

Jephthah's Vow

Judges 10 – 12

by Don Falkos

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Jephthah was a great warrior. His father had several sons, but Jephthah's mother was a prostitute. His half-brothers drove him off saying, "You won't get any of our father's inheritance." He fled to a different country and became the leader of a band of marauders.

Then the Ammonites attacked Israel. The people of Gilead asked Jephthah for help.

"You sent me away," he said, "Why come to me now."

"We need you!" And they offered to make him the leader of Gilead if only he would defeat the Ammonites.

Jephthah replied, "Let me get this straight. If I come with you now and the Lord gives me victory over the Ammonites, you will make me your ruler."

"As the Lord is our witness."

The Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he led the people into battle. He made a vow to the Lord. "Give me victory! And whatever comes out of my house to greet me when I get home, I will sacrifice to you as a burnt offering." The Lord gave him a devastating victory.

When Jephthah returned home, his daughter came dancing out of the house to meet him. She was his only child, and when Jephthah saw her, he cried out, "Oh! My daughter! What have I done! I have made a vow to the Lord that I cannot break."

"Father," said the girl, "the Lord has given you victory. You must keep your word. But first, give me two months to go up into the hills to weep with my friends because I will never marry."

Jephthah agreed, and when she came back, her father fulfilled his vow.