

11[1] And Jephthah,¹ the Gileadite, was a mighty man of valor, and he was son of a woman of prostitution. And Gilead begot Jephthah.² [2] And Gilead's woman bore sons, and sons of the woman grew and drove out Jephthah. And they said to him, “You have no inheritance in our father's house, because you are a son of another woman.” [3] And Jephthah fled from before his brothers and dwelt in Good Land.³ And empty⁴ men gathered together to Jephthah and went out with him.

[4] And it was after some days, and sons of Ammon made war with Israel. [5] And it was, just as sons of Ammon made war with Israel, so elders of Gilead went to take Jephthah from Good Land. [6] And they said to Jephthah, “Come and be for us for a commander, so we might make war against sons of Ammon.” [7] And Jephthah said to elders of Gilead, “Did you not hate me and drive me out from my father's house? And why are you coming to me now, just as you have distress?”

[8] And elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “For this reason we have now returned to you, so you may come with us and wage war against sons of Ammon. And you shall be our head for all inhabitants of Gilead.” [9] And Jephthah said to elders of Gilead, “If you bring me back to wage war against sons of Ammon and Yehvah gives them to my face, I will be your head.” [10] And elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “Yehvah hears⁵ between us, if we do not do so, according to your word.” [11] And Jephthah went with elders of Gilead, and the people put him over them for head and commander. And Jephthah spoke all his words before Yehvah in the Mizpah.

[12] And Jephthah sent messengers to king of sons of Ammon saying, “What to me and to you that you come to me to wage war in my land?” [13] And king of sons of Ammon said to Jephthah's messengers, “Because Israel took, in his going up from Egypt, from Arnon and unto the Jabbok and unto the Jordan. And now, return them in peace.”

[14] And Jephthah yet again sent messengers to king of sons of Ammon. [15] And he said to him, “Thus says Jephthah, 'Israel did not take land of Moab and land of sons of Ammon. [16] For in their going up from Egypt, Israel walked in the wilderness unto Sea of Reeds⁶ and came into Kadesh.⁷ [17] And Israel sent to king of Edom saying, “Please let me pass in your land.” And king of Edom did not listen. And also he sent to king of Moab, and he was not willing. And Israel dwelt in Kadesh. [18] And he walked in the wilderness and went around land of Edom and land of Moab. And he came in from rising of Sun to land of Moab, and they camped beyond Arnon. And they did not enter into boarder of Moab, for Arnon is border of Moab.”

[19] “And Israel sent messengers to Sihon, king of the Amorite, king of Heshbon. And Israel said to him, “Please let us pass in your land unto my place.”⁸ [20] And Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through in his border. And Sihon gathered all his people and camped in Jahaz and fought with Israel. [21] And Yehvah, Gods of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people in hand of Israel. And they struck them, and Israel possessed all the land of the Amorite, the inhabitant of that land. [22] And they possessed every border of the Amorite from Arnon and unto the Jabbok and from the wilderness and unto the

1 יִפְתָּח (yiphttâh) “Jephthah” - see footnote for Joshua 15:43.

2 In other words, Gilead had sex with a prostitute.

3 אֶרֶץ טוֹב ('erets tov) “Good Land” - NKJV, etc. “land of Tob” - similar thing found in 2 Samuel 10:6, 8, “Good Man,” איש טוב (“ish tov”) NKJV “Ish-tob”; KJV “Ishtob”; NAS “men of Tob.”

4 רֵיקִים (rêyqiym) “empty” - see footnote for Judges 9:4.

5 שָׁמַע (shomê'a) “hears” - DRA “who heareth”; ERV, EXB, ICB, NCV, NLV “is listening”; WYC “heareth”; NKJV “will be a witness”; KJV “be witness”; NAS “is witness.”

6 יַם־סוּף (yam-suph) “Sea of Reeds” - see footnote for Exodus 13:18.

7 קַדְשָׁה (qâdhêshâh) “Kadesh” - see footnote for Genesis 14:7.

8 מְקוֹמִי (meqomiy) “my place” KJV, Green, YLT; “our place” NKJV, NAS

Jordan.”

[23] “And now, Yehvah, Gods of Israel, dispossessed the Amorite from before his people Israel. And you should possess it? [24] Is not what Chemosh your gods, he causes you to possess, it you possess? And all that Yehvah our Gods causes before us to possess, it we possess. [25] And now, are you any better than Balak, son of Bird,⁹ king of Moab? Striving, did he strive with Israel? Waging war, did he wage war against them? [26] When Israel dwelt in Heshbon and in her daughters and in Aror¹⁰ and in her daughters and in all the cities that are upon hands of Arnon three hundred years, so why did you not recover them in that time? [27] And I, I have not sinned against you. And you are dealing with me bad to wage war against me. May Yehvah the judge, judge this day between sons of Israel and sons of Ammon.” [28] And king of sons of Ammon did not listen to words of Jephthah that he sent to him.

[29] And spirit of Yehvah was upon Jephthah, and he passed through the Gilead and Manasseh and passed through Mizpah of Gilead; and from Mizpah of Gilead he passed through to sons of Ammon. [30] And Jephthah vowed a vow to Yehvah and said, “If giving, you give sons of Ammon in my hand, [31] so it shall be, the one going out, who goes out from doors of my house to greet me in my returning in peace from sons of Ammon, so he shall be for Yehvah. And I will offer him up, a burnt offering.” [32] And Jephthah passed through to sons of Ammon to wage war against them, and Yehvah gave them in his hand. [33] And he struck them from Aroer unto your going in to Minnith,¹¹ twenty cities, and unto Mourning¹² of Vineyards,¹³ a very great slaughter. And they subdued sons of Ammon before sons of Israel.

[34] And Jephthah came to his house at the Mizpah. And behold, his daughter was coming out to greet him with timbrels and in dancing, and she was his only one. He had no other son or daughter. [35] And it was, when he saw her, so he tore his clothes. And he said, “Ahah, my daughter, bringing low, you have brought me low, and you are among those who trouble me. And I, I have opened my mouth to Yehvah, and I am not able to turn back.”

[36] And she said to him, “My father, you opened your mouth to Yehvah, do to me just as it has come out of your mouth; since Yehvah has performed for you vengeance from your enemies, from sons of Ammon.” [37] And she said to her father, “Do for me this thing. Let me alone two months, and let me go and go down upon the mountains and weep over my virginity, my friends and I.” [38] And he said, “Go.”

And he sent her off two months, and she went, and her friends, and wept over her virginity on the mountains. [39] And it was, at end of two months, so she returned to her father. And he did to her his vow that he vowed. And she did not know a man. And it was a statute in Israel. [40] From days to days daughters of Israel went to recount¹⁴ for the daughter¹⁵ of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in the year.

9 צִפּוֹר (tsippor) “Bird” (same word for “bird” e.g. in Genesis 7:14); NKJV, etc. “Zippor”

10 אֲרֹר (ar`or) “Aror” - this appears to be “Aroer” אֲרֹעַר (aro`êr) spelled slightly different, see Numbers 32:34.

11 מִנִּית (minniyt) “Minnith” - found also in Ezekiel 27:17.

12 אָבֵל (âvêl) “Mourning” = same word as in Genesis 50:11 for “Mourning” of Egypt. See footnote for Genesis 50:11.

13 כְּרָמִים (kerâmiym) “Vineyards” = same word as in Joshua 24:13 (“vineyards”).

14 לְתַנּוֹת (letannot) “to recount” CEB; “to tell again” Green; “to lament” NKJV, KJV; “to commemorate” NAS – same root word as is found in Judges 5:11 “recount” NKJV.

15 לְבַת (levat) “for the daughter” EHV, GNT, NLV; “to the daughter” YLT – can be translated either way. For this kind of talking to the dead, see 2 Samuel 1:26; 18:33.