

Judges Study #7: Judges 10:6-12:7

Jephthah

Intro: What were some hasty commitments you have made that you wish you could change?

Jephthah is the fifth major judge in Judges and he is flanked by two minor judges at the beginning of this section, Tola and Jair, and by three minor judges at the end — Ibzon, Elon, and Abdon. As Israel continues to fall more and more into sin and idolatry, her oppression by the enemy also increases. As Israel's sin and oppression increase, so does the cost of deliverance for the judge.

Takeaway: We are far more affected by our culture than by the Bible – and we are far more affected by our culture than we think.

Read Judges 10:6-18

Question #1: In the judge cycle, Israel does evil; the Lord becomes angry; He gives Israel into the hand of oppressors; and then Israel cries out to God for help. At this point in the present cycle, we would expect the Lord to raise up a judge to deliver His people. In this case, however, the Lord responds differently. How does the Lord respond to Israel's cry for help? How is the Lord's response ultimately a gracious response?

Question #2: Have you experienced the temptation to worship an idol more because it has not delivered? Where did it leave you?

Read Judges 11:1-40

Question #3: What is the vow that Jephthah promises to fulfill if the Lord will deliver Israel through him? Is this a wise or unwise vow? Why did he make this vow?

Question #4: Read Leviticus 5:4-6. Jephthah was committed to God, but didn't understand God's Word. If he truly understood God then he wouldn't have made this vow.

Question #5: Why did Jephthah keep this vow? Why are there still consequences for things even when they are done in ignorance? How have you experienced this in your life?

Read Judges 12:1-15

Question #6: How does the tribe of Ephraim respond to the Lord's gracious salvation? What makes it so difficult at times for us to see the Lord's grace as presented in the Scriptures and yet not respond with repentance and worship?

Application:

The Israelites as well as Jephthah were affected by the culture around them. In what ways are you far more affected by the culture around you than the Bible?