Judges

1 After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel
inquired of the LORD, “Who will go up for us
first against the Canaanites to fight them?”
2 The LORD said, “Judah will go up. Look, I
have given the land into his hand.”
3 Judah said to Simeon his brother, “Come up
with me into my allotment, and let us fight the
Canaanites. I too will go with you into your
allotment.” So Simeon went with him.
4 Judah went up, and the LORD gave the
Canaanites and Perizzites into their hand. They
struck down ten thousand men at Bezek.
5 They found Adoni-bezek at Bezek and fought
against him. They struck down the Canaanites
and Perizzites.
6 Adoni-bezek fled, but they pursued him,
caught him, and cut off his thumbs and big toes.
7 Adoni-bezek said, “Seventy kings with their
thumbs and big toes cut off used to pick up
scraps under my table. As I have done, so God
has repaid me.” They brought him to Jerusalem,
and he died there.
8 The descendants of Judah fought against
Jerusalem and captured it. They struck it with
the edge of the sword and set the city on fire.
9 Afterward the descendants of Judah went
down to fight the Canaanites living in the hill
country, the Negev, and the lowland.

10 Judah went against the Canaanites living in
Hebron, formerly called Kiriath-arba, and they
struck down Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai.
11 From there he went against the inhabitants
of Debir, formerly called Kiriath-sepher.
12 Caleb said, “To the man who attacks
Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give my
daughter Achsah as his wife.”
13 Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger
brother, captured it, and Caleb gave him his
daughter Achsah as his wife.
14 When she arrived, she urged him to ask her
father for the field. She dismounted from the
donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you
want?”
15 She said to him, “Give me a blessing. Since
you have given me land in the Negev, give me
springs of water too.” So Caleb gave her the
upper springs and the lower springs.
16 The descendants of the Kenite, Moses’
father-in-law, went up from the City of Palms
with the descendants of Judah into the
wilderness of Judah south of Arad. They went
and settled among the people.
17 Judah went with Simeon his brother, and
they struck down the Canaanites living in
Zephath and devoted it to destruction. The city
was called Hormah.
18 Judah captured Gaza with its territory,
Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its
territory.
19 The LORD was with Judah, and Judah took
possession of the hill country. But he could not

drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because
they had iron chariots.
20 They gave Hebron to Caleb, as Moses had
said, and he drove out the three sons of Anak
from there.
21 But the descendants of Benjamin did not
drive out the Jebusites living in Jerusalem. The
Jebusites have lived with the descendants of
Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.
22 The house of Joseph also went up against
Bethel, and the LORD was with them.
23 The house of Joseph spied out Bethel. The
city was formerly called Luz.
24 The scouts saw a man coming out of the city
and said to him, “Please show us the entrance to
the city, and we will show you kindness.”
25 He showed them the entrance to the city,
and they struck the city with the edge of the
sword. But they let the man and all his family go.
26 The man went to the land of the Hittites,
built a city, and called it Luz. That is its name to
this day.
27 Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants
of Beth-shean and its towns, or of Taanach and
its towns, or the inhabitants of Dor and its
towns, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its
towns, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its
towns. The Canaanites persisted in living in this
land.
28 When Israel grew strong, they subjected the
Canaanites to forced labor, but they did not
drive them out.
29 Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites
living in Gezer. The Canaanites lived among

them in Gezer.
30 Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of
Kitron or Nahalol. The Canaanites lived among
them and were subjected to forced labor.
31 Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of
Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, or
Rehob.
32 The Asherites lived among the Canaanites,
the inhabitants of the land, because they did not
drive them out.
33 Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of
Beth-shemesh or Beth-anath. He lived among
the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, but
the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath
were subjected to forced labor for them.
34 The Amorites pressed the descendants of
Dan into the hill country, for they would not let
them come down into the valley.
35 The Amorites persisted in living on Mount
Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim. But the hand
of the house of Joseph grew heavy upon them,
and they were subjected to forced labor.
36 The border of the Amorites ran from the
ascent of Akrabbim, from the rock upward.

2

1 The angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal
to Bochim and said, “I brought you up from
Egypt and brought you into the land I swore to
your ancestors. I said, ‘I will never break my
covenant with you.
2 You must make no covenant with the
inhabitants of this land. You must tear down

their altars.' But you have not obeyed my voice. What is this you have done?
3 So I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you. They will be thorns in your sides, and their gods will be a snare to you.' "
4 When the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the people of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept.
5 They called that place Bochim and sacrificed there to the LORD.
6 When Joshua sent the people away, the people of Israel went each to his inheritance to possess the land.
7 The people served the LORD all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work the LORD had done for Israel.
8 Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of one hundred ten.
9 They buried him within the territory of his inheritance at Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of Mount Gaash.
10 That whole generation was also gathered to its ancestors. Another generation arose after them that did not know the LORD or the work he had done for Israel.
11 The people of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals.
12 They forsook the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They followed other gods, from among the gods of the peoples around them, bowed down to them, and provoked the LORD to anger.

13 They forsook the LORD and served Baal and
the Ashtaroth.
14 The LORD's anger burned against Israel. He
gave them into the hands of plunderers who
plundered them, and he sold them into the
hands of their enemies all around. They could
no longer stand against their enemies.
15 Wherever they went out, the hand of the
LORD was against them to their harm, as the
LORD had said and as the LORD had sworn to
them. They were in great distress.
16 Then the LORD raised up judges who
delivered them from the hand of those who
plundered them.
17 But they would not listen even to their
judges. They prostituted themselves to other
gods and bowed down to them. They quickly
turned aside from the way their ancestors had
walked in obeying the commandments of the
LORD. They did not do so.
18 Whenever the LORD raised up judges for
them, the LORD was with the judge and
delivered them from the hand of their enemies
all the days of the judge. For the LORD was
moved to pity by their groaning because of those
who oppressed and afflicted them.
19 But when the judge died, they turned back
and acted more corruptly than their ancestors,
following other gods to serve them and bow
down to them. They did not abandon their
practices or their stubborn way.
20 The LORD's anger burned against Israel,
and he said, "Because this nation has

transgressed my covenant that I commanded
their ancestors and has not obeyed my voice,
21 I too will no longer drive out before them
any of the nations Joshua left when he died,
22 so that through them I may test Israel,
whether they will keep the way of the LORD and
walk in it as their ancestors did, or not."
23 So the LORD left these nations without
driving them out quickly, and he did not give
them into Joshua's hand.

3

1 These are the nations the LORD left to test
Israel through them—all those who had not
known any of the wars of Canaan.
2 He did this only so that the generations of the
people of Israel might know war, teaching it to
those who had not known it before:
3 the five rulers of the Philistines, all the
Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites who
lived in the hill country of Lebanon, from Mount
Baal-hermon to the entrance of Hamath.
4 They were left to test Israel, to know whether
they would obey the commandments of the
LORD, which he had commanded their
ancestors through Moses.
5 The people of Israel lived among the
Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the
Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites.
6 They took their daughters as wives and gave
their own daughters to their sons, and they
served their gods.

7 The people of Israel did evil in the sight of
the LORD. They forgot the LORD their God and
served the Baals and the Asheroth.
8 The LORD's anger burned against Israel, and
he sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim
king of Aram-naharaim. The people of Israel
served Cushan-rishathaim eight years.
9 Then the people of Israel cried out to the
LORD, and the LORD raised up a deliverer for
the people of Israel, who delivered them:
Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.
10 The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and
he judged Israel. He went out to war, and the
LORD gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Aram into
his hand. His hand prevailed against
Cushan-rishathaim.
11 The land had rest forty years. Then Othniel
son of Kenaz died.

12 The people of Israel again did evil in the
sight of the LORD. The LORD strengthened Eglon
king of Moab against Israel because they had
done evil in the sight of the LORD.
13 Eglon gathered the Ammonites and
Amalekites to himself. He went and defeated
Israel, and they took possession of the City of
Palms.
14 The people of Israel served Eglon king of
Moab eighteen years.

15 Then the people of Israel cried out to the
LORD, and the LORD raised up a deliverer for
them: Ehud son of Gera, a Benjamite, a
left-handed man. The people of Israel sent
tribute through him to Eglon king of Moab.

16 Ehud made himself a double-edged dagger
about a foot long and strapped it under his
clothing on his right thigh.
17 He presented the tribute to Eglon king of
Moab. Eglon was a very fat man.
18 When Ehud finished presenting the tribute,
he sent away the people who had carried it.
19 But he himself turned back from the idols
near Gilgal and said, “I have a secret message for
you, O king.” The king said, “Silence!” And all his
attendants went out from his presence.
20 Ehud came to him while he was sitting
alone in his cool upper room. Ehud said, “I have
a message from God for you.” And the king rose
from his seat.
21 Ehud reached with his left hand, took the
dagger from his right thigh, and thrust it into
the king’s belly.
22 The hilt also went in after the blade, and the
fat closed over the blade, for he did not pull the
dagger out of his belly. And the excrement came
out.
23 Ehud went out to the porch, closed the doors
of the upper room behind him, and locked them.
24 After he had gone out, the king’s servants
came and saw that the doors of the upper room
were locked. They said, “Surely he is relieving
himself in the cool chamber.”
25 They waited until they were embarrassed,
but he still did not open the doors of the upper
room. So they took the key and opened them,
and there was their lord lying dead on the floor.
26 Ehud escaped while they delayed. He

passed beyond the idols and escaped to Seirah.
27 When he arrived, he blew the ram's horn in
the hill country of Ephraim. The people of Israel
went down with him from the hill country, and
he went ahead of them.
28 He said to them, "Follow me, for the LORD
has given your enemies, the Moabites, into your
hand." They went down after him and seized the
fords of the Jordan leading to Moab. They did
not let anyone cross.
29 At that time they struck down about ten
thousand Moabites, all strong and valiant men.
Not one escaped.
30 So Moab was subdued that day under the
hand of Israel, and the land had rest eighty
years.
31 After him came Shamgar son of Anath, who
struck down six hundred Philistines with an
oxgoad. He too delivered Israel.

4

1 After Ehud died, the people of Israel again
did evil in the sight of the LORD.
2 The LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin
king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The
commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in
Harosheth-hagoyim.
3 The people of Israel cried out to the LORD,
for he had nine hundred iron chariots and had
severely oppressed the people of Israel for
twenty years.
4 Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of
Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time.

5 She used to sit under the palm of Deborah
between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of
Ephraim. The people of Israel came up to her for
judgment.
6 She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from
Kedesh-naphtali and said to him, “Has not the
LORD, the God of Israel, commanded, ‘Go, gather
at Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand
men from Naphtali and Zebulun.
7 I will draw Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s
army, with his chariots and his troops, to you at
the Kishon River, and I will give him into your
hand’?”
8 Barak said to her, “If you go with me, I will
go. But if you do not go with me, I will not go.”
9 She said, “I will certainly go with you. But the
honor will not be yours on the journey you are
taking, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the
hand of a woman.” So Deborah arose and went
with Barak to Kedesh.
10 Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali to
Kedesh. Ten thousand men went up following
him, and Deborah went up with him.
11 Now Heber the Kenite had separated from
the Kenites, the descendants of Hobab, Moses’
father-in-law. He had pitched his tent by the oak
at Zaanannim, near Kedesh.
12 They told Sisera that Barak son of Abinoam
had gone up to Mount Tabor.

13 Sisera summoned all his chariots, nine
hundred iron chariots, and all the troops with
him, from Harosheth-hagoyim to the Kishon
River.

14 Deborah said to Barak, “Arise! This is the
day the LORD has given Sisera into your hand.
Has not the LORD gone out before you?” So
Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten
thousand men following him.
15 The LORD routed Sisera, all his chariots, and
his whole army before Barak by the edge of the
sword. Sisera got down from his chariot and
fled on foot.
16 Barak pursued the chariots and the army as
far as Harosheth-hagoyim. Sisera’s whole army
fell by the edge of the sword; not one remained.
17 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 household
of Heber the Kenite.
18 Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him,
“Come in, my lord. Come in here. Do not be
afraid.” He went into her tent, and she covered
him with a blanket.
19 He said to her, “Please give me a little water
to drink, for I am thirsty.” She opened a skin of
milk, gave him a drink, and covered him.
20 He said to her, “Stand at the entrance of the
tent. If anyone comes and asks you, ‘Is there a
man here?’ say, ‘No.’ ”
21 Then Jael, Heber’s wife, took a tent peg and
a hammer in her hand. She approached him
quietly and drove the peg through his temple
into the ground. He was sound asleep and
exhausted, and he died.
22 As Barak was pursuing Sisera, Jael went out
to meet him and said, “Come, and I will show
you the man you are seeking.” He went in with

her, and there was Sisera lying dead, with the peg in his temple.
23 So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan before the people of Israel.
24 The hand of the people of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin king of Canaan until they destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

5

1 On that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang:
2 "When the leaders led in Israel, when the
people offered themselves willingly, bless
the LORD!
3 Hear, O kings!
Give ear, O rulers!
I, to the LORD, I will sing;
I will sing praise to the LORD, the God of
Israel.
4 LORD, when you went out from Seir, when you
marched from the fields of Edom, the
earth trembled.
The heavens also poured, the clouds also
poured water.
5 The mountains melted before the LORD, Sinai
itself before the LORD, the God of Israel.
6 In the days of Shamgar son of Anath, in the
days of Jael, the roads were deserted, and
travelers took winding paths.
7 Village life ceased in Israel;
it ceased until I, Deborah, arose, until I
arose as a mother in Israel.
8 They chose new gods;

then war was at the gates.
Was a shield or spear seen among forty
thousand in Israel?
9 My heart is with the commanders of Israel,
those who offered themselves willingly
among the people.
Bless the LORD!
10 You who ride on white female donkeys, you
who sit on carpets, and you who travel the
road, tell of it!
11 Far from the sound of archers, at the watering
places, there they recount the righteous
acts of the LORD, his righteous acts for the
villagers in Israel.
Then the people of the LORD went down to
the gates.
12 Awake, awake, Deborah!
Awake, awake, sing a song!
Arise, Barak!
Lead away your captives, son of Abinoam!
13 Then a remnant of the people came down
against the mighty;
the LORD came down for me against the
warriors.
14 From Ephraim came those whose roots were
in Amalek;
after you, Benjamin, with your peoples.
From Machir came down commanders, and
from Zebulun those who wield the
recruiter's staff.
15 The princes of Issachar were with Deborah;
Issachar was also with Barak, sent into the
valley at his heels.

Among the divisions of Reuben there were
great resolves of heart.
16 Why did you stay among the sheepfolds,
listening to the whistling for the flocks?
Among the divisions of Reuben there were
great searchings of heart.
17 Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan.
And Dan, why did he remain by the ships?
Asher sat at the seashore and stayed by his
harbors.
18 Zebulun was a people who risked their lives to
the death, as did Naphtali on the heights
of the field.
19 Kings came and fought;
then the kings of Canaan fought at Taanach,
by the waters of Megiddo.
They took no spoil of silver.
20 From heaven the stars fought;
from their courses they fought against
Sisera.
21 The Kishon River swept them away, the
ancient river, the Kishon River.
March on, my soul, in strength!
22 Then the horses' hooves pounded from the
galloping, the galloping of his mighty
steeds.
23 'Curse Meroz,' said the angel of the LORD.
'Bitterly curse its inhabitants, because they
did not come to the help of the LORD, to
the help of the LORD against the mighty.'
24 Most blessed of women is Jael, the wife of
Heber the Kenite;
most blessed of women in tents.

25 He asked for water;
she gave him milk.
In a noble's bowl she offered curds.
26 She reached out her hand for the tent peg, her
right hand for the workers' hammer.
She struck Sisera, crushed his head,
shattered and pierced his temple.
27 Between her feet he sank, he fell, he lay.
Between her feet he sank, he fell.
Where he sank, there he fell, slain.
28 Through the window Sisera's mother looked
out and cried through the lattice: 'Why is
his chariot so long in coming?
Why are the hoofbeats of his chariots
delayed?'
29 The wisest of her ladies answered her;
she too repeated her words to herself:
30 'Are they not finding and dividing the spoil?
A woman, two women for each man;
spoil of dyed cloth for Sisera, spoil of
embroidered dyed cloth, dyed cloth, two
pieces of embroidery for the necks of
those who take the spoil.'
31 So may all your enemies perish, LORD!
But may those who love him be like the sun
when it rises in its might."
And the land had rest forty years.

6

1 The people of Israel did evil in the sight of
the LORD, and the LORD gave them into the
hand of Midian for seven years.

2 The hand of Midian prevailed over Israel.
Because of Midian, the people of Israel prepared
mountain shelters, caves, and strongholds for
themselves.
3 Whenever Israel sowed, the Midianites, the
Amalekites, and the people of the east came up
against them.
4 They camped against them and destroyed the
produce of the land as far as Gaza. They left no
food in Israel, nor sheep, oxen, or donkeys.
5 For they came up with their livestock and
their tents, as numerous as locusts. Neither they
nor their camels could be counted. They entered
the land to destroy it.
6 Israel was greatly impoverished because of
Midian, and the people of Israel cried out to the
LORD.
7 When the people of Israel cried out to the
LORD because of Midian,
8 the LORD sent a prophet to the people of
Israel. He said to them, “This is what the LORD,
the God of Israel, says: ‘I brought you up from
Egypt and brought you out of the house of
slavery.
9 I delivered you from the hand of Egypt and
from the hand of all who oppressed you. I drove
them out before you and gave you their land.
10 I said to you, “I am the LORD your God. You
must not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose
land you live.” But you have not obeyed my
voice.’ ”
11 The angel of the LORD came and sat under
the terebinth in Ophrah that belonged to Joash

the Abiezrite. His son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress to hide it from Midian.
12 The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said, “The LORD is with you, mighty warrior.”
13 Gideon said to him, “Please, my lord, if the LORD is with us, why has all this happened to us? Where are all his wonders that our ancestors told us about, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the LORD has abandoned us and given us into the hand of Midian.”
14 The LORD turned to him and said, “Go in this strength of yours and save Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you?”
15 He said to him, “Please, Lord, how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father’s household.”
16 The LORD said to him, “Surely I will be with you, and you will strike down Midian as one man.”
17 He said to him, “If I have found favor in your sight, please give me a sign that it is you who are speaking with me.
18 Please do not leave here until I return to you, bring out my offering, and set it before you.” He said, “I will stay until you return.”
19 Gideon went in and prepared a young goat and unleavened bread from about twenty quarts of flour. He put the meat in a basket and the broth in a pot, brought them out to him under the terebinth, and presented them.
20 The angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread, put them on this

rock, and pour out the broth." And he did so.
21 The angel of the LORD reached out the tip of
the staff in his hand and touched the meat and
the unleavened bread. Fire rose from the rock
and consumed the meat and the unleavened
bread. Then the angel of the LORD vanished
from his sight.
22 Gideon realized that he was the angel of the
LORD, and Gideon said, "Alas, Lord GOD! I have
seen the angel of the LORD face to face!"
23 The LORD said to him, "Peace to you. Do not
be afraid; you will not die."
24 Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and
called it The LORD Is Peace. To this day it is still
in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.
25 That night the LORD said to him, "Take your
father's bull and the second bull, the
seven-year-old. Tear down your father's altar to
Baal, and cut down the Asherah pole beside it.
26 Build an altar to the LORD your God on top
of this stronghold, arranging it in order. Take the
second bull and offer it as a burnt offering with
the wood of the Asherah pole you cut down."
27 Gideon took ten of his servants and did as
the LORD had told him. Because he feared his
father's household and the men of the city too
much to do it by day, he did it at night.
28 The men of the city rose early in the
morning and found the altar of Baal torn down,
the Asherah pole beside it cut down, and the
second bull offered on the altar that had been
built.
29 They said to one another, "Who has done
this?" They investigated and searched, and they

said, “Gideon son of Joash has done this.”
30 The men of the city said to Joash, “Bring out
your son so that he may die, because he has torn
down the altar of Baal and cut down the
Asherah pole beside it.”
31 But Joash said to all who stood against him,
“Will you contend for Baal? Will you save him?
Whoever contends for him must be put to death
by morning. If he is a god, let him contend for
himself, because his altar has been torn down.”
32 So on that day he called Gideon Jerubbaal,
saying, “Let Baal contend against him, because
he has torn down his altar.”
33 All the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the
people of the east gathered together, crossed
over, and camped in the Valley of Jezreel.
34 The Spirit of the LORD clothed himself with
Gideon. Gideon blew the ram’s horn, and the
Abiezrites were summoned to follow him.
35 He sent messengers throughout Manasseh,
and they too were summoned to follow him. He
also sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and
Naphtali, and they came up to meet them.
36 Gideon said to God, “If you will save Israel
by my hand, as you have said,
37 I am placing a fleece of wool on the
threshing floor. If there is dew on the fleece
alone and all the ground is dry, then I will know
that you will save Israel by my hand, as you
have said.”
38 And it was so. He rose early the next day,
squeezed the fleece, and wrung dew from it, a
bowlful of water.

39 Then Gideon said to God, “Do not let your
anger burn against me, but let me speak just this
once. Please let me test just this once more with
the fleece. Let the fleece alone be dry, and let
there be dew on all the ground.”
40 God did so that night. The fleece alone was
dry, and there was dew on all the ground.

7

1 Jerubbaal, that is, Gideon, rose early with all
the people who were with him, and they camped
by the spring of Harod. The camp of Midian was
north of him, by the hill of Moreh in the valley.
2 The LORD said to Gideon, “The people with
you are too many for me to give Midian into
their hand, lest Israel boast against me, saying,
‘My own hand has saved me.’
3 Now proclaim in the hearing of the people,
‘Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him return
and depart from Mount Gilead.’ ” Twenty-two
thousand of the people returned, and ten
thousand remained.
4 The LORD said to Gideon, “The people are
still too many. Bring them down to the water,
and I will test them for you there. Whoever I tell
you, ‘This one will go with you,’ will go with you.
And whoever I tell you, ‘This one will not go
with you,’ will not go.”
5 So he brought the people down to the water.
The LORD said to Gideon, “Set apart everyone
who laps the water with his tongue as a dog
laps, and likewise everyone who kneels down to
drink.”

6 The number of those who lapped, bringing
their hand to their mouth, was three hundred
men. All the rest of the people knelt down to
drink water.
7 The LORD said to Gideon, “With the three
hundred men who lapped I will save you and
give Midian into your hand. Let all the other
people go, each to his own place.”
8 The men took the people’s provisions and
their ram’s horns. Gideon sent every other man
of Israel to his tent, but kept the three hundred
men. The camp of Midian was below him in the
valley.
9 That night the LORD said to him, “Arise, go
down against the camp, for I have given it into
your hand.
10 But if you are afraid to go down, go down to
the camp with Purah your servant.
11 Listen to what they say, and afterward your
hands will be strengthened, and you will go
down against the camp.” So he went down with
Purah his servant to the edge of the armed men
in the camp.
12 The Midianites, the Amalekites, and all the
people of the east lay in the valley, as numerous
as locusts. Their camels were beyond counting,
as numerous as the sand on the seashore.
13 When Gideon arrived, a man was telling his
companion a dream. He said, “I had a dream! A
loaf of barley bread was tumbling into the camp
of Midian. It came to the tent and struck it, and
it fell. It turned it upside down, and the tent
collapsed.”

14 His companion answered, “This is nothing
other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash, an
Israelite. God has given Midian and the whole
camp into his hand.”

15 When Gideon heard the account of the
dream and its interpretation, he bowed down.
He returned to the camp of Israel and said,
“Arise, for the LORD has given the camp of
Midian into your hand!”
16 He divided the three hundred men into
three companies and put ram’s horns into the
hands of all of them, along with empty jars and
torches inside the jars.
17 He said to them, “Watch me and do as I do.
When I come to the edge of the camp, do just as
I do.
18 When I blow the ram’s horn, I and all who
are with me, you too must blow the ram’s horns
all around the camp and shout, ‘For the LORD
and for Gideon!’ ”

19 Gideon and the hundred men with him
came to the edge of the camp at the beginning of
the middle watch, just after the sentries had
been posted. They blew the ram’s horns and
smashed the jars in their hands.
20 The three companies blew the ram’s horns
and broke the jars. They held the torches in
their left hands and the ram’s horns in their
right hands to blow, and they cried, “A sword for
the LORD and for Gideon!”
21 Each man stood in his place around the
camp, while the whole army ran, cried out, and
fled.

22 When the three hundred ram's horns
sounded, the LORD turned each man's sword
against his companion throughout the camp.
The army fled as far as Beth-shittah toward
Zererah, as far as the edge of Abel-meholah near
Tabbath.
23 The men of Israel were summoned from
Naphtali, Asher, and all Manasseh, and they
pursued Midian.
24 Gideon sent messengers throughout the hill
country of Ephraim, saying, "Go down to meet
Midian and seize the waters ahead of them as
far as Beth-barah, and the Jordan." All the men
of Ephraim were summoned, and they seized
the waters as far as Beth-barah, and the Jordan.
25 They captured the two princes of Midian,
Oreb and Zeeb. They killed Oreb at the rock of
Oreb and Zeeb at the winepress of Zeeb, and
they pursued Midian. They brought the heads of
Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon from beyond the
Jordan.

8

1 The men of Ephraim said to him, "What is
this you have done to us, not calling us when
you went to fight Midian?" They contended
sharply with him.
2 He said to them, "What have I done now
compared with you? Are not the grape gleanings
of Ephraim better than the grape harvest of
Abiezer?
3 God gave the princes of Midian, Oreb and
Zeeb, into your hand. What was I able to do

compared with you?" Their anger toward him subsided when he said this.

4 Gideon came to the Jordan and crossed it with the three hundred men who were with him, exhausted but still pursuing.

5 He said to the men of Succoth, "Please give loaves of bread to the people following me, for they are exhausted. I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian."

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

7 Gideon said, "Then when the LORD gives Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, I will thresh your flesh with the thorns and briers of the wilderness."

8 From there he went up to Penuel and spoke to them in the same way. The men of Penuel answered him as the men of Succoth had.

9 So he said to the men of Penuel as well, "When I return in peace, I will tear down this tower."

10 Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor with their army, about fifteen thousand men, all who remained of the whole army of the people of the east. One hundred twenty thousand men who drew the sword had fallen.

11 Gideon went up by the route of the tent dwellers east of Nobah and Jogbehah. He struck the camp while the army felt secure.

12 Zebah and Zalmunna fled, but he pursued them. He captured the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and threw the whole army into terror.

13 Gideon son of Joash returned from the
battle by the ascent of Heres.
14 He captured a young man from Succoth and
questioned him. The young man wrote down for
him the names of the leaders and elders of
Succoth, seventy-seven men.
15 He came to the men of Succoth and said,
“Here are Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom
you taunted me, saying, ‘Are the hands of Zebah
and Zalmunna already in your hand, that we
should give bread to your exhausted men?’ ”
16 He took the elders of the city and the thorns
and briers of the wilderness, and with these he
taught the men of Succoth a lesson.
17 He tore down the tower of Penuel and killed
the men of the city.
18 Then he said to Zebah and Zalmunna,
“Where are the men you killed at Tabor?” They
said, “They were like you; each had the
appearance of a king’s son.”
19 He said, “They were my brothers, the sons of
my mother. As the LORD lives, if you had let
them live, I would not kill you.”
20 He said to Jether his firstborn, “Arise, kill
them.” But the young man did not draw his
sword, for he was afraid, since he was still a
youth.
21 Zebah and Zalmunna said, “Arise yourself
and strike us down, for as the man is, so is his
strength.” Gideon arose and killed Zebah and
Zalmunna, and he took the crescent ornaments
from their camels’ necks.
22 Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, “Rule
over us, you and your son and your grandson,

for you have saved us from the hand of Midian."
23 Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over
you, nor will my son rule over you. The LORD
will rule over you."
24 Gideon said to them, "Let me ask this of you:
each of you give me an earring from your spoil."
For they had gold earrings, because they were
Ishmaelites.
25 They said, "We will gladly give them." They
spread out a cloak, and each man threw an
earring from his spoil onto it.
26 The gold earrings he had requested weighed
about forty-three pounds, apart from the
crescent ornaments, the pendants, and the
purple garments worn by the kings of Midian,
and apart from the chains on their camels'
necks.
27 Gideon made it into an ephod and placed it
in his city, Ophrah. All Israel prostituted
themselves to it there, and it became a snare to
Gideon and his household.
28 Midian was subdued before the people of
Israel and did not lift up their heads again. The
land had rest forty years in the days of Gideon.

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

33 As soon as Gideon died, the people of Israel
turned back and prostituted themselves to the
Baals. They made Baal-berith their god.
34 The people of Israel did not remember the
LORD their God, who had delivered them from
the hand of all their enemies around them.
35 Nor did they show kindness to the
household of Jerubbaal, that is, Gideon, in
return for all the good he had done for Israel.

9

1 Abimelech son of Jerubbaal went to
Shechem, to his mother's brothers. He spoke to
them and to the whole clan of his maternal
grandfather's household, saying,
2 "Please ask all the citizens of Shechem,
'Which is better for you: for seventy men, all the
sons of Jerubbaal, to rule over you, or for one
man to rule over you?' Remember that I am
your bone and your flesh."
3 His mother's brothers repeated all these
words on his behalf to all the citizens of
Shechem. Their hearts inclined toward
Abimelech, for they said, "He is our brother."
4 They gave him seventy pieces of silver from
the temple of Baal-berith. With these Abimelech
hired worthless and reckless men, and they
followed him.
5 He went to his father's house at Ophrah and
killed his brothers, the sons of Jerubbaal,
seventy men, on one stone. But Jotham,
Jerubbaal's youngest son, survived because he
had hidden himself.

6 All the citizens of Shechem and all Beth-millo
gathered together and went and made
Abimelech king by the oak of the pillar in
Shechem.
7 When Jotham was told, he went and stood on
top of Mount Gerizim. He raised his voice and
cried out to them, “Listen to me, citizens of
Shechem, so that God may listen to you.
8 The trees once went out to anoint a king over
themselves. They said to the olive tree, ‘Rule
over us.’
9 But the olive tree said to them, ‘Should I
leave my rich oil, by which God and people are
honored, and go to sway over the trees?’
10 The trees said to the fig tree, ‘Come, you rule
over us.’
11 But the fig tree said to them, ‘Should I leave
my sweetness and my good fruit and go to sway
over the trees?’
12 The trees said to the vine, ‘Come, you rule
over us.’
13 But the vine said to them, ‘Should I leave my
new wine, which cheers God and people, and go
to sway over the trees?’
14 Then all the trees said to the bramble,
‘Come, you rule over us.’
15 The bramble said to the trees, ‘If you are
truly anointing me king over you, come and take
refuge in my shade. But if not, let fire come out
of the bramble and consume the cedars of
Lebanon.’
16 Now if you have acted in truth and integrity
in making Abimelech king, if you have dealt
well with Jerubbaal and his household and have

treated him as his deeds deserve—
17 for my father fought for you, risked his life,
and delivered you from the hand of Midian,
18 but today you have risen against my father's
household, killed his sons, seventy men, on one
stone, and made Abimelech, the son of his
female slave, king over the citizens of Shechem
because he is your brother—
19 if you have acted in truth and integrity
toward Jerubbaal and his household this day,
then rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also
rejoice in you.
20 But if not, let fire come out of Abimelech
and consume the citizens of Shechem and
Beth-millo. Let fire come out of the citizens of
Shechem and Beth-millo and consume
Abimelech."
21 Jotham escaped and fled to Beer. He lived
there because of Abimelech his brother.
22 Abimelech ruled over Israel for three years.
23 Then God sent an evil spirit between
Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem, and the
citizens of Shechem dealt treacherously with
Abimelech,
24 so that the violence done to the seventy sons
of Jerubbaal might return, and their blood be
laid on Abimelech their brother, who killed
them, and on the citizens of Shechem, who
strengthened his hands to kill his brothers.
25 The citizens of Shechem set men in ambush
against him on the mountaintops. They robbed
everyone who passed them on the road, and
Abimelech was told.
26 Gaal son of Ebed came with his brothers

and moved into Shechem. The citizens of
Shechem put their trust in him.
27 They went out into the fields, harvested
their vineyards, trod the grapes, and held a
festival. They entered the temple of their god,
ate and drank, and cursed Abimelech.
28 Gaal son of Ebed said, “Who is Abimelech,
and who is Shechem, that we should serve him?
Is he not Jerubbaal’s son, and is not Zebul his
deputy? Serve the men of Hamor, Shechem’s
father! Why should we serve him?
29 If only this people were under my
command! I would remove Abimelech.” And he
said to Abimelech, “Increase your army and
come out!”
30 When Zebul, the ruler of the city, heard the
words of Gaal son of Ebed, his anger burned.
31 He secretly sent messengers to Abimelech,
saying, “Gaal son of Ebed and his brothers have
come to Shechem, and they are closing off the
city against you.
32 Now arise by night, you and the people with
you, and lie in ambush in the fields.
33 In the morning, as soon as the sun rises, get
up early and attack the city. When he and the
people with him come out against you, do to him
whatever your hand finds to do.”
34 So Abimelech and all the people with him
arose by night and lay in ambush against
Shechem in four companies.
35 Gaal son of Ebed went out and stood at the
entrance of the city gate. Abimelech and the
people with him rose from the ambush.

36 When Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul,
“Look, people are coming down from the
mountaintops!” Zebul said to him, “You are
seeing the shadows of the mountains as though
they were men.”
37 Gaal spoke again: “Look, people are coming
down from the center of the land, and one
company is coming by the road of the Diviners’
Oak.”
38 Zebul said to him, “Where is that mouth of
yours now, with which you said, ‘Who is
Abimelech, that we should serve him?’ Are these
not the people you despised? Go out now and
fight them!”
39 So Gaal went out at the head of the citizens
of Shechem and fought Abimelech.
40 Abimelech pursued him, and he fled before
him. Many fell slain all the way to the entrance
of the gate.
41 Abimelech stayed at Arumah, and Zebul
drove Gaal and his brothers out so that they
could no longer live in Shechem.
42 The next day the people went out into the
fields, and Abimelech was told.
43 He took his people, divided them into three
companies, and lay in ambush in the fields.
When he saw the people coming out of the city,
he rose against them and struck them down.
44 Abimelech and the companies with him
rushed forward and took their stand at the
entrance of the city gate. The other two
companies rushed against all who were in the
fields and struck them down.

45 Abimelech fought against the city all that
day. He captured it and killed the people in it.
He demolished the city and sowed it with salt.
46 When all the citizens of the tower of
Shechem heard this, they entered the stronghold
of the temple of El-berith.
47 Abimelech was told that all the citizens of
the tower of Shechem had gathered together.
48 Abimelech went up Mount Zalmon with all
the people who were with him. Abimelech took
the axes in his hand, cut a branch from the
trees, lifted it, and put it on his shoulder. He said
to the people with him, “Hurry and do what you
have seen me do.”
49 All the people likewise cut a branch, each
man his own, and followed Abimelech. They put
them against the stronghold and set the
stronghold on fire over those inside. All the
people of the tower of Shechem also died, about
a thousand men and women.
50 Then Abimelech went to Thebez, camped
against Thebez, and captured it.
51 There was a strong tower inside the city. All
the men and women and all the citizens of the
city fled there, shut themselves in, and went up
onto the roof of the tower.
52 Abimelech came to the tower and fought
against it. He approached the entrance of the
tower to burn it with fire.
53 But a woman threw a piece of an upper
millstone onto Abimelech’s head and crushed
his skull.
54 He quickly called to the young man who
carried his armor and said, “Draw your sword

and kill me, lest they say of me, ‘A woman killed
him.’ ” His young man thrust him through, and
he died.
55 When the men of Israel saw that Abimelech
was dead, they went away, each to his own
place.
56 So God repaid Abimelech for the evil he had
done to his father by killing his seventy brothers.
57 God also brought all the evil of the men of
Shechem back on their heads, and the curse of
Jotham son of Jerubbaal came upon them.

10

1 After Abimelech, Tola son of Puah, son of
Dodo, a man of Issachar, arose to save Israel. He
lived at Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim.
2 He judged Israel twenty-three years. Then he
died and was buried at Shamir.
3 After him arose Jair the Gileadite, who
judged Israel twenty-two years.
4 He had thirty sons who rode thirty donkey
colts, and they had thirty towns in the land of
Gilead, called Havvoth-jair to this day.
5 Jair died and was buried at Kamon.
6 The people of Israel again did evil in the
sight of the LORD. They served the Baals and the
Ashtaroth, the gods of Aram, the gods of Sidon,
the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites,
and the gods of the Philistines. They forsook the
LORD and did not serve him.
7 The LORD’s anger burned against Israel, and
he sold them into the hand of the Philistines and
into the hand of the Ammonites.

8 They oppressed and crushed the people of
Israel that year. For eighteen years they
oppressed all the people of Israel who were
beyond the Jordan, in the land of the Amorites
in Gilead.
9 The Ammonites also crossed the Jordan to
fight Judah, Benjamin, and the house of
Ephraim, and Israel was in great distress.
10 The people of Israel cried out to the LORD,
saying, “We have sinned against you, for we
have forsaken our God and served the Baals.”
11 The LORD said to the people of Israel, “Did I
not save you from the Egyptians, the Amorites,
the Ammonites, and the Philistines?
12 The Sidonians, the Amalekites, and the
Maonites also oppressed you, and you cried out
to me, and I saved you from their hand.
13 But you have forsaken me and served other
gods. Therefore I will no longer save you.
14 Go and cry out to the gods you have chosen.
Let them save you in the time of your distress!”
15 The people of Israel said to the LORD, “We
have sinned. Do to us whatever seems good in
your sight; only please deliver us this day.”
16 They removed the foreign gods from among
them and served the LORD, and he could no
longer bear Israel's misery.
17 The Ammonites were summoned and
camped in Gilead. The people of Israel gathered
together and camped at Mizpah.
18 The people and the leaders of Gilead said to
one another, “Who is the man who will begin to

fight the Ammonites? He will be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."

11

1 Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior.
He was the son of a prostitute, and Gilead was
Jephthah's father.
2 Gilead's wife also bore him sons. When his
wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out
and said to him, "You will have no inheritance in
our father's house, because you are the son of
another woman."
3 Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in
the land of Tob. Worthless men gathered around
Jephthah and went out with him.
4 After some time, the Ammonites made war
against Israel.
5 When the Ammonites made war against
Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring
Jephthah from the land of Tob.
6 They said to Jephthah, "Come and be our
commander, so that we may fight the
Ammonites."
7 Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Did
you not hate me and drive me out of my father's
house? Why have you come to me now, when
you are in distress?"
8 The elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "That is
why we have now returned to you, so that you
may go with us, fight the Ammonites, and
become our head over all the inhabitants of
Gilead."
9 Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you
bring me back to fight the Ammonites and the

LORD gives them over to me, will I be your
head?"
10 The elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "May
the LORD be witness between us if we do not do
as you have said."
11 Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead,
and the people made him their head and
commander. Jephthah spoke all his words
before the LORD at Mizpah.
12 Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the
Ammonites, saying, "What do you have against
me, that you have come to fight against my
land?"
13 The king of the Ammonites said to
Jephthah's messengers, "Because Israel took my
land when they came up from Egypt, from the
Arnon to the Jabbok and to the Jordan. Now
return those lands in peace."
14 Jephthah again sent messengers to the king
of the Ammonites,
15 saying to him, "This is what Jephthah says:
Israel did not take the land of Moab or the land
of the Ammonites.
16 When they came up from Egypt, Israel went
through the wilderness as far as the Red Sea and
came to Kadesh.
17 Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom,
saying, 'Please let me pass through your land.'
But the king of Edom would not listen. Israel
also sent to the king of Moab, but he would not
agree, so Israel stayed at Kadesh.
18 Then Israel went through the wilderness,
around the land of Edom and the land of Moab,
and came to the east side of the land of Moab.

They camped beyond the Arnon and did not
enter the territory of Moab, for the Arnon was
Moab's border.
19 Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the
Amorites, king of Heshbon. Israel said to him,
'Please let us pass through your land to my
place.'
20 But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass
through his territory. Sihon gathered all his
people, and they camped at Jahaz and fought
against Israel.
21 The LORD, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and
all his people into the hand of Israel, and they
struck them down. Israel took possession of all
the land of the Amorites who inhabited that
land.
22 They took possession of all the territory of
the Amorites, from the Arnon to the Jabbok, and
from the wilderness to the Jordan.
23 Now the LORD, the God of Israel, has driven
out the Amorites before his people Israel. Would
you take possession of their land?
24 Do you not possess what Chemosh your god
gives you to possess? So we will possess the land
of all whom the LORD our God has driven out
before us.
25 Now are you any better than Balak son of
Zippor, king of Moab? Did he ever contend with
Israel or ever fight against them?
26 Israel has lived in Heshbon and its
settlements, in Aroer and its settlements, and in
all the cities along the Arnon for three hundred
years. Why did you not recover them during
that time?

27 I have not sinned against you, but you are
doing me wrong by making war against me.
May the LORD, the Judge, judge this day between
the people of Israel and the Ammonites."
28 But the king of the Ammonites did not listen
to the words Jephthah had sent him.

29 The Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah.
He passed through Gilead and Manasseh and
through Mizpah of Gilead. From Mizpah of
Gilead he advanced against the Ammonites.
30 Jephthah made a vow to the LORD and said,
"If you indeed give the Ammonites into my hand,
31 then whatever comes out of the doors of my
house to meet me when I return in peace from
the Ammonites will belong to the LORD, and I
will offer it up as a burnt offering."

32 Jephthah advanced against the Ammonites
to fight them, and the LORD gave them into his
hand.
33 He struck them from Aroer as far as the
approach to Minnith, twenty cities, and as far as
Abel-keramim, with a very great slaughter. So
the Ammonites were subdued before the people
of Israel.

34 When Jephthah came to his house at
Mizpah, his daughter came out to meet him with
tambourines and dancing. She was his only
child; apart from her he had neither son nor
daughter.
35 When he saw her, he tore his clothes and
said, "Alas, my daughter! You have brought me
very low, and you are among those who bring

me trouble. I have opened my mouth to the
LORD and cannot take it back."
36 She said to him, "My father, you have
opened your mouth to the LORD. Do to me what
has gone out of your mouth, since the LORD has
taken vengeance for you on your enemies, the
Ammonites."
37 She said to her father, "Let this be done for
me: leave me alone for two months, so that my
companions and I may go down into the
mountains and weep over my virginity."
38 He said, "Go." He sent her away for two
months, and she went with her companions and
wept over her virginity on the mountains.
39 At the end of two months she returned to
her father, and he did to her according to the
vow he had made. She had never had relations
with a man. It became a custom in Israel
40 that year after year the daughters of Israel
went to commemorate the daughter of Jephthah
the Gileadite for four days each year.

12

1 The men of Ephraim were summoned and
crossed over toward the north. They said to
Jephthah, "Why did you cross over to fight the
Ammonites and not call us to go with you? We
will burn your house over you!"
2 Jephthah said to them, "My people and I were
in a bitter conflict with the Ammonites. I called
you, but you did not save me from their hand.
3 When I saw that you would not save me, I
put my life in my hand and crossed over against
the Ammonites, and the LORD gave them into

my hand. Why have you come up against me
this day to fight me?"
4 Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and
fought Ephraim. The men of Gilead struck down
Ephraim because the Ephraimites had said, "You
Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim, in the midst
of Ephraim and Manasseh."
5 Gilead seized the fords of the Jordan leading
to Ephraim. Whenever one of the fugitives of
Ephraim said, "Let me cross over," the men of
Gilead asked him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" If he
said, "No,"
6 they said to him, "Please say 'Shibboleth.' "
But he said, "Sibboleth," for he could not
pronounce it correctly. Then they seized him
and slaughtered him at the fords of the Jordan.
Forty-two thousand of Ephraim fell at that time.
7 Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then
Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried in
one of the cities of Gilead.

8 After him, Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel.
9 He had thirty sons and thirty daughters. He
sent his daughters away in marriage and
brought in thirty daughters from elsewhere for
his sons. He judged Israel seven years.
10 Ibzan died and was buried at Bethlehem.

11 After him, Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel.
He judged Israel ten years.
12 Elon the Zebulunite died and was buried at
Aijalon in the land of Zebulun.

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

14 He had forty sons and thirty grandsons who
rode seventy donkey colts. He judged Israel
eight years.
15 Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite died and
was buried at Pirathon in the land of Ephraim,
in the hill country of the Amalekites.

13

1 The people of Israel again did evil in the
sight of the LORD, and the LORD gave them into
the hand of the Philistines for forty years.
2 There was a man from Zorah, from the clan
of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. His
wife was barren and had borne no children.
3 The angel of the LORD appeared to the
woman and said to her, “You are barren and
have borne no children, but you will conceive
and bear a son.
4 Now be careful: do not drink wine or
intoxicating drink, and do not eat anything
unclean.
5 For you will conceive and bear a son. No
razor must come upon his head, for the boy will
be a Nazirite to God from the womb. He will
begin to save Israel from the hand of the
Philistines.”
6 The woman came and told her husband, “A
man of God came to me. His appearance was
like the appearance of an angel of God, very
awe-inspiring. I did not ask him where he was
from, and he did not tell me his name.
7 He said to me, ‘You will conceive and bear a
son. Now do not drink wine or intoxicating
drink, and do not eat anything unclean, for the

boy will be a Nazirite to God from the womb
until the day of his death.' "
8 Manoah pleaded with the LORD and said,
"Please, Lord, let the man of God you sent come
to us again and teach us what we should do for
the boy who is to be born."
9 God listened to the voice of Manoah. The
angel of God came again to the woman while
she was sitting in the field, but Manoah her
husband was not with her.
10 The woman hurried and ran to tell her
husband. She said to him, "The man who came
to me the other day has appeared to me!"
11 Manoah arose and followed his wife. He
came to the man and said to him, "Are you the
man who spoke to the woman?" He said, "I am."
12 Manoah said, "Now may your words come
true. What is to be the boy's way of life, and
what is he to do?"
13 The angel of the LORD said to Manoah, "The
woman must be careful about everything I said
to her.
14 She must not eat anything that comes from
the grapevine, drink wine or intoxicating drink,
or eat anything unclean. She must observe
everything I commanded her."
15 Manoah said to the angel of the LORD,
"Please let us detain you while we prepare a
young goat for you."
16 The angel of the LORD said to Manoah,
"Even if you detain me, I will not eat your food.
But if you prepare a burnt offering, offer it to
the LORD." For Manoah did not know that he
was the angel of the LORD.

17 Manoah said to the angel of the LORD,
“What is your name, so that we may honor you
when your words come true?”
18 The angel of the LORD said to him, “Why do
you ask my name? It is wonderful.”
19 Manoah took the young goat and the grain
offering and offered them on the rock to the
LORD. He worked a wonder while Manoah and
his wife watched.
20 When the flame went up from the altar
toward heaven, the angel of the LORD ascended
in the flame of the altar. Manoah and his wife
saw it and fell on their faces to the ground.
21 The angel of the LORD did not appear again
to Manoah and his wife. Then Manoah knew
that he was the angel of the LORD.
22 Manoah said to his wife, “We will surely die,
for we have seen God.”
23 But his wife said to him, “If the LORD had
wanted to kill us, he would not have accepted a
burnt offering and a grain offering from our
hands, or shown us all these things, or told us
such things at this time.”
24 The woman bore a son and named him
Samson. The boy grew, and the LORD blessed
him.
25 The Spirit of the LORD began to stir him at
Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

14

1 Samson went down to Timnah and saw a
woman there from among the daughters of the
Philistines.

2 He went up and told his father and mother, “I
saw a woman in Timnah from among the
daughters of the Philistines. Now get her for me
as a wife.”
3 His father and mother said to him, “Is there
no woman among the daughters of your
relatives or among all my people, that you go to
take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?”
But Samson said to his father, “Get her for me,
for she is right in my eyes.”
4 His father and mother did not know that this
was from the LORD, for he was seeking an
occasion against the Philistines. At that time the
Philistines were ruling over Israel.

5 Samson went down to Timnah with his
father and mother. When they came to the
vineyards of Timnah, a young lion came roaring
toward him.
6 The Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him, and
he tore the lion apart as one tears apart a young
goat, though he had nothing in his hand. He did
not tell his father or mother what he had done.
7 He went down and spoke to the woman, and
she was right in Samson’s eyes.
8 After some time he returned to take her as
his wife. He turned aside to see the lion’s
carcass, and there was a swarm of bees and
honey in the lion’s body.
9 He scooped it into his hands and went on,
eating as he walked. He came to his father and
mother and gave them some, and they ate. But
he did not tell them that he had taken the honey
from the lion’s body.
10 His father went down to the woman, and

Samson held a feast there, as the young men
used to do.
11 When they saw him, they brought thirty
companions to be with him.
12 Samson said to them, “Let me pose a riddle
to you. If you can explain it to me during the
seven days of the feast and find it out, I will give
you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of
clothes.
13 But if you cannot explain it to me, you must
give me thirty linen garments and thirty
changes of clothes.” They said to him, “Pose your
riddle, and let us hear it.”
14 He said to them, “Out of the eater came food,
and out of the strong came sweetness.” For three
days they could not explain the riddle.
15 On the seventh day they said to Samson’s
wife, “Persuade your husband to explain the
riddle to us, or we will burn you and your
father’s household with fire. Did you invite us so
you could take our possessions? Is that not so?”
16 Samson’s wife wept before him and said,
“You only hate me; you do not love me. You have
posed a riddle to my people, but you have not
explained it to me.” He said to her, “I have not
explained it to my father or mother. Should I
explain it to you?”
17 She wept before him during the seven days
of their feast. On the seventh day he explained it
to her because she pressed him, and she
explained the riddle to her people.
18 On the seventh day, before the sun set, the
men of the city said to him, “What is sweeter

than honey? What is stronger than a lion?" He
said to them, "If you had not plowed with my
heifer, you would not have found out my riddle."
19 The Spirit of the LORD rushed upon him. He
went down to Ashkelon, struck down thirty of
their men, took their spoil, and gave the changes
of clothes to those who had explained the riddle.
His anger burned, and he went up to his father's
house.
20 Samson's wife was given to his companion,
who had been his friend.

15

1 After some time, during the wheat harvest,
Samson visited his wife with a young goat. He
said, "I will go in to my wife in her room." But
her father would not let him go in.
2 Her father said, "I was certain that you
utterly hated her, so I gave her to your
companion. Is not her younger sister more
beautiful than she? Please take her instead."
3 Samson said to them, "This time I will be
blameless with regard to the Philistines when I
do them harm."
4 Samson went and caught three hundred
foxes. He took torches, paired the foxes tail to
tail, and placed one torch between each pair of
tails.
5 He lit the torches and released the foxes into
the standing grain of the Philistines. He burned
the stacked grain, the standing grain, and the
olive groves.
6 The Philistines said, "Who did this?" They
were told, "Samson, the son-in-law of the

Timnite, because the Timnite took his wife and
gave her to his companion." So the Philistines
went up and burned her and her father with
fire.
7 Samson said to them, "If this is how you act, I
will take revenge on you, and only then will I
stop."
8 He struck them hip and thigh in a great
slaughter. Then he went down and lived in the
cleft of the rock of Etam.

9 The Philistines went up, camped in Judah,
and spread out at Lehi.
10 The men of Judah said, "Why have you come
up against us?" They said, "We have come up to
bind Samson, to do to him as he has done to us."
11 Three thousand men of Judah went down to
the cleft of the rock of Etam and said to Samson,
"Do you not know that the Philistines rule over
us? What is this you have done to us?" He said
to them, "As they did to me, so I have done to
them."
12 They said to him, "We have come down to
bind you and give you into the hand of the
Philistines." Samson said to them, "Swear to me
that you yourselves will not attack me."
13 They said to him, "No, we will only bind you
securely and give you into their hand. We
certainly will not kill you." They bound him with
two new ropes and brought him up from the
rock.
14 When he came to Lehi, the Philistines
shouted as they met him. The Spirit of the LORD
rushed upon him. The ropes on his arms

became like flax burned with fire, and his bonds melted away from his hands.
15 He found a fresh jawbone of a donkey,
reached out his hand, took it, and struck down a thousand men with it.
16 Samson said, “With the jawbone of a
donkey, a heap, two heaps! With the jawbone of a donkey I have struck down a thousand men.”
17 When he finished speaking, he threw the
jawbone from his hand and called that place Ramath-lehi.
18 He was very thirsty and called to the LORD,
saying, “You have given this great deliverance into the hand of your servant. Now must I die of thirst and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?”
19 God split open the hollow at Lehi, and water
came out of it. Samson drank, his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore he called its name En-hakkore, which is at Lehi to this day.
20 He judged Israel twenty years in the days of
the Philistines.

16

1 Samson went to Gaza, saw a prostitute there,
and slept with her.
2 The Gazites were told, “Samson has come
here.” They surrounded him and lay in wait for him all night at the city gate. They kept quiet all night, saying, “Wait until the light of morning, and we will kill him.”
3 Samson lay until midnight. At midnight he
arose, took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two doorposts, and pulled them up, bar and

all. He put them on his shoulders and carried
them to the top of the hill facing Hebron.

4 After this he loved a woman in the Valley of
Sorek whose name was Delilah.
5 The rulers of the Philistines went up to her
and said, “Entice him and find out where his
great strength lies and how we can overpower
him, so that we may bind him and afflict him.
Each of us will give you about twenty-eight
pounds of silver.”
6 Delilah said to Samson, “Please tell me where
your great strength lies and how you could be
bound and afflicted.”
7 Samson said to her, “If they bind me with
seven fresh cords that have not dried, I will
become weak and be like any other man.”
8 The rulers of the Philistines brought her
seven fresh cords that had not dried, and she
bound him with them.
9 She had men lying in ambush in the room.
She said to him, “The Philistines are upon you,
Samson!” But he snapped the cords as a strand
of flax snaps when it touches fire. So his
strength was not discovered.
10 Delilah said to Samson, “You have mocked
me and told me lies. Now please tell me how
you could be bound.”
11 He said to her, “If they bind me securely with
new ropes that have never been used for work, I
will become weak and be like any other man.”
12 Delilah took new ropes, bound him with
them, and said to him, “The Philistines are upon
you, Samson!” Men were lying in ambush in the

room, but he snapped the ropes from his arms like a thread.
13 Delilah said to Samson, “Until now you have mocked me and told me lies. Tell me how you could be bound.” He said to her, “If you weave the seven locks of my head into the fabric on the loom…”
14 She fastened it with the peg and said to him, “The Philistines are upon you, Samson!” He awoke from his sleep and pulled away the loom peg and the fabric.
15 She said to him, “How can you say, ‘I love you,’ when your heart is not with me? These three times you have mocked me and have not told me where your great strength lies.”
16 She pressed him with her words day after day and urged him until his soul was distressed to the point of death.
17 So he told her all his heart. He said to her, “No razor has come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother’s womb. If I am shaved, my strength will leave me, and I will become weak and be like any other man.”
18 When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent for the rulers of the Philistines, saying, “Come up this time, for he has told me all his heart.” The rulers of the Philistines came up to her with the silver in their hands.
19 She made him sleep on her knees, called for a man, and had the seven locks of his head shaved off. She began to afflict him, and his strength left him.
20 She said, “The Philistines are upon you,

Samson!" He awoke from his sleep and said, "I will go out as before and shake myself free." But he did not know that the LORD had left him.
21 The Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes. They brought him down to Gaza, bound him with bronze shackles, and he ground grain in the prison.
22 But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved.

23 The rulers of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god and to rejoice. They said, "Our god has given Samson our enemy into our hand."
24 When the people saw him, they praised their god, saying, "Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the one who devastated our land and multiplied our slain."
25 When their hearts were merry, they said, "Call Samson, so that he may entertain us." They called Samson from the prison, and he entertained them. They made him stand between the pillars.
26 Samson said to the young man who held him by the hand, "Let me feel the pillars that support the building, so that I may lean on them."
27 The building was full of men and women, and all the rulers of the Philistines were there. On the roof were about three thousand men and women watching Samson entertain them.
28 Samson called to the LORD and said, "Lord GOD, please remember me. Please strengthen me just this once, O God, so that I may take

vengeance on the Philistines for one of my two eyes."
29 Samson grasped the two middle pillars that supported the building and leaned against them, one with his right hand and the other with his left.
30 Samson said, "Let me die with the Philistines!" He bent with all his strength, and the building fell on the rulers and all the people in it. Those he killed at his death were more than those he had killed during his life.
31 His brothers and all his father's household went down, took him, brought him up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in the tomb of Manoah his father. He had judged Israel twenty years.

17

1 There was a man from the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Micaiah.
2 He said to his mother, "The silver taken from you, about twenty-eight pounds, over which you pronounced a curse that I also heard—the silver is with me. I took it." His mother said, "Blessed be my son by the LORD!"
3 He returned the silver, about twenty-eight pounds, to his mother. His mother said, "I have solemnly dedicated the silver to the LORD from my own hand for my son, to make a carved image and a cast image. Now I will return it to you."
4 He returned the silver to his mother, and his mother took two hundred pieces of silver and gave them to the silversmith. He made it into a

carved image and a cast image, which stood in
Micaiah's house.
5 The man Micah had a shrine. He made an
ephod and household gods, and consecrated one
of his sons, who became his priest.
6 In those days there was no king in Israel.
Each man did what was right in his own eyes.
7 There was a young man from Bethlehem in
Judah, of the clan of Judah, who was a Levite
staying there.
8 The man left the city of Bethlehem in Judah
to live wherever he could find a place. As he
traveled, he came to Micah's house in the hill
country of Ephraim.
9 Micah said to him, "Where do you come
from?" He said to him, "I am a Levite from
Bethlehem in Judah, and I am traveling to find a
place to live."
10 Micah said to him, "Stay with me, and be a
father and a priest to me. I will give you about
four ounces of silver a year, a set of clothes, and
your food." So the Levite went with him.
11 The Levite agreed to stay with the man, and
the young man became like one of his sons.
12 Micah consecrated the Levite, and the
young man became his priest and lived in
Micah's house.
13 Then Micah said, "Now I know that the
LORD will deal well with me, because I have a
Levite as my priest."

18

1 In those days there was no king in Israel. In

those days the tribe of Dan was seeking an
inheritance to live in, for until that day no
inheritance had fallen to them among the tribes
of Israel.

2 The Danites sent five men from their clan,
from among their number, valiant men from
Zorah and Eshtaol, to spy out and explore the
land. They said to them, “Go and explore the
land.” They came to the hill country of Ephraim,
to Micah’s house, and spent the night there.

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

4 He said to them, “Micah has done this and
that for me. He has hired me, and I have
become his priest.”

5 They said to him, “Please inquire of God, so
that we may know whether the journey we are
taking will succeed.”

6 The priest said to them, “Go in peace. The
way you are taking is before the LORD.”

7 The five men went on and came to Laish.
They saw that the people in it lived securely,
after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and
confident. There was no ruler in the land to
humiliate them in anything. They were far from
the Sidonians and had no dealings with anyone.

8 They came back to their brothers at Zorah
and Eshtaol, and their brothers said to them,
“What do you report?”

9 They said, “Arise, and let us go up against

them! We have seen the land, and it is very
good. Will you sit still? Do not be slow to go in
and possess the land.
10 When you enter, you will come to a
confident people and a spacious land, for God
has given it into your hand—a place lacking
nothing that is on the earth."
11 Six hundred men from the clan of Dan set
out from Zorah and Eshtaol, equipped with
weapons of war.
12 They went up and camped at Kiriath-jearim
in Judah. Therefore that place is called
Mahaneh-dan to this day. It is west of
Kiriath-jearim.
13 From there they passed on to the hill
country of Ephraim and came to Micah's house.
14 The five men who had gone to spy out the
land of Laish said to their brothers, "Do you
know that these houses contain an ephod,
household gods, a carved image, and a cast
image? Now consider what you should do."
15 They turned aside there and came to the
house of the young Levite, Micah's house, and
asked him how he was.
16 The six hundred Danites, equipped with
their weapons of war, stood at the entrance of
the gate.
17 The five men who had gone to spy out the
land went up, entered there, and took the
carved image, the ephod, the household gods,
and the cast image. The priest stood at the
entrance of the gate with the six hundred men
equipped with weapons of war.

18 These men entered Micah's house and took
the carved image of the ephod, the household
gods, and the cast image. The priest said to
them, "What are you doing?"
19 They said to him, "Be quiet. Put your hand
over your mouth and come with us. Be a father
and a priest to us. Is it better for you to be priest
to one man's household, or to be priest to a tribe
and a clan in Israel?"
20 The priest's heart was glad. He took the
ephod, the household gods, and the carved
image, and went among the people.
21 They turned and departed, putting the little
ones, the livestock, and the possessions ahead of
them.
22 When they were far from Micah's house, the
men from the houses near Micah's house were
summoned and overtook the Danites.
23 They called out to the Danites, who turned
around and said to Micah, "What is wrong, that
you have rallied?"
24 He said, "You have taken my gods that I
made, and the priest, and gone away. What do I
have left? How can you say to me, 'What is
wrong?' "
25 The Danites said to him, "Do not let your
voice be heard among us, lest angry men attack
you and you lose your life and the lives of your
household."
26 The Danites went on their way. Micah saw
that they were stronger than he was, so he
turned and went back to his house.
27 They took what Micah had made and the
priest who had belonged to him, and came

against Laish, against a quiet and confident
people. They struck them down by the edge of
the sword and burned the city with fire.
28 There was no one to deliver them, because
it was far from Sidon and they had no dealings
with anyone. It was in the valley of Beth-rehob.
They rebuilt the city and lived in it.
29 They named the city Dan, after Dan their
ancestor, who was born to Israel. Previously the
city's name had been Laish.
30 The Danites set up the carved image for
themselves. Jonathan son of Gershom, son of
Manasseh, and his sons were priests to the tribe
of Dan until the day the land went into captivity.
31 They set up for themselves the carved image
Micah had made, all the time that the house of
God was at Shiloh.

19

1 In those days, when there was no king in
Israel, a Levite was living in a remote part of the
hill country of Ephraim. He took a concubine
from Bethlehem in Judah.
2 His concubine was unfaithful to him and left
him for her father's house in Bethlehem in
Judah. She stayed there four months.
3 Her husband arose and went after her to
speak tenderly to her and bring her back. His
servant and a pair of donkeys were with him.
She brought him into her father's house, and the
young woman's father saw him and was glad to
meet him.
4 His father-in-law, the young woman's father,
persuaded him to stay, and he stayed with him

three days. They ate and drank and spent the night there.

5 On the fourth day they rose early in the morning, and he arose to leave. But the young woman's father said to his son-in-law, "Refresh your heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward you may go."

6 The two of them sat down and ate and drank together. Then the young woman's father said to the man, "Please agree to stay the night, and let your heart be merry."

7 The man arose to leave, but his father-in-law urged him, so he stayed there another night.

8 On the fifth day he rose early in the morning to leave. The young woman's father said, "Please refresh your heart, and wait until afternoon." The two of them ate.

9 The man arose to leave with his concubine and his servant. His father-in-law, the young woman's father, said to him, "Look, the day is drawing toward evening. Please stay the night. The day is coming to an end; spend the night here, and let your heart be merry. Tomorrow you can rise early for your journey and go home."

10 But the man would not stay the night. He arose and left, and came opposite Jebus, that is, Jerusalem. With him were a pair of saddled donkeys, and his concubine was with him.

11 When they were near Jebus and the day was far spent, the servant said to his master, "Please come, let us turn aside into this city of the Jebusites and spend the night in it."

12 His master said to him, “We will not turn
aside into a city of foreigners who are not of the
people of Israel. We will go on to Gibeah.”
13 He said to his servant, “Come, let us draw
near to one of these places and spend the night
at Gibeah or Ramah.”
14 They passed on and went their way, and the
sun set on them near Gibeah, which belongs to
Benjamin.
15 They turned aside there to enter and spend
the night in Gibeah. He entered and sat in the
city square, but no one took them into a house to
spend the night.
16 An old man was coming from his work in
the fields that evening. He was from the hill
country of Ephraim and was staying in Gibeah,
though the people of the place were Benjamites.
17 He lifted up his eyes and saw the traveler in
the city square. The old man said, “Where are
you going, and where do you come from?”
18 He said to him, “We are traveling from
Bethlehem in Judah to a remote part of the hill
country of Ephraim. I am from there. I went to
Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to the house
of the LORD, but no one takes me into a house.
19 We have straw and fodder for our donkeys,
and bread and wine for me, for your female
servant, and for the young man with your
servants. We lack nothing.”
20 The old man said, “Peace to you. Let all your
needs be my responsibility. Only do not spend
the night in the square.”
21 He brought him into his house and fed the

donkeys. They washed their feet, ate, and drank.
22 While they were making their hearts merry,
worthless men of the city surrounded the house
and pounded on the door. They said to the old
man, the owner of the house, “Bring out the man
who came into your house, so that we may have
sexual relations with him.”
23 The owner of the house went out to them
and said, “No, my brothers, please do not act
wickedly. Since this man has entered my house,
do not commit this outrage.
24 Here are my virgin daughter and his
concubine. Let me bring them out. Abuse them
and do to them whatever seems good in your
eyes. But do not do this outrageous thing to this
man.”
25 But the men would not listen to him. The
man seized his concubine and brought her
outside to them. They raped her and abused her
all night until morning. They let her go as dawn
broke.
26 As morning approached, the woman came
and fell at the entrance of the man's house,
where her master was, and lay there until it was
light.
27 Her master arose in the morning, opened
the doors of the house, and went out to go on his
way. There was the woman, his concubine,
fallen at the entrance of the house, with her
hands on the threshold.
28 He said to her, “Get up, and let us go.” But
there was no answer. He put her on the donkey,
and the man arose and went to his place.
29 When he came to his house, he took the

knife, seized his concubine, and cut her up, with
her bones, into twelve pieces. He sent her
throughout all the territory of Israel.
30 Everyone who saw it said, “Nothing like this
has happened or been seen from the day the
people of Israel came up from the land of Egypt
until this day. Consider it, take counsel, and
speak!”

20

1 All the people of Israel came out, and the
congregation assembled as one man before the
LORD at Mizpah, from Dan to Beersheba,
including the land of Gilead.
2 The leaders of all the people, all the tribes of
Israel, took their places in the assembly of the
people of God: four hundred thousand foot
soldiers who drew the sword.
3 The Benjamites heard that the people of
Israel had gone up to Mizpah. The people of
Israel said, “Tell us how this evil happened.”
4 The Levite, the husband of the murdered
woman, answered, “I came with my concubine
to Gibeah of Benjamin to spend the night.
5 The citizens of Gibeah rose against me and
surrounded the house against me at night. They
intended to kill me. They violated my
concubine, and she died.
6 I took my concubine, cut her in pieces, and
sent her throughout all the territory of Israel’s
inheritance, because they had committed
lewdness and outrage in Israel.

7 All of you are people of Israel. Give your
opinion and counsel here."
8 All the people arose as one man, saying,
"None of us will go to his tent, and none will
turn aside to his house.
9 Now this is what we will do to Gibeah: we
will go up against it by lot.
10 We will take ten men from every hundred
throughout all the tribes of Israel, a hundred
from every thousand, and a thousand from
every ten thousand, to get provisions for the
people. Then, when they come to Geba of
Benjamin, they can repay it for all the outrage it
has committed in Israel."
11 All the men of Israel gathered against the
city, united as one man.
12 The tribes of Israel sent men throughout all
the clans of Benjamin, saying, "What is this evil
that has happened among you?
13 Now hand over the worthless men in
Gibeah, so that we may put them to death and
remove evil from Israel." But the Benjamites
would not listen to the voice of their brothers,
the people of Israel.
14 The Benjamites gathered from the cities to
Gibeah to go out to battle against the people of
Israel.
15 On that day the Benjamites mustered
twenty-six thousand men from the cities who
drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of
Gibeah, who mustered seven hundred chosen
men.
16 Among all these people were seven hundred
chosen left-handed men. Every one could sling a

stone at a hair and not miss.
17 The men of Israel, excluding Benjamin,
mustered four hundred thousand men who
drew the sword. All of them were men of war.
18 They arose, went up to Bethel, and inquired
of God. The people of Israel said, “Who should
go up first for us to battle against the
Benjamites?” The LORD said, “Judah first.”
19 The people of Israel arose in the morning
and camped against Gibeah.
20 The men of Israel went out to battle against
Benjamin and arrayed themselves for battle
against them at Gibeah.
21 The Benjamites came out of Gibeah and
struck twenty-two thousand men of Israel dead
to the ground that day.
22 But the people, the men of Israel, took
courage and again arrayed themselves for battle
in the place where they had arrayed themselves
on the first day.
23 The people of Israel went up and wept
before the LORD until evening. They inquired of
the LORD, saying, “Shall I again advance to
battle against the people of Benjamin, my
brother?” The LORD said, “Go up against him.”
24 The people of Israel advanced against the
Benjamites on the second day.
25 Benjamin came out of Gibeah to meet them
on the second day and struck another eighteen
thousand men of Israel dead to the ground. All
of them drew the sword.
26 Then all the people of Israel, the whole
people, went up and came to Bethel. They wept

and sat there before the LORD, fasted that day
until evening, and offered burnt offerings and
peace offerings before the LORD.
27 The people of Israel inquired of the LORD.
The ark of the covenant of God was there in
those days,
28 and Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron,
stood before it in those days. They asked, “Shall I
again go out to battle against the people of
Benjamin, my brother, or shall I stop?” The
LORD said, “Go up, for tomorrow I will give him
into your hand.”
29 Israel set men in ambush all around Gibeah.
30 The people of Israel went up against the
Benjamites on the third day and arrayed
themselves against Gibeah as before.
31 The Benjamites came out to meet the people
and were drawn away from the city. As before,
they began to strike some of the people dead on
the roads, one of which goes up to Bethel and
the other to Gibeah, in the open country—about
thirty men of Israel.
32 The Benjamites said, “They are being
defeated before us as at first.” But the people of
Israel had said, “Let us flee and draw them away
from the city to the roads.”
33 All the men of Israel arose from their
positions and arrayed themselves at Baal-tamar.
The men of Israel in ambush rushed out from
their place, from the open ground of Geba.
34 Ten thousand chosen men from all Israel
came opposite Gibeah. The battle was fierce,
and the Benjamites did not know that disaster

was closing in on them.

35 The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel.
That day the people of Israel destroyed
twenty-five thousand one hundred men of
Benjamin, all of whom drew the sword.
36 The Benjamites saw that they were
defeated. The men of Israel had given ground to
Benjamin because they trusted the ambush they
had set against Gibeah.
37 The men in ambush hurried and rushed
upon Gibeah. They spread out and struck the
whole city by the edge of the sword.
38 The agreed signal between the men of Israel
and the men in ambush was for them to send up
a great cloud of smoke from the city.
39 When the men of Israel turned back in the
battle, Benjamin began to strike down about
thirty men of Israel. They said, “Surely they are
being defeated before us as in the first battle.”
40 But the signal began to rise from the city, a
pillar of smoke. Benjamin looked back, and the
whole city was going up toward heaven.
41 The men of Israel turned, and the men of
Benjamin were terrified, for they saw that
disaster had reached them.
42 They turned before the men of Israel
toward the wilderness road, but the battle
overtook them. Those coming from the cities
were destroying them in their midst.
43 They surrounded Benjamin, pursued them,
and trampled them down with ease as far as
opposite Gibeah, toward the east.

44 Eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell, all
of them valiant men.
45 They turned and fled toward the wilderness
to the rock of Rimmon. The Israelites gleaned
five thousand of them along the roads. They
pursued them as far as Gidom and struck down
two thousand more.
46 All who fell from Benjamin that day were
twenty-five thousand men who drew the sword,
all of them valiant men.
47 But six hundred men turned and fled
toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon.
They stayed at the rock of Rimmon four months.
48 The men of Israel turned back against the
Benjamites and struck them down by the edge of
the sword—entire cities, livestock, and
everything they found. They also set fire to all
the cities they found.

21

1 The men of Israel had sworn at Mizpah,
saying, “None of us will give his daughter as a
wife to a Benjamite.”
2 The people came to Bethel and sat there
before God until evening. They lifted up their
voices and wept bitterly.
3 They said, “LORD, the God of Israel, why has
this happened in Israel, that one tribe should be
missing from Israel this day?”
4 The next day the people rose early, built an
altar there, and offered burnt offerings and
peace offerings.

5 The people of Israel said, “Who from all the
tribes of Israel did not come up in the assembly
before the LORD?” For they had made a solemn
oath concerning anyone who did not come up
before the LORD at Mizpah, saying, “He must
surely be put to death.”
6 The people of Israel had compassion on
Benjamin their brother and said, “One tribe has
been cut off from Israel this day.
7 What shall we do for wives for those who
remain? We have sworn by the LORD not to give
them any of our daughters as wives.”
8 They said, “Who from the tribes of Israel did
not come up before the LORD at Mizpah?” No
one from Jabesh-gilead had come to the camp, to
the assembly.
9 When the people were counted, no one from
the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead was there.
10 The congregation sent twelve thousand
valiant men there and commanded them,
saying, “Go and strike the inhabitants of
Jabesh-gilead by the edge of the sword,
including the women and little ones.
11 This is what you must do: devote to
destruction every male and every woman who
has had relations with a man.”
12 They found among the inhabitants of
Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins who
had never had relations with a man. They
brought them to the camp at Shiloh, in the land
of Canaan.
13 The whole congregation sent word to the
Benjamites at the rock of Rimmon and

proclaimed peace to them.
14 Benjamin returned at that time, and they
gave them the women they had kept alive from
the women of Jabesh-gilead. But they did not
find enough for them.
15 The people had compassion on Benjamin
because the LORD had made a breach among
the tribes of Israel.
16 The elders of the congregation said, “What
shall we do for wives for those who remain,
since the women have been destroyed out of
Benjamin?”
17 They said, “There must be an inheritance for
the survivors of Benjamin, so that a tribe may
not be wiped out from Israel.
18 But we cannot give them wives from our
daughters, for the people of Israel have sworn,
saying, ‘Cursed be anyone who gives a wife to a
Benjamite.’ ”
19 They said, “There is a yearly feast of the
LORD at Shiloh, north of Bethel, east of the road
that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south
of Lebonah.”
20 They commanded the Benjamites, saying,
“Go and lie in ambush in the vineyards.
21 Watch, and when the daughters of Shiloh
come out to dance, come out of the vineyards
and seize a wife for yourselves, each man from
among the daughters of Shiloh. Then go to the
land of Benjamin.
22 When their fathers or brothers come to
contend with us, we will say to them, ‘Favor us
with them, for we did not take a wife for each

man in the war. You did not give wives to them;
otherwise you would now be guilty.' "
23 The Benjamites did so and took wives
according to their number from the dancers
they abducted. They went and returned to their
inheritance, rebuilt the cities, and lived in them.
24 At that time the people of Israel departed
from there, each to his tribe and clan. Each
went out from there to his inheritance.
25 In those days there was no king in Israel.
Each man did what was right in his own eyes.

BibliaTodo New Translation

The Holy Bible in English, BibliaTodo New Translation

copyright © 2026 BibliaTodo LLC

Language: English

Holy Bible, BibliaTodo New Translation (BTNT). Published by BibliaTodo Bible Society, an imprint of BibliaTodo LLC.
https://www.bibliatodo.org/en/btnt/

2026-11-06

PDF generated using Haiola and XeLaTeX on 6 Nov 2026 from source files dated 6 Nov 2026
bf5e3ce4-cf5d-56f2-a94a-006c5ec812cc