbing whoever passed by them on the road. And it was reported to Abimelech.

- ¶26. And Gaal ben-Ebed and his kinsmen came, and they passed over to Shechem, and the leaders of Shechem put their trust in him.
27. And they went out into the field and harvested their vineyards, and trod them, and offered praises. And they went into the house of their gods and ate and drank, and they reviled Abimelech.
28. And Gaal ben-Ebed said, "Who is Abimelech! And who is Shechem, that we should serve him! Is he not the son of Jerubbaal, and Zebul his deputy? Serve the men of Hamor, the father of Shechem! Why should we serve him?"
29. Would that this people were put under my hand! I would remove Abimelech! I would say to Abimelech, 'Increase your army, and come out!'"
30. And Zebul, ruler of the city, heard the words of Gaal ben-Ebed, and his anger was kindled,
31. and he secretly sent messengers to Abimelech, saying, "Behold, Gaal ben-Ebed and his kinsmen have come to Shechem, and they are turning the city against you.
32. Now, therefore, come up by night, you and the people who are with you, and lie in wait in the field.
33. And it shall be, in the morning, as soon as the sun comes up, you rise and attack the city, and behold, when he and the people with him come out against you, you may deal with him as you are able."
- ¶34. And Abimelech rose by night, and all the people with him, and they lay in wait against Shechem in four companies.
35. And Gaal ben-Ebed went out and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city, and Abimelech and the people that were with him rose up from the ambush.
36. And Gaal ben-Ebed saw the people, and he said to Zebul, "Behold! People are coming down from the mountaintops." And Zebul said to him, "The shadow on the mountains is looking like people to you."
- ¶37. And once more, Gaal ben-Ebed spoke, saying, "Behold, people are coming down from the height of the land, and one company is coming by way of the Diviners' Oak."
38. Then Zebul said to him, "Where is your mouth now, you who said, 'Who is Abimelech, that we should serve him?' Isn't this the company you made light of? Go out now, I pray you, and fight against him!"
39. And Gaal went out before the leaders of Shechem and fought against Abimelech.
40. And Abimelech pursued him, and he fled from his face. And many of the wounded fell, to the entrance of the gate.
41. And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah. And Zebul ordered Gaal and his kinsmen out from dwelling in Shechem.
42. And it was to be the next day that the people were to go out into the open, and some reported it to Abimelech.
43. So, he took the people and divided them into three companies, and he lay wait in the field. And he looked, and behold, the people began to come out from the city, and he rose up against them and struck them down.
44. Now, Abimelech and the companies that were with him had rushed forward and positioned themselves at the entrance of the gate of the city, and two of the companies attacked and killed all those in the field.
45. And Abimelech fought against the city all that day, and he took the city and slew the people who were in it. And then, he razed the city and sowed it with salt.

- ¶46. And when all the lords of the Tower of Shechem heard of it, they entered into a hewn-out chamber of the temple of El-berith.
47. And it was reported to Abimelech that all the lords of the Tower of Shechem were gathered together.
48. So Abimelech went up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the people with him, and Abimelech took axes in his hand, and he cut a bough of the trees, and picked it up, and laid it on his shoulder, and said to the people who were with him, “What you have seen me do, hurry and do likewise.”
49. And all the people, each man, also cut a bough and followed after Abimelech, and they laid it over the chamber, and set fire to the stronghold upon them so that all the men of the Tower of Shechem died, about a thousand men and women.
- ¶50. Then Abimelech went to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it.
51. But a strong tower was in the midst of the city, and all the men and women fled there with all the leaders of the city, and they shut *the doors* behind them. And they went up on the roof of the tower.
52. And Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it, and he drew near the entrance of the tower to burn it with fire.
53. But a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech’s head, and it crushed his skull.
54. And immediately, he called the young man who bore his armor and said to him, “Draw your sword and kill me, lest it be said of me ‘A woman killed him!’” So the young man ran him through, and he died.
55. And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they went, each one, to his own place.
56. So, God repaid Abimelech for the evil which he had done to his father, in murdering his seventy brothers.
57. Also, God caused all the evil of the men of Shechem to return upon their heads, so that upon them came the curse of Jotham ben-Jerubbaal.

Judges 10

- ¶1. And after Abimelech, a man of Issachar arose to deliver Israel, Tola ben-Puah the son of Dodo, and he dwelt in Shamir, in the hill country of Ephraim.
2. And he judged Israel twenty-three years, and he died and was buried at Shamir.
- ¶3. And after him arose Jair the Gileadite, and he judged Israel twenty-two years.
4. And he had thirty sons who rode on thirty mules, and they had thirty villages which are in the territory of Gilead. They are called Havvoth-Jair⁵ to this day.
5. And Jair died and was buried in Kamon.
- ¶6. Then again, the children of Israel did what was evil in the sight of Jehovah, and they served the Baals and Ashtaroth, and gods of Syria, and gods of Sidon, and gods of Moab, and gods of Ammon, and gods of Philistia. And they forsook Jehovah and would not serve Him.
7. And Jehovah’s anger was kindled against Israel, and He sold them into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the children of Ammon,
8. and beginning that year, they crushed and oppressed the children of Israel eighteen years, along with all the children of Israel who were beyond the Jordan, in the land of the Amorites, which is Gilead.

⁵ That is, “Villages of Jair”

9. And the children of Ammon crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah also, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim, and Israel was greatly distressed.
 10. And the children of Israel cried out to Jehovah, saying, "We have sinned against you, in that we have forsaken our God and served the Baals!"
 11. And Jehovah said to the children of Israel, "Did I not *deliver you* from Egypt, and from the Amorites, and from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines?"
 12. And when the Sidonians, and Amalek, and Maon oppressed you, and you cried out to me, I delivered you out of their hand.
 13. Yet you have forsaken me and served other gods. Therefore, I will not deliver you again!
 14. Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen! Let them save you in the time of your distress."
 15. And the children of Israel said to Jehovah, "We have sinned! Do to us whatever seems good to you. Only deliver us, we beseech you, this day!"
 16. And they put away the foreign gods from their midst, and served Jehovah. And His soul could no longer bear Israel's misery.
- ¶17. And the children of Ammon were mustered, and they camped in Gilead, and the children of Israel came together and camped in Mizpah.
18. And the people, the princes of Gilead, each said to his neighbor, "Who is the man who will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? He will be the head of all the inhabitants of Gilead."

Judges 11

- ¶1. Now, Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior, but he was the son of a harlot, and Gilead had fathered Jephthah.
2. And Gilead's wife bore him sons, and when the wife's sons were grown, they drove Jephthah away and said to him, "You have no inheritance in the house of our father, for you are the son of another woman."
 3. So, Jephthah fled from the face of his brothers, and he dwelt in the land of Tob. And worthless men gathered themselves to Jephthah, and they went out with him.
- ¶4. But it happened after those days that the sons of Ammon fought against Israel,
5. and it came to pass that when the sons of Ammon fought against Israel that the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah from the land of Tob.
 6. And they said to Jephthah, "Come and be our commander, that we may fight against the sons of Ammon."
 7. But Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Did you not hate me and drive me out of my father's house? So, why do you come to me now, when you are in trouble?"
 8. And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "For this reason, we have turned to you now, that you might go with us, and fight against the sons of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."
 9. And Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you bring me back to fight against the sons of Ammon, and Jehovah gives them over to me, I will be your head."
 10. And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "Jehovah is witness between us. *May God damn us* if we do not do as you say."⁶

⁶ Literally, only "– if we do not do as you say." The curse intended with this oath is so horrific – calling for one's own death and damnation – that it is not even uttered.

11. And so, Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head over them and commander, and Jephthah spoke all his words before Jehovah in Mizpah.
- ¶12. And Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the children of Ammon, saying, “What is there between me and you, that you have come to me to fight in my land?”
13. And the king of the children of Ammon said to Jephthah’s messengers, “*I am come* because Israel, when he came up from Egypt, took my land, from the Arnon to the Jabbok and to the Jordan. Therefore, return them now, peacefully!”
14. Then, once more, Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the children of Ammon,
15. and he said to him, “Thus says Jephthah: Israel did not take away the land of Moab or the land of the children of Ammon,
16. for when Israel came up from Egypt, they went by way of the desert to the Red Sea and then came to Kadesh.
17. And Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, ‘Let me, I pray you, pass through your land.’ But the king of Edom would not listen. Likewise, *Israel* sent to the king of Moab, but he would not consent. So, Israel remained in Kadesh.
18. Then, they walked through the desert and went around the land of Edom and the land of Moab, and they came in on the east side of the land of Moab and camped on the other side of Arnon, and they did not come within the border of Moab [for Arnon is the border of Moab].
19. And Israel sent messengers to Sihon, king of the Amorites, king of Heshbon, and Israel said to him, ‘Let us pass through your land, we pray you, to my place.’
20. But Sihon did not trust Israel to cross his border; so, Sihon gathered all his people and camped a Jahaz, and he fought against Israel.
21. And Jehovah, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they struck them down. So, Israel took possession of all the land of the Amorites who dwelt in that land.
22. And they took possession of all the territory belonging to the Amorites, from the Arnon to the Jabbok, and from the wilderness to the Jordan.
23. So then, Jehovah, the God of Israel, dispossessed the Amorites from before His people Israel, and you would dispossess him!
24. Why not possess what Chemosh your god gives you to possess? And all whom Jehovah our God dispossesses before us, we will take possession of.
25. So now, are you any better than Balak ben-Zippor, the king of Moab? Did he ever contend against Israel or ever go to war against them?
26. All the while Israel lived in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities that are along the Arnon – three hundred years! – how is it that you did not try to recover them during that time?
27. So, I have not sinned against you, but you are doing me wrong in making war against me. Jehovah, the Judge, be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon!”
28. But the king of the children of Ammon would not hear the words of Jephthah that he sent to him.
- ¶29. Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and he passed through Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead, he passed over to the children of Ammon.
30. And Jephthah made a vow to Jehovah and said, “If you completely give the sons of Ammon into my hand,

31. then whatever comes out the door of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the children of Ammon shall be Jehovah's, and I will offer it as a burnt offering."
- ¶32. Then Jephthah passed over to the sons of Ammon to fight against them, and Jehovah gave them into his hand,
33. and he struck them down from Aroer until you come to Minnith, twenty towns, even to Abel-keramim, a very great slaughter, and the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.
- ¶34. Then Jephthah came to Mizpah, to his house, and behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and dancing, and she was his only child; he had no other, 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, and you have brought calamity upon me! I have opened my mouth before Jehovah, and I cannot undo it."
36. But she said to him, "My father, *if* you have opened your mouth to Jehovah, do to me according to what came forth from your mouth, since Jehovah has wrought vengeance for you upon your enemies, upon the sons of Ammon."
37. And she said to her father, "Let this thing be done for me. Withhold *your hand* from me for two months, that I may go up and down on the mountains and weep for my virginity, I and my friends."
38. And he said, "Go." And he sent her away for two months, and she went, she and her friends, and she wept on the mountains for her virginity.
39. And it came to pass at the end of two months that she returned to her father, and he did to her according to his oath which he had made, and she had not known a man. And it became a statute in Israel
40. that, from year to year, the daughters of Israel should go to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite for four days each year.

Judges 12

- ¶1. And the army of Ephraim was summoned, and it crossed over to Zaphon, and they said to Jephthah, "Why did you cross over to fight against the sons of Ammon without calling us to come with you? We will burn down your house with fire on top of you!"
2. And Jephthah said to them, "I was a man in a great dispute, I and my people, with the sons of Ammon, and I called for you, but you did not rescue me from their hand.
3. And when I saw that you would provide no deliverance, I took my life into my own hand and crossed over to the sons of Ammon, and Jehovah gave them into my hand. So, why have you come up to me this day to fight against me?"
4. Then Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and fought Ephraim, and the men of Gilead struck Ephraim down because they had said, "You Gileadites are fugitives from Ephraim and from Manasseh."
5. And Gilead captured the fords of Jordan belonging to Ephraim, and it came to pass when the fugitives of Ephraim would say, "Let me go over," then the men of Gilead would say to him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" And he would say, "No."
6. And they would say to him, "If you will, say 'shibboleth.'" But he would say, "sibboleth", not being able to say it rightly. Then they would seize him and kill him at the fords of Jordan. And there fell at that time 42,000 men from Ephraim.
7. And Jephthah judged Israel six years. And Jephthah the Gileadite died, and he was buried in *one of* the cities of Gilead.

- ¶8. And after him, Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel.
9. And he had thirty sons. And he sent thirty daughters abroad, and he brought in from abroad thirty daughters for his sons. And he judged Israel seven years.
10. And Ibzan died, and he was buried in Bethlehem.
- ¶11. And after him, Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel. And he judged Israel ten years.
12. And Elon the Zebulunite died, and he was buried in Aijalon in the territory of Zebulun.
- ¶13. And after him, Abdon ben-Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel.
14. And he had forty sons and thirty grandsons who rode on seventy donkeys. And he judged Israel eight years.
15. And Abdon ben-Hillel the Pirathonite died, and he was buried in Pirathon in the territory of Ephraim, in the hill country of the Amalekites.

Judges 13

- ¶1. And the children of Israel began again to do what was evil in the eyes of Jehovah, and so, Jehovah gave them over into the hand of the Philistines forty years.
- ¶2. And there was a certain man from Zorah, from the family of the Danites, and his name was Manoah, and his wife was barren and could not bear children.
3. And an angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold now, you are barren and cannot bear, but you have conceived and will bear a son.
4. So, take heed now, I warn you, that you do not drink wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing,
5. for behold, you are with child, and you will bear a son, and no razor shall come upon his head, but the boy will be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he will begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.
6. And the woman went and told her husband, saying, "A man of God came to me, and his appearance was like the appearance of an angel of God, very fearsome, but I did not ask him where he was from, and he did not tell me his name.
7. And he said to me, 'Behold, you have conceived and will bear a son. So, for the time being, do not drink wine or strong drink, nor eat anything unclean, because the young man will be a Nazirite to God from the womb to the day of his death.'
- ¶8. And Manoah made entreaty to Jehovah, and he said, "O my Lord, let the man of God you sent come again to us, I pray, and show us how we are to deal with the child that will be born."
9. And God heard the voice of Manoah, and the angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field, but Manoah her husband was not with her.
10. And the woman made haste and ran, and she told her husband, and said to him, "Behold, he has appeared to me, the man who came to me that day!"
11. And Manoah rose up and followed his wife and came to the man, and he said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to the woman?" And he said, "I am."
12. And Manoah said, "May your words now come to pass! What will the boy's rule and work be?"
13. And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "Let the woman observe all that I said to her.
14. She may not eat anything that comes from the vineyard, nor shall she drink either wine or strong drink, nor shall she eat anything unclean. Let her observe all that I have commanded her."

15. And Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "Let us detain you, if you will, while we prepare a kid of the goats for you."
16. And the angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "If you detain me, I will not eat of your food. But if you prepare a burnt offering, you should offer it to Jehovah." (For Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD.)
17. And Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, "What is your name, so that when your sayings come to pass, we may do you honor?"
18. And the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why do you ask for my name, seeing it is secret?"
19. Then Manoah took a kid of the goats, and the grain offering, and made an offering on the rock to Jehovah. And he began to act wondrously as Manoah and his wife looked on.
20. And it came to pass that as the flame from the altar went up toward heaven, the angel of the LORD went up in the flame of the altar. And when Manoah and his wife saw it, they fell on their faces to the earth.
21. (And the angel of Jehovah did not again appear to Manoah or to his wife.) Then Manoah knew that he was the angel of the LORD.
22. And Manoah said to his wife, "We are doomed to die because we have seen God!"
23. And his wife said to him, "If it pleased Jehovah to kill us, He would not have accepted a burnt offering and grain offering from our hand, and He would not have shown us all these things, and He would not now have made us hear such a thing."
24. And the woman gave birth to a son, and she called his name Samson. And the boy grew, and Jehovah blessed him.
25. And the Spirit of the LORD began to move on him in Mahaneh-Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

Judges 14

- ¶1. And Samson went down to Timnah, and he saw a woman in Timnah among the daughters of the Philistines.
2. Then he went up and told his father and his mother, and said, "I have seen a woman among the daughters of the Philistines in Timnah; so, get her for me to wife, now!"
3. But his father and his mother said to him, "Is there not one among the daughters of your kinsmen or a woman among all my people, that you would go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me! For she pleases me."
4. Now, his father and his mother did not know that it was of the LORD, for He was setting up a situation with the Philistines because at that time, the Philistines ruled over Israel.

- ¶5. And Samson went down with his father and his mother to Timnah. And he came to the vineyards of Timnah, and behold, a young lion came at him, roaring.
6. And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he tore him apart as if tearing a young goat, and there was nothing in his hand. And he did not tell his father or his mother what he had done.
7. And he went on down and spoke to the woman, and she pleased Samson.
8. And after some days, he returned to take her, but he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion. And behold, a swarm of bees, was within the lion's dead body, and honey.
9. And he scraped out some into his hands, and then went on, eating as he went. And he came to his father and his mother and gave some to them, and they ate it. But he did not tell them he scraped the honey out of the lion's carcass.

10. And his father went down to the woman, and Samson made a feast there, for the young men used to do that.
 11. And it came to pass that when they saw him, they brought thirty attendants so that they might be with him.
 12. And Samson said to them, "Let me, if I may, put a riddle to you. If you declare it to me within the seven days of the feast, and figure it out, then I will give you thirty linen coats and thirty changes of raiment.
 13. But if you are not able to declare it to me, then you must give me thirty linen coats and thirty changes of raiment." And they said to him, "Put forth your riddle, that we may hear it!"
 14. And he said to them, "Out of the eater came forth food, and out of the powerful came forth sweetness." And for three days, they were not able to declare the riddle.
 15. And it came to pass before the seventh day that they said to Samson's wife, "Entice your husband to explain the riddle for us, lest we burn you and your father's house with fire. You invited us in order to plunder us, didn't you? Didn't *you!*"
 16. So, Samson's wife wept upon him, saying, "You just hate me instead of loving me! You put forth a riddle to the children of my people, but to me, you did not explain it." And he said to her, "Behold, I haven't explained it to my father or my mother, but I am going to explain it to you."
 17. And she kept weeping before him the seven days during which the feast continued. And it came to pass on the seventh day that he explained it to her because she pressed him, and she then explained the riddle to the sons of her people.
 18. And the men of the city told 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, "Had you not plowed with my heifer, you would not have found out my riddle."
 19. Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and he went down to Ashkelon, and he killed thirty of them, and took their spoil, and gave the garments to the men who explained the riddle, but his anger was burning. And he went up to his father's house.
- ¶20. But Samson's wife became *the wife* of his companion, who had been his friend.

Judges 15

- ¶1. And it came to pass after some days, during the days of wheat harvest, that Samson went to visit his wife with a kid of the goats, for he said, "I will go in to my wife, in her chamber." But her father would not allow him to go in.
2. And her father said, "I truly thought that you utterly hated her, and so, I gave her to your companion. Isn't her younger sister prettier than she is? I beg you, take this one instead of her."
3. And Samson said to them, "I will be blameless this time regarding the Philistines when I do them damage."
4. And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and he took torches, and turned *the foxes* tail to tail, and put a torch between the two tails.
5. Then he set the torches on fire and released *the foxes* into the Philistines' fields of standing grain, and he burned up both the stacked and the standing grain, as well as the olive orchards.
6. And the Philistines said, "Who did this?" And they said, "Samson, the Timnite's son-in-law, because he took his wife and gave her to his companion." And the Philistines went up and burned her and her father with fire.
7. Then Samson said to them, "Since you have done such a thing, I will surely avenge myself of you, and afterwards, I will stop."

8. And he struck them down, hip and thigh, with a great slaughter, and then went down and sat in a cleft of the cliff of Etam.
9. And the Philistines went up and camped in Judah, and they made raids in Lehi.
10. And the men of Judah said, "Why have you come up against us?" And they said, "To bind Samson. We have come up to do to him as he did to us."
11. And three thousand men of Judah went down to the cleft of the cliff of Etam and said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? So, what is this you have done to us?" And he said to them, "As they did to me, so have I done to them."
12. And they said to him, "We have come down to tie you up and hand you over to the Philistines." And Samson said to them, "Swear to me that you, yourselves, will not harm me."
13. And they answered him, saying, "No. But we will tie you up tight and give you into their hand, but we ourselves will not kill you." And they bound him with two new cords and brought him up from the cliff.
14. And when he came to Lehi, the Philistines shouted when they met him, but the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily, and the cords that were on his arms became like strands of flax that is burned in the fire, and his bonds melted off his hands.
15. And he found a fresh jawbone⁷ of an ass, and he reached out his hand and took it, and killed a thousand men with it.
16. And Samson said, "With the jawbone of an ass, a heap – two heaps! With the jawbone of an ass have I slain a thousand men!"
17. And it came to pass when he had ceased speaking that he threw the jawbone from his hand, and called that place Ramath-Lehi.⁸
18. Then he grew very thirsty, and he called on Jehovah, and said, "You gave this great salvation by the hand of your servant, and now, I am dying of thirst and I will fall into the hand of the uncircumcised!"
19. And God split open a hollow place that is in Lehi, and water came out of it. And he drank, and his spirit revived, and he lived. Therefore, he called its name, En-Hakkore.⁹ It is in Lehi to this day.
20. And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years.

Judges 16

- ¶1. Then Samson went to Gaza, and he saw there a woman prostitute and went in to her.
2. And one told the Gazites, "Samson has come here!" So, they gathered around and lay in wait for him all that night at the city gate. And they stayed quiet all that night, thinking, "At morning light, we will kill him."
3. And Samson lay until the middle of the night, and rose at midnight and took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two doorposts, and he pulled them up with the bar, and put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the hill that is before Hebron.

- ¶4. And it came to pass after this that he fell in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek, and her name was Delilah.

⁷ "Lehi" means "jawbone".

⁸ *Ramath-Lehi* means "The Height of Lehi".

⁹ *En-hakkore* means "the spring of him who called".

5. And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, “Seduce him and find out wherein his great strength lies and how we may overpower him, that we may bind him to humble him, and each one of us will give you eleven hundred pieces of silver”.
6. So Delilah said to Samson, “Tell me, I beg you, wherein your great strength lies, and how you might be bound so as to humble you.”
7. And Samson said to her, “If they bind me with seven damp cords that have not been dried, then I will become weak, and be like the next man.”
8. And 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 an ambush waiting in the chamber. Then she said, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” And he snapped off the cords as a thread of flax snaps when it touches fire. So, he had not revealed *the secret of his strength*.
10. And Delilah said to Samson, “Behold, you deceived me and told me lies. Tell me, please, how you might be bound.”
11. And he said to her, “If they bind me tightly with new ropes that have not been used for work, then I will become weak, and be like the next man.”
12. So Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them. Then she said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” (For the ambush was waiting in the chamber.) But he snapped the ropes from off his arms like a thread.
13. And Delilah said to Samson, “Until now you have deceived me and told me lies. Tell me how you can be bound!” And he said to her, “If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web of the loom, *I will become weak.*”
14. And so, she fastened *his locks* with the pin, and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” And he awoke from his sleep and pulled away the pin of the loom and the web.
15. And she said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when your heart is not with me? These three times, you have deceived me and not told me wherein your great strength lies.”
16. And so it happened that because she pressed him with her words every day, and hounded him, and vexed his soul to death,
17. that he revealed to her his whole heart and said to her, “No razor has come upon my head because I am a Nazirite of God from my mother’s womb. If I am shaved, my strength will leave me, and I will become weak, and be like any man.”
18. And when Delilah saw that he had divulged to her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines and said, “Come up once more!” For he had divulged to her all his heart. And the lords of the Philistines came to her and brought the silver in their hand.
19. And she made him sleep upon her knees, and then summoned the man and had *him* shave off the seven locks of his head. Thus she began his humiliation, for his strength left him.
20. And she said, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” Then he woke up from his sleep, and he said, “I will go out just like before and shake myself free.” But he did not know that Jehovah had departed from him.
21. And the Philistines seized him, and they bore out his eyes, and they led him down to Gaza and bound him with bronze shackles. And he was a grinder in the house of prisoners.
22. But the hair of his head began to grow out after it was shaved.
- ¶23. And the lords of the Philistines were gathered together to make a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to celebrate. And they said, “Our god has given Samson our great enemy into our hand!”

24. And when the people saw him, they praised their god, for they said, “Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our land, and the one who slew so many of us!”
25. And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, “Call for Samson! Let him entertain us!” So, they called for Samson from the house of prisoners, and he made sport before them. Then they made him stand between the pillars.
26. And Samson said to the young man who was holding him by the hand, “Let go of me so that I can feel the pillars that this building rests upon, so I can lean on them.”
27. Now, the house was filled with men and women, and all the lords of the Philistines were there. And on the roof were about three-thousand men and women who had been looking on while Samson entertained.
28. And Samson cried out to Jehovah, and said, “My Lord Jehovah! Remember me, and strengthen me, I beseech you, just this one time, O God, that with one act of vengeance, I might avenge myself of the Philistines for my two eyes!”
29. Then Samson grasped the two middle pillars upon which the house rested, and he braced himself against them, his right hand on one, and his left hand on the other.
30. And Samson said, “Let me die with the Philistines!” And he bowed himself with *all his* might, and the house collapsed upon the lords and upon all the people that were in it. And so it was that the dead that he killed at his death were many more than the ones he killed while he lived.
31. And his brothers, and all the house of his father, went down and took him, and they brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol, in the burial place of Manoah his father. And he had judged Israel twenty years.

Judges 17

- ¶1. Then there was a man from the hill country of Ephraim, and his name was Micaiah.
2. And he said to his mother, “The eleven hundred pieces of silver of yours that were taken, and about which you uttered a curse, and even spoke it in my ears – behold, the silver is with me. I took it.” And his mother said, “Blessed of Jehovah be my son!”
3. And he restored the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother. And his mother said, “I had solemnly dedicated the silver to Jehovah from my hand for my son, to make a graven image and a molten image, and then I will bring it back to you.”
4. So he restored the silver to his mother, and his mother took two hundred pieces of silver and gave it to the silversmith, and he made it into a graven image and a molten image. And it was in the house of Micaiah.
5. Now, the man Micah had a house of gods, and he made an ephod, and teraphim, and he ordained one of his sons, and he became his priest.
6. In those days, there was no king in Israel; each man did what was right in his own eyes.

- ¶7. And there was a young man of Bethlehem-Judah of the family of Judah, and he was a Levite, and he was sojourning there.
8. And the man went from the city, from Bethlehem-Judah, to sojourn wherever he could find to make his living, and he came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah.
9. And Micah said to him, “Where’d you come from?” And he said to him, “I am a Levite from Bethlehem-Judah, and I am going to sojourn wherever I can find *a position*.”
10. And Micah said, “Stay with me, and be my father and priest, and I will give you ten silver pieces per year, and a suit of clothes, and your living.” So, the Levite *stayed*.
11. And the Levite agreed to dwell with the man, and the young man became to him as one of his sons.

12. And Micah ordained the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and he was in the house of Micah.
13. And Micah said, "Now I know that Jehovah will do me good, because I have a Levite for a priest."

Judges 18

- ¶1. In those days, there was no king in Israel. And in those days, the tribe of the Danites was looking for an inheritance for himself to live in because until that day, an inheritance had not fallen to it among the tribes of Israel.
2. So, the children of Dan sent beyond their borders five men from their family, mighty men, from Zorah and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land and explore it. And they said to them, "Go explore the land." And they came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and they lodged there.
3. When they were near the house of Micah, they took note of the voice of the young man, the Levite, and they turned aside there. And they said to him, "Who brought you here?" and "What are you doing in this place?" and "What do you have here?"
4. And he told them, "Thus and so has Micah done for me, and hired me, and I am his priest."
5. And they said to him, "Inquire of God, if you will, that we may know if the journey on which we are going will prosper."
6. And the priest said to them, "Go in peace! Before Jehovah is your way in which you go."
- ¶7. Then the five men left, and they came to Laish. And they observed how the people in it were living confidently, after the custom of the Sidonians, undisturbed and unsuspecting, and no one in the land was lacking a thing, *but* possessed wealth.¹⁰ Moreover, they were far from the Sidonians and had no dealings with any man.
8. And they came to their brothers at Zorah and Eshtaol, and their brothers said to them, "What *news*?"
9. And they said, "Rise, and let us go up against them! For we saw the land, and behold, it is very good. And you are sitting still! Do not be slow to go and move in to possess the land!"
10. When you go in, you will come to an unsuspecting people and a spacious land. Surely, God has given it into your hand, a place where there is no lack of anything that is in the earth!"
11. So, some of the family of the Danites set out from there, six hundred men from Zorah and Eshtaol, girt with weapons of war.
12. And they went up and camped in Kirjath-jearim in Judah. That is why they called that place Mahaneh-Dan¹¹ to this day. Behold, it is west of Kirjath-jearim.
13. And they passed on from there to the hill country of Ephraim, and they came to the house of Micah.
14. Then the five men who had gone up to spy out the territory of Laish spoke and said to their kinsmen, "Did you know that among these buildings is an ephod and teraphim, and a graven image and a molten image? So now, think about what you should do."
15. And they turned aside to that place and entered the house of the young man, the Levite, the house belonging to Micah. And they asked him of his welfare.
16. Now, the six hundred men who were of the sons of Dan, girt with their weapons of war, stood at the entrance of the gate

¹⁰ Hebrew uncertain.

¹¹ That is, "Camp of Dan".

17. while the five men who went to spy out the land went in there to take the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. And the priest stood at the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men girt with weapons of war.
18. But those men went in Micah's house and took the graven image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image. And the priest said to them, "What are you doing?"
19. And they said to him, "Shut up! Put your hand over your mouth and come with us and be a father and priest to us. Is it better for you to be priest for one man's house or to be priest for a tribe, and for a family in Israel?"
20. And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the company.
21. So, they turned and went away, putting the children, and the cattle, and the goods ahead of them.
22. They were a good distance from Micah's house when the men who were in the houses close to Micah's house were called together, and they overtook the children of Dan.
23. And they cried out to the children of Dan, and they turned around and said to Micah, "What's the matter with you, that you have assembled *this company*?"
24. And he said, "You took my gods and the priest that I made, and went away! And what is left for me! So, how is it that you say to me, 'What's the matter with you?'"
25. And the sons of Dan said to him, "Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest hot-tempered men fall upon you and you lose your life, along with the life of your household."
26. Then the children of Dan went on their way. And Micah saw that they were too strong for him, so he turned and went back to his house.
27. And they took what Micah had made and the priest that was his, and they moved in on Laish, on a people undisturbed and unsuspecting, and they struck them with the edge of the sword and burned their city with fire.
28. There was no deliverer because it was far from Sidon, and they had no dealings with anyone. And it was in the valley that is near Beth-rehob. And they rebuilt the city and began living in it.
29. And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan, their father, who was born to Israel. However, Laish was name of the city at first.
30. And the children of Dan set up for themselves the graven image, and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses,¹² he and his sons, were priests for the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land.
31. And they set up for themselves Micah's graven image that he made all the days the house of God was in Shiloh.

Judges 19

- ¶1. Now, it came to pass in those days when there was no king in Israel that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the far side of the hill country of Ephraim, and he took for himself a woman from Bethlehem-Judah as a concubine.
2. But his concubine played the harlot against him, and went away from him to her father's house, to Bethlehem-Judah. And she was there for a period of four months.
3. Then her husband arose and went after her, to speak kindly to her, to bring back what was his, and with him were his servant and a couple of asses. Then she brought him into the house of her father, and when the girl's father saw him, he rejoiced to meet him.

¹² Many manuscripts have "Gershom, the son of Manasseh".

4. And his father-in-law, the girl's father, compelled him to stay with him three days, and so, they ate and drank and lodged there.
5. And it came to pass on the fourth day, that they arose early in the morning, and he rose up to depart, but the girl's father said to his son-in-law, "Strengthen your heart with a bit of bread, and afterward, you may go."
6. So, they both sat down together and ate and drank, and then the girl's father said to the man, "Be content, I pray you, to stay tonight and let your heart be merry."
7. And the man rose up to leave, but his father-in-law urged him. So, he sat down and stayed there that night.
8. And he arose early in the morning of the fifth day to go, but the girl's father said to him, "Strengthen your heart, I pray you, and tarry until the day declines." And so, the two of them ate.
9. Then the man rose up to go, he and his concubine and his servant, but his father-in-law, the girl's father, said to him, "Behold now, the day is fading away to evening. Stay here tonight, I pray you. Behold, the day is drawing to a close. Spend the night here and let your heart be merry. Then you can get up early tomorrow for your journey and go to your tent."
10. But the man was unwilling to spend the night, and he rose up and went. And he arrived opposite Jebus (the same is Jerusalem), and with him were a pair of saddled asses, and his concubine was with him.
11. They were close to Jebus, and the day was far gone, and so, his servant said to his master, "Come, if you will, and let's turn aside to this city of the Jebusites and spend the night in it."
12. But his master said to him, "We will not turn aside there, into a city of foreigners, where there are none of the children of Israel. But let's pass on toward Gibeah."
13. Then he said to his servant, "Come on, and let's draw near one of these places and spend the night in Gibeah or in Ramah."
14. So, they passed on and went their way, and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin.
15. So, they turned aside there to go in to spend the night in Gibeah. And he went in and sat down in the city square, but no man would take them into his house to spend the night.
16. And behold, at evening an old man came in from his work in the field. Now, the man hailed from the hill country of Ephraim, but he was sojourning in Gibeah, and the men of that place were Benjaminites.
17. And he lifted up his eyes and saw the man who was a traveler in the city square, and the old man said, "Where are you going, and where did you come from?"
18. And he said to him, "We're passing through, from Bethlehem-Judah to the far side of the hill country of Ephraim. I am from there, and I went to Bethlehem-Judah, and I am going to the house of the LORD, but there is no man to take me into his house.
19. Yet, there is both straw and fodder for our donkeys, and there is bread and wine for me, and for your handmaid, and for the young man who is with your servants. There is no lack of anything."
20. And the old man said, "Though you have enough, all your needs will be on me. Only, you must not spend the night in the square."
21. Then he brought him into his house, and he gave provender to the asses, and he washed their feet, and they ate and drank.
22. They were making their heart merry when, behold, men of the city, men who were sons of Belial, surrounded the house, pounding on the door, and they spoke to the old man, the master of the house, saying, "Bring out the man who came into your house, that we may know him!"
23. And the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brothers, do not do this wickedness, I beg you, seeing that this is a man who has come into my house! Do not do this disgraceful thing!"

24. Behold, my virgin daughter and his concubine. I will bring them out, if you will, and you may humble them and do to them whatever seems good in your eyes, but to this man, you must not do this disgraceful thing!”
25. But the men would not listen to him. Then the man grabbed his concubine and brought her out to them, and they knew her and abused her all that night until morning, and they let her go at the break of dawn.
26. And as morning was dawning, the woman came and fell down at the door of the man’s house where her master was, until it was light.
27. And her master arose in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go on his way. And behold, the woman, his concubine, was fallen down at the door of the house, with her hands on the threshold.
28. And he said to her, “Get up, and let’s go.” But there was no response. Then he put her on the donkey, and the man rose up and went to his place.
29. And he went into his house and took a knife, and then he took hold of his concubine and divided her, limb by limb, into twelve pieces and sent her into every territory in Israel.
30. And it came to pass that everyone who saw it said, “Such as this has not happened or been seen since the day the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt until this day! Consider it; take counsel; and then speak!”

Judges 20

- ¶1. Then all the children of Israel came out, from Dan to Beersheba, and the territory of Gilead, and the congregation assembled 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 men, footmen who drew the sword.
- ¶3. (Now, the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel were gone up to Mizpah.) And the children of Israel said, “Tell us, how did this wickedness happen?”
4. And the man, the Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, answered and said, “At Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin, I went in, I and my concubine, to spend the night.
5. And the rulers of Gibeah rose up against me and surrounded the house about me at night. Me, they thought to kill, and my concubine they humbled, and she died.
6. Then I took my concubine and cut her into pieces, and I sent her throughout the extent of the inheritance of Israel because they had done wickedness and a disgraceful deed in Israel.
7. Behold, all you sons of Israel! Give your decision and counsel here!”
8. Then all the people rose up as one man, saying, “Not a man will go to his tent, and not a man will turn aside to his house,
9. but this is the thing that we will do now to Gibeah: *we will go up* against it by lot.
10. And we will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand of ten thousand, to take provisions for the militia to use when they go against Geba of Benjamin because of all the outrage which *Benjamin* had done in Israel.
11. And all the men of Israel gathered against the city, united as one man.
- ¶12. And the heads of Israel sent men to all the heads of Benjamin, saying, “What is this evil that was done among you?”
13. Hand over the men, the sons of Belial, who are in Gibeah now, so that we may put them to death and purge Israel of evil!” But Benjamin would not heed the voice of their brothers, the sons of Israel.

14. And the sons of Benjamin came together out of their cities to Gibeah, to go out and do battle against the sons of Israel.
15. And from their cities, the sons of Benjamin mustered twenty-six thousand men that day who drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who numbered seven hundred chosen men.
16. Among all this company were seven hundred chosen men, left-handed, all of whom could sling a stone at a hair and not miss.
- ¶17. And, excluding Benjamin, the men of Israel mustered four hundred thousand men who drew the sword, each one a man of war.
18. Then they arose and went up to Bethel, and they inquired of God. And the sons of Israel said, "Who shall first go up for us to the battle with the sons of Benjamin?" And Jehovah said, "Judah first."
19. So the sons of Israel arose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah.
- ¶20. And the men of Israel went out for the battle against Benjamin, and the men of Israel set the battle in order against them at Gibeah.
21. And the sons of Benjamin went out from Gibeah, and in Israel that day, they destroyed to the earth twenty-two thousand men.
22. But the people, the men of Israel, strengthened themselves to set the battle in order again in the place where they set it on the first day.
23. However, the sons of Israel had gone up and wept before Jehovah until the evening, and they had enquired of Jehovah, saying, "Am I again to draw near for battle against the sons of Benjamin my brother?" And Jehovah said, "Go up against him."
- ¶24. So, the sons of Israel drew near the sons of Benjamin on the second day.
25. And Benjamin went out from Gibeah to meet them the second day, and once more, they destroyed to the earth eighteen thousand men, all of them men who drew the sword.
26. Then all the sons of Israel went up, and all the people, and they came to Bethel and wept, and sat there before Jehovah, and they fasted that day until evening, and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before Jehovah.
27. And the sons of Israel enquired of Jehovah (the ark of the covenant of God was there during those days,
28. and Phinehas ben-Eleazar the son of Aaron stood before it in those days), saying, "Am I to go out yet again for the battle against the sons of Benjamin my brother, or shall I desist?" And Jehovah said, "Go up! For tomorrow, I will give him into your hand."
29. And Israel set ambushments all around Gibeah.
- ¶30. Then the sons of Israel went up against the sons of Benjamin on the third day and set themselves in array against Gibeah, as *they had done* the other times.
31. And when the sons of Benjamin came out against the people, they were drawn away from the city, and they began to strike some of the people down as before, on the highways (one of which goes up to Bethel, and one to Gibeah) and in the field, about thirty of the men of Israel.
32. And the sons of Benjamin said, "They are smitten before us as at the first!" But the sons of Israel had said, "Let's flee and draw them away from the city to the highways."
33. Then all the men of Israel rose from their place and got in battle order at Baal-tamar, while Israel's ambush burst forth from its place, from Maareh-geba.
34. And ten thousand chosen men from all Israel came against Gibeah, and the battle was fierce, and they did not know that disaster was closing in on them.

- ¶35. And Jehovah struck Benjamin down before Israel, and the sons of Israel that day destroyed of Benjamin twenty-five thousand one hundred men, all of them men who drew the sword.
36. Then the sons of Benjamin saw that they were smitten and that the men of Israel had given place to Benjamin because they were relying on the ambush they had set against Gibeah.
37. And the men in ambush had hurried and rushed to Gibeah, and the men in ambush had spread out and struck the whole city with the edge of the sword.
38. Now, the appointed signal for the men of Israel from *those in* ambush was that they would send up a great cloud of smoke from the city.
39. And the men of Israel turned back in the battle when Benjamin started to strike down some of the men of Israel, about thirty men, thinking, "Surely, they are utterly smitten, as in the first battle!"
40. But when the cloud began to rise from the city, a pillar of smoke, then Benjamin turned and looked behind him, and behold, the whole city was going up toward heaven.
41. Then the men of Israel turned, and the men of Benjamin were dismayed when they saw that disaster was come upon them.
42. So they turned before the men of Israel toward the way of the wilderness, but the battle overtook them, and those from the cities began destroying them, they being *caught* in the middle.
43. They surrounded Benjamin; they hunted him down easily; they trod him down as far as in front of Gibeah, toward the east.
44. And there fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men, mighty men, all of them.
45. And they turned and fled toward the wilderness, to the Rock of Rimmon, but on the highways, they gleaned of them five thousand men, and then pressed hard after them to Gidom, and of them, they killed two thousand men.
46. And it came to pass that all who fell that day from Benjamin were twenty-five thousand men who drew the sword, all of them mighty men.
47. And six hundred men had turned and fled toward the wilderness to the Rock of Rimmon (and they remained at the Rock of Rimmon four months).
48. Then the men of Israel returned to the children of Benjamin and slew them with the edge of the sword, from the innocent one in the city, to the beast, to everything found in it; they also set on fire all the cities that were found.

Judges 21

- ¶1. Now, the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpah, saying, "Not one of us will give his daughter to Benjamin for a wife."
2. And the people went to Bethel, and they stayed there before God until evening, and they lifted up their voice and wept very bitterly,
3. and they said, "Why, O Jehovah, God of Israel, has this happened in Israel, that there should be one tribe lost to Israel this day?"
4. And it came to pass the next day that the people arose early and built an altar there, and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings.
- ¶5. And the children of Israel said, "Who is there among all the tribes of Israel who did not come up to Jehovah with the assembly?" For there had been a great oath made concerning whoever would not come up to Jehovah at Mizpah, saying, "He shall surely be put to death!"
6. And the children of Israel felt compassion for Benjamin their brother, and they said, "Today, one tribe has been cut off from Israel."

7. What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since we have taken an oath before Jehovah not to give our daughters to them for wives?"
8. And they said, "Is there one among the tribes of Israel that did not go up to Jehovah at Mizpah?" And behold, no one had come to the camp from Jabesh-gilead, to the assembly.
9. For when the people were mustered, behold, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead was there.
10. And so, the congregation sent twelve thousand valiant men there, having commanded them, saying, "Go smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, including the wives and the children.
11. And this is the thing which you are to do: every male and every woman who has known a man's bed-chamber, you are to devote to destruction."
12. And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins who had not known a man by lying with him, and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which was in the land of Canaan.
13. And all the congregation sent and spoke to the sons of Benjamin who were at the Rock of Rimmon, and they spoke peaceably to them.
14. And Benjamin returned then, and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead, yet even so, they did not find enough for them.
15. And the people were moved with pity for Benjamin because Jehovah had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.
16. Then the elders of the congregation said, "What are we to do for wives for those who remain, for women have been eradicated out of Benjamin?"
17. And they said, "*There must be* an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe not be blotted out of Israel.
18. And we ourselves cannot give them wives from our daughters." (For the children of Israel had taken an oath, saying, "Cursed be he who gives a wife to Benjamin!")
19. Then they said, "Behold, there is a yearly feast to Jehovah at Shiloh" (which is north of Bethel, to the east of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and southward toward Lebonah).
20. And they commanded the sons of Benjamin, saying, "Go and lie in wait in the vineyards,
21. and watch. And behold, when the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in the dances, then you come out of the vineyards and seize for yourselves, each one, a wife for himself from the daughters of Shiloh, and then go to the land of Benjamin.
22. And it will be that, when their fathers or brothers come to complain to us, we will say to them, 'Show them mercy for our sakes, for we did not take for each one his wife during the war. And since you did not give them to them, you are not now guilty.'"
23. And the sons of Benjamin did so; they took wives, according to their number, whom they abducted from among those who were dancing. And they went and returned to their inheritance, and they rebuilt the cities and lived in them.
24. And the children of Israel then departed from there, each to his own tribe and to his own family, and they went out from there, each to his own inheritance.
25. In those days there was no king in Israel. Every man did what was right in his own eyes.