

Judges

or, Deliverers from Oppression

1:1 Subsequent War against Canaan. 3:7 Foreign oppression and deliverance.

1 And it came to pass after *the* death of Joshua that *the* children of Israel asked of Jehovah, saying, Who shall go up for us first against the Canaanites, to fight against them? 2 And Jehovah said, Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand. 3 And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him. 4 And Judah went up; and Jehovah delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they smote of them in Bezek ten thousand men. 5 And they found ¹Adoni-bezek in Bezek; and they fought against him, and they smote the Canaanites and the Perizzites. 6 But Adoni-bezek fled; and they pursued after him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. 7 And Adoni-bezek said, Seventy kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered *their food* under my table: as I have done, so God hath requited me. And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

8 And *the* children of Judah fought against Jerusalem, and took it, and smote it with *the* edge of *the* sword, and set the city on fire. 9 And afterward *the* children of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites that dwelt in the hill-country, and in the South, and in the lowland. 10 And Judah went against the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron (now *the* name of Hebron beforetime was ²Kiriath-arba); and they smote Sheshai, and Ahiman, and Talmai.

11 And from thence he went against *the* inhabitants of Debir. (Now *the* name of Debir beforetime was Kiriath-sepher.) 12 And Caleb said, He that smiteth Kiriath-sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achsah my daughter to wife. 13 And Othniel *the* son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it: and he gave him Achsah his daughter to wife. 14 And it came to pass, when she came *unto him*, that she moved him to ask of her father *a* field: and she alighted from off *her* ass; and Caleb said unto her, What wouldest thou? 15 And she said unto him, Give me a ³blessing; for that thou hast ⁴set me in *the* land of the ⁵South, give me also springs of water. And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the nether springs.

¹ Meaning, Lord of Bezek or, Lord of Lightning

² Kiriath meaning City of And so elsewhere.

³ Or, present;

⁴ Or, given me *the* land of the South,

⁵ Hb. Negev (spelled Negeb), meaning South,

16 and *the* children of *the* Kenite, Moses' ⁶brother-in-law, went up out of the city of palm-trees with the children of Judah into *the* wilderness of Judah, which is in *the* south of Arad; and they went and dwelt with the people. 17 And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they smote the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and ⁷utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah. 18 Also Judah took Gaza with the border thereof, and Ashkelon with the border thereof, and Ekron with the border thereof. 19 And Jehovah was with Judah; and he drove out *the inhabitants of* the hill-country; for he could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron. 20 And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moses had spoken: and he drove out thence the three sons of Anak. 21 And *the* children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

22 And *the* house of Joseph, they also went up against Beth-el; and Jehovah was with them. 23 And *the* house of Joseph sent to spy out Beth-el. (Now *the* name of the city beforetime was Luz.) 24 And the watchers saw a man come forth out of the city, and they said unto him, show us, we pray thee, the entrance into the city, and we will deal kindly with thee. 25 And he showed them the entrance into the city; and they smote the city with *the* edge of *the* sword; but they let the man go and all his family. 26 And the man went into *the* land of the Hittites, and built a city, and called *the* name thereof Luz, which is *the* name thereof unto this day.

27 And Manasseh did not drive out *the inhabitants of* Beth-shean and its ⁸towns, nor of Taanach and its towns, nor the inhabitants of Dor and its towns, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and its towns, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and its towns; but the Canaanites would dwell in that land. 28 And it came to pass, when Israel was waxed strong, that they put the Canaanites to taskwork, and did not utterly drive them out.

29 And Ephraim drove not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.

30 Zebulun drove not out the inhabitants of Kitron, nor the inhabitants of Nahalol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became subject to taskwork.

⁶ Or, father-in-law,

⁷ Hb. devoted it.

⁸ Hb. daughters,

31 Asher drove not out the inhabitants of Acco, nor the inhabitants of Sidon, nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib, nor of Helbah, nor of Aphik, nor of Rehob; 32 but the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, *the* inhabitants of the land: for they did not drive them out.

33 Naphtali drove not out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, nor the inhabitants of Beth-anath; but he dwelt among the Canaanites, *the* inhabitants of the land: nevertheless *the* inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became subject to taskwork.

34 And the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the hill-country; for they would not suffer them to come down to the valley; 35 but the Amorites would dwell in mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim: yet *the* hand of *the* house of Joseph prevailed, so that they became subject to taskwork. 36 And *the* border of the Amorites *was* from *the* ascent of Akrabbim, from the ⁹rock, and upward.

2 And ¹⁰*the* angel of Jehovah came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you: 2 and ye shall make no covenant with *the* inhabitants of this land; ye shall break down their altars. But ye have not hearkened unto my voice: why have ye done this? 3 wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be *as thorns* in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. 4 And it came to pass, when *the* angel of Jehovah spake these words unto all *the* children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept. 5 And they called *the* name of that place ¹¹Bochim: and they sacrificed there unto Jehovah.

6 Now when Joshua had sent the people away, *the* children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land. 7 And the people served Jehovah all *the* days of Joshua, and all *the* days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work of Jehovah that he had wrought for Israel. 8 And Joshua *the* son of Nun, *the* servant of Jehovah, died, *being* a hundred ten years old. 9 And they buried him in *the* border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in *the* hill-country of Ephraim, on *the* north of *the* mountain of Gaash. 10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, that knew not Jehovah, nor yet the work which he had wrought for Israel.

11 And *the* children of Israel did that which was evil in *the* sight of Jehovah, and served the ¹²Baalim; 12 and they forsook Jehovah, *the* God of their fathers, who brought them out of *the* land of Egypt, and

⁹ Or, Sela,

¹⁰ Or, a messenger of Jehovah

¹¹ That is, Weepers:

¹² Plural of Baal or, lords;

followed other gods, of *the* gods of the peoples that *were* round about them, and bowed themselves down unto them: and they provoked Jehovah to anger. 13 And they forsook Jehovah, and served Baal and the Ashtaroth. 14 And *the* anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into *the* hands of spoilers that despoiled them; and he sold them into *the* hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. 15 Whithersoever they went out, *the* hand of Jehovah was against them for evil, as Jehovah had spoken, and as Jehovah had sworn unto them: and they were sore distressed.

16 And Jehovah raised up judges, who saved them out of *the* hand of those that despoiled them. 17 And yet they hearkened not unto their judges; for they played *the* harlot after other gods, and bowed themselves down unto them: they turned aside quickly out of the way wherein their fathers walked, obeying *the* commandments of Jehovah; *but* they did not so. 18 And when Jehovah raised them up judges, then Jehovah was with the judge, and saved them out of *the* hand of their enemies all *the* days of the judge: for it repented Jehovah because of their groaning by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. 19 But it came to pass, when the judge was dead, *that* they turned back, and dealt more corruptly than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; ¹³they ceased not from their doings, nor from their stubborn way. 20 And *the* anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel; and he said, Because this nation have transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not hearkened unto my voice; 21 I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations that Joshua left when he died; 22 that by them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of Jehovah to walk therein, as their fathers did keep *it*, or not. 23 So Jehovah left those nations, without driving them out hastily; neither delivered he them into *the* hand of Joshua.

3 Now these *are* the nations which Jehovah left, to prove Israel by them, *even* as many of *Israel* as had not known all *the* wars of Canaan; 2 only that *the* generations of *the* children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at *the* least such as beforetime knew nothing thereof: 3 *namely, the* five lords of *the* Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites that dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon unto *the* entrance of Hamath. 4 And they were *left*, to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah, which he commanded their fathers by Moses. 5 And *the* children of Israel dwelt among the

¹³ *Hb.* they let nothing fall of their doings,

Canaanites, the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites: 6 and they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their own daughters to their sons and served their gods.

7 And *the* children of Israel did that which was evil in *the* sight of Jehovah, and forgot Jehovah their God, and served the Baalim and the Asheroth. 8 Therefore the anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into *the* hand of ¹⁴Cushan-rishathaim king of ¹⁵Mesopotamia: and *the* children of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years. 9 And when the children of Israel cried unto Jehovah, Jehovah raised up a saviour to *the* children of Israel, who saved them, *even* Othniel *the* son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. 10 And *the* Spirit of Jehovah came upon him, and he judged Israel; and he went out to war, and Jehovah delivered Cushan-rishathaim king of ¹⁶Mesopotamia into his hand: and his hand prevailed against Cushan-rishathaim. 11 And the land had rest forty years. And Othniel *the* son of Kenaz died.

12 And *the* children of Israel again did that which was evil in *the* sight of Jehovah: and Jehovah strengthened Eglon *the* king of Moab against Israel, because they had done that which was evil in *the* sight of Jehovah. 13 And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek; and he went and smote Israel, and they possessed the city of palm-trees. 14 And *the* children of Israel served Eglon *the* king of Moab eighteen years.

15 But when *the* children of Israel cried unto Jehovah, Jehovah raised them up a saviour, Ehud *the* son of Gera, the Benjamite, a man left-handed. And *the* children of Israel sent tribute by him unto Eglon *the* king of Moab. 16 And Ehud made him a sword which had two edges, a cubit in length; and he girded it under his raiment upon his right thigh. 17 And he offered the tribute unto Eglon king of Moab: now Eglon *was* a very fat man. 18 And when he had made an end of offering the tribute, he sent away the people that bare the tribute. 19 But he himself turned back from the ¹⁷quarries that *were* by Gilgal, and said, I have a secret errand unto thee, O king. And he said, Keep silence. And all *that* stood by him went out from him. 20 And Ehud came unto him; and he was sitting by himself alone in the cool upper room. And Ehud said, I have a message from God unto thee. And he arose out of *his* seat. 21 And Ehud put forth his left hand, and took the sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into his body: 22 and the haft also went in after the blade; and the fat

¹⁴ Or, Cushan, *the* very Wicked, *And so everywhere.* Possibly Khuzziyash of the Anatolian "Hittites."

¹⁵ Hb. Aram-naharaim: *or*, Aram between *the* two Rivers:

¹⁶ Hb. Aram

¹⁷ Or, graven images that *were* Similarly in vs. 26.

closed upon the blade, for he drew not the sword out of his body; and ¹⁸it came out behind. 23 Then Ehud went forth into the porch, and shut *the* doors of the upper room upon him, and locked *them*.

24 Now when he was gone out, his servants came; and they saw, and, behold, *the* doors of the upper room *were* locked; and they said, Surely he is covering his feet in the upper chamber. 25 And they tarried till they were ashamed; and, behold, he opened not *the* doors of the upper room: therefore they took the key, and opened *them*, and, behold, their lord *was* fallen down dead on *the* earth.

26 And Ehud escaped while they tarried, and passed beyond the quarries, and escaped unto Seirah. 27 And it came to pass, when he was come, that he blew a trumpet in *the* hill-country of Ephraim; and *the* children of Israel went down with him from the hill-country, and he before them. 28 And he said unto them, Follow after me; for Jehovah hath delivered your enemies the Moabites into your hand. And they went down after him, and took the fords of the Jordan against *the* Moabites, and suffered not a man to pass over. 29 And they smote of Moab at that time about ten thousand men, every lusty man, and every man of valor; and there escaped not a man. 30 So Moab was subdued that day under *the* hand of Israel. And the land had rest eighty years.

31 And after him was Shamgar *the* son of Anath, who smote of the Philistines six hundred men with an ox-goad: and he also saved Israel.

4 And *the* children of Israel again did that which was evil in *the* sight of Jehovah, when Ehud was dead. 2 And Jehovah sold them into *the* hand of ¹⁹Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host *was* Sisera, who dwelt in Harosheth of the ²⁰Gentiles. 3 And *the* children of Israel cried unto Jehovah: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.

Now Deborah, a prophetess, *the* wife of Lappidoth, she judged Israel at that time. 5 And she ²¹dwelt under *the* palm-tree of Deborah between Ramah and Beth-el in *the* hill-country of Ephraim: and *the* children of Israel came up to her for judgment. 6 And she sent and called Barak *the* son of Abinoam out of Kedesh-naphtali, and said unto him, Hath not Jehovah, *the* God of Israel, commanded, *saying*, Go and draw unto mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of *the* children of Naphtali and of *the* children of Zebulun? 7 And I will draw unto thee, to *the* river Kishon, Sisera, *the* captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his

¹⁸ Or, he went out into the antechamber.

¹⁹ Likely a title. Cf. Josh 11:1, *two centuries earlier.*

²⁰ Or, nations. Hb. Goiim. Cf. Ge 14:1 and footnote

²¹ Or, sat

multitude; and I will deliver him into thy hand. 8 And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, I will not go. 9 And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding, the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honor; for Jehovah will sell Sisera into *the* hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh. 10 And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali together to Kedesh; and there went up ten thousand men at his feet: and Deborah went up with him.

11 Now Heber ²²the Kenite had separated himself from the Kenites, *even* from the children of Hobab the ²³brother-in-law of Moses and had pitched his tent as far as the ²⁴oak in Zaananim, which is by Kedesh.

12 And they told Sisera that Barak *the* son of Abinoam was gone up to mount Tabor. 13 And Sisera gathered together all his chariots, *even* nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that *were* with him, from Harosheth of the Gentiles, unto *the* river Kishon. 14 And Deborah said unto Barak, *Get* up; for ²⁵this *is* the day in which Jehovah hath delivered Sisera into thy hand; is not Jehovah gone out before thee? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. 15 And Jehovah discomfited Sisera, and all *his* chariots, and all *his* host, with *the* edge of *the* sword before Barak; and Sisera ²⁶alighted from *his* chariot, and fled away on his feet. 16 But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the ²⁷Gentiles: and all *the* host of Sisera fell by *the* edge of *the* sword; there was not a man left.

17 Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to *the* tent of Jael *the* wife of Heber the Kenite; for *there* was peace between Jabin *the* king of Hazor and *the* house of Heber the Kenite. 18 And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not. And he turned in unto her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. 19 And he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink; for I am thirsty. And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him. 20 And he said unto her, Stand in *the* door of the tent, and it shall be, when any man doth come and inquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here: that thou shalt say, No. 21 Then Jael Heber's wife took a tent-pin, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the pin into his temples, and it pierced through into the ground; for he

²² *Hb.* Kain. See Nu 24:22.

²³ *Or*, father-in-law

²⁴ *Or*, terebinth

²⁵ *It might be inferred that from mount Tabor one could see storm clouds coming from the South, which mount Carmel would hide from view on the road from Harosheth to Megiddo and Taanach.*

²⁶ *By implication, the chariots were mired in mud.*

²⁷ *Or*, nations. *Hb.* Goim.

was ²⁸in a deep sleep; so he swooned and died. 22 And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come, and I will show thee the man whom thou seekest. And he came unto her; and, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the tent-pin *was* in his temples.

23 So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before *the* children of Israel. 24 And *the* hand of *the* children of Israel prevailed more and more against Jabin *the* king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

5 Then sang Deborah and Barak *the* son of Abinoam on that day, saying,

2 For that *the* leaders took *the* lead in Israel,

For that *the* people offered themselves willingly,
Bless ye Jehovah.

3 Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes;

I, *even* I, will sing unto Jehovah;

I will sing *praise* to Jehovah, *the* God of Israel.

4 Jehovah, when thou wentest forth out of Seir,

When thou marchedst out of *the* field of Edom,

The earth trembled, *the* heavens also dropped,

Yes, ²⁹*the* clouds dropped water.

5 *The* mountains quaked at *the* presence of Jehovah,

Even you Sinai at *the* presence of Jehovah, *the* God of Israel.

6 In *the* days of Shamgar *the* son of Anath,

In *the* days of Jael, ³⁰*the* highways were unoccupied,

And *the* travellers walked through ³¹byways.

7 ³²*The* rulers ceased in Israel, they ceased,

Until that I Deborah arose,

That I arose a mother in Israel.

8 They chose new gods;

Then *was* war in *the* gates:

Was there a shield or spear seen

Among forty thousand in Israel?

9 My heart *is* toward *the* governors of Israel,

³³*That* offered themselves willingly among the people:

Bless ye Jehovah.

10 Tell *of* it, ye that ride on white asses,

Ye that sit on rich carpets,

And ye that walk by the way.

11 ³⁴*Far* from *the* noise of archers, in *the* places of drawing water,

²⁸ *Or*, in a deep sleep and weary; so he died.

²⁹ *Rain would neutralize the archers and immobilize the chariots, leaving foot soldiers without support.*

³⁰ *Or*, the caravans ceased,

³¹ *Hb.* crooked ways.

³² *Or*, *The* villages were unoccupied,

³³ *Or*, Ye that offered yourselves willingly among the people, bless ye Jehovah.

³⁴ *Or*, Because of *the* voice of *the* archers...there let them rehearse *the* righteous acts of Jehovah,

There shall they rehearse *the* righteous acts of Jehovah,
Even the righteous acts ³⁵of his rule in Israel.
 Then *the* people of Jehovah went down to the gates.
 12 Awake, awake, Deborah;
 Awake, awake, utter a song:
 Arise, Barak, and lead away thy captives, thou son of Abinoam.
 13 ³⁶Then came down a remnant of *the* nobles ³⁷*and the* people;
 Jehovah came down for me ³⁸against the mighty.
 14 Out of Ephraim *came down* they whose root is in Amalek;
 After thee, Benjamin, among thy peoples;
 Out of Machir came down ³⁹governors,
 And out of Zebulun they that handle ⁴⁰*the* marshal's staff.
 15 And ⁴¹the princes of Issachar *were* with Deborah;
 As was Issachar, so was Barak;
 Into the valley they rushed forth at his feet.
 By *the* watercourses of Reuben
There were great resolves of heart.
 16 ⁴²Why satest thou among the sheepfolds,
 To hear *the* pipings for *the* flocks?
 At *the* watercourses of Reuben
There were great searchings of heart.
 17 Gilead abode beyond the Jordan:
 And Dan, why did he remain in ships?
 Asher sat still at *the* ⁴³haven of *the* sea,
 And abode by his creeks.
 18 Zebulun *was* a people *that* jeopardized his soul unto the death,
 And Naphtali, upon *the* high places of *the* field.
 19 *The* kings came *and* fought;
 Then fought *the* kings of Canaan,
 In Taanach by *the* waters of Megiddo:
 They took no gain of money.
 20 From heaven fought the stars,
 From their courses they fought against Sisera.
 21 *The* river Kishon ⁴⁴swept them away,

³⁵ *Or*, toward his villages in Israel.

³⁶ *Or*, Then go down, O remnant, for *the* nobles...
 O Jehovah, go down for me against the mighty.
or, Then made he a remnant to have dominion over *the* nobles *and the* people; Jehovah made me have dominion over the mighty.

³⁷ *Or as otherwise punctuated*, *The* people of Jehovah came down for me among (*or*, against) the mighty.

³⁸ *Or*, among

³⁹ *Or*, lawgivers,

⁴⁰ *Or*, *the* staff of *the* scribe.

⁴¹ *Or*, my princes in Issachar *were* with Deborah;

⁴² *Apparently Reuben, Gad, Dan and Asher did not support the battle.*

⁴³ *Or*, shore

That ancient river, *the* river Kishon.
 O my soul, ⁴⁵march on with strength.
 22 Then did *the* horsehoofs stamp
 By reason of *the* prancings, *the* prancings of their strong ones.
 23 Curse ye Meroz, said *the* angel of Jehovah.
 Curse ye bitterly *the* inhabitants thereof,
 Because they came not to *the* help of Jehovah,
 To *the* help of Jehovah ⁴⁶against *the* mighty.
 24 Blessed ⁴⁷above women shall Jael be,
The wife of Heber the Kenite;
 Blessed shall she be above women in the tent.
 25 He asked water, *and* she gave *him* milk;
 She brought him butter in a lordly dish.
 26 She put her hand to the tent-pin,
 And her right *hand* to *the* workmen's hammer;
 And with *the* hammer she smote Sisera, she smote through his head;
 Yes, she pierced and struck through his temples.
 27 At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay;
 At her feet he bowed, he fell:
 Where he bowed, there he fell down ⁴⁸dead.
 28 Through the window she looked forth, and cried,
The mother of Sisera *cried* through the lattice,
 Why is his chariot *so* long in coming?
 Why tarry *the* ⁴⁹wheels of his chariots?
 29 Her wise ladies answered her,
⁵⁰Yes, she returned answer to herself,
 30 Have they not found, have they *not* divided *the* spoil?
 A damsel, two damsels to every man;
 To Sisera a spoil of dyed garments,
 A spoil of dyed garments embroidered,
 Of dyed garments embroidered on both sides, on *the* necks of *the* spoil?
 31 So let all thine enemies perish, O Jehovah:
 But *let* them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.
 And the land had rest forty years.

6 And *the* children of Israel⁵¹ did that which was evil in *the* sight of Jehovah: and Jehovah delivered them into *the* hand of Midian seven years. **2** And *the* hand of Midian prevailed against Israel; *and* because of Midian *the* children of Israel made them the dens which *are* in

⁴⁴ *The* rainstorm evidently produced a flash flood, giving the chariots no opportunity to evade.
 (Cf. *the* 600 Egyptian chariots in the Red Sea.)

⁴⁵ *Or*, thou hast trodden down strength.

⁴⁶ *Or*, among

⁴⁷ *Or*, of (*both times*)

⁴⁸ *Or*, overpowered.

⁴⁹ *Hb.* steps

⁵⁰ *Or*, (Yet she repeateth her words unto herself),

⁵¹ *Absence of the word* again *may imply* Gideon was contemporary with Deborah and Barak.

the mountains, and the caves, and the strongholds. 3 And *so* it was, when Israel had sown, that *the* Midianites came up, and *the* Amalekites, and *the* children of *the* east; they came up against them; 4 and they encamped against them, and destroyed the increase of the earth, till thou come unto Gaza, and left no sustenance in Israel, neither sheep, nor ox, nor ass. 5 For they came up with their cattle and their tents; they came in as locusts for multitude; both they and their camels were without number: and they came into the land to destroy it. 6 And Israel was brought very low because of Midian; and *the* children of Israel cried unto Jehovah.

7 And it came to pass, when *the* children of Israel cried unto Jehovah because of Midian, 8 that Jehovah sent a prophet unto *the* children of Israel: and he said unto them, Thus saith Jehovah, *the* God of Israel, I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of *the* house of bondage; 9 and I delivered you out of *the* hand of the Egyptians, and out of *the* hand of all that oppressed you, and drove them out from before you, and gave you their land; 10 and I said unto you, I *am* Jehovah your God; ye shall not fear the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell. But ye have not hearkened unto my voice.

11 And *the* angel of Jehovah came, and sat under the ⁵²oak which *was* in Ophrah, that *pertained* unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the winepress, to hide *it* from *the* Midianites. 12 And *the* angel of Jehovah appeared unto him, and said unto him, Jehovah *is* with thee, thou mighty man of valor. 13 And Gideon said unto him, Oh, my lord, if Jehovah *is* with us, why then *is* all this befallen us? and where *are* all his wondrous works which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not Jehovah bring us up from Egypt? but now Jehovah hath cast us off, and delivered us into *the* hand of Midian. 14 And Jehovah ⁵³looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and save Israel from *the* hand of Midian: have not I sent thee? 15 And he said unto him, Oh, ⁵⁴Jehovah, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my ⁵⁵family *is* the poorest in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house. 16 And Jehovah said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. 17 And he said unto him, If now I have found favor in thy sight, then show me a sign that it is thou that talkest with me. 18 Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my ⁵⁶present, and lay *it* before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again.

⁵² Or, terebinth *And in vs. 19.*

⁵³ Or, turned towards him,

⁵⁴ Sopherim *changed to* Lord,

⁵⁵ *Hb.* thousand

⁵⁶ Or, offering

19 And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of meal: the flesh he put in *a* basket, and he put the broth in *a* pot, and brought *it* out unto him under the oak, and presented *it*. 20 And the angel of God said unto him, Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay *them* upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so. 21 Then *the* angel of Jehovah put forth the end of the staff that *was* in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there went up fire out of the rock and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and *the* angel of Jehovah departed out of his sight. 22 And Gideon saw that he *was* *the* angel of Jehovah; and Gideon said, Alas, O Lord Jehovah! forasmuch as I have seen *the* angel of Jehovah face to face. 23 And Jehovah said unto him, Peace *be* unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die. 24 Then Gideon built an altar there unto Jehovah, and called it ⁵⁷Jehovah-shalom: unto this day it *is* yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

25 And it came to pass the same night, that Jehovah said unto him, Take thy father's bullock, ⁵⁸even the second bullock seven years *old*, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the Asherah that *is* ⁵⁹by it; 26 and build an altar unto Jehovah thy God upon *the* top of this stronghold, ⁶⁰in the orderly manner, and take the second bullock, and offer *a* burnt-offering with *the* wood of the Asherah which thou shalt cut down. 27 Then Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as Jehovah had spoken unto him: and it came to pass, because he feared his father's household and the men of the city, so that he could not do *it* by day, that he did *it* by night.

28 And when *the* men of the city arose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Baal was broken down, and the Asherah was cut down that *was* ⁶¹by it, and the second bullock was offered upon the altar that *was* built. 29 And they said one to another, Who hath done this thing? And when they inquired and asked, they said, Gideon *the* son of Joash hath done this thing. 30 Then *the* men of the city said unto Joash, Bring out thy son, that he may die, because he hath broken down the altar of Baal, and because he hath cut down the Asherah that *was* by it. 31 And Joash said unto all that stood against him, Will ye contend for Baal? or will ye save him? he that will contend for him, ⁶²let him be put to death ⁶³whilst *it is yet* morning: if he *be* a god, let him contend for himself, because *one* hath broken down his altar. 32 Therefore on that day he called him

⁵⁷ *That is,* Jehovah *is* peace:

⁵⁸ Or, and

⁵⁹ Or, upon

⁶⁰ Or, with that pertaining to it,

⁶¹ Or, upon it, *And similarly in vs. 30.*

⁶² Or, shall be put to death: *let be* till morning;

⁶³ Or, before morning:

⁶⁴Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal contend against him, because he hath broken down his altar.

33 Then all *the* Midianites and *the* Amalekites and *the* children of *the* east assembled themselves together; and they passed over, and encamped in *the* valley of Jezreel. 34 But *the* Spirit of Jehovah ⁶⁵came upon Gideon; and he blew *a* trumpet; and Abiezer was gathered together after him. 35 And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh; and they also were gathered together after him: and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they came up to meet them.

36 And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by my hand, as thou hast spoken, 37 behold, I will put a fleece of wool on the threshing-floor; if there be dew on the fleece only, and *it be* dry upon all the ground, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by my hand, as thou hast spoken. 38 And it was so; for he rose up early on *the* morrow, and pressed the fleece together, and wrung *the* dew out of the fleece, *a* bowlful of water. 39 And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be kindled against me, and I will speak but *this* once: let me make trial, I pray thee, but *this* once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. 40 And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground.

7 Then Jerubbaal, who *is* Gideon, and all the people that *were* with him, rose up early, and encamped beside *the* spring of ⁶⁶Harod: and *the* camp of Midian was on *the* north side of them, ⁶⁷by the hill of Moreh, in the valley.

2 And Jehovah said unto Gideon, The people that *are* with thee *are* too many for me to give the Midianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me. 3 Now therefore proclaim in *the* ears of the people, saying, Whosoever *is* fearful and trembling, let him return and ⁶⁸depart from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people twenty-two thousand; and there remained ten thousand.

4 And Jehovah said unto Gideon, The people *are* yet *too* many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, *that* of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, *the* same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, *the* same shall not go. 5 So he brought down the people unto the water: and Jehovah said unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as *a* dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by

⁶⁴ *That is,* Let Baal contend,

⁶⁵ *Hb.* clothed itself with Gideon;

⁶⁶ *That is,* Trembling: See vs. 3.

⁶⁷ *Or,* from the hill of Moreh *onwards* in the valley.

⁶⁸ *Or,* go round about mount Gilead.

himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink. 6 And *the* number of them that lapped, *putting* their hand to their mouth, was three hundred men: but all *the* rest of the people bowed down upon their knees to drink water. 7 And Jehovah said unto Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thy hand; and let all the people go every man unto his place. 8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets; ⁶⁹and he sent all *the* men of Israel every man unto his tent, but retained the three hundred men: and *the* camp of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

9 And it came to pass the same night, that Jehovah said unto him, Arise, get thee down ⁷⁰into the camp; for I have delivered it into thy hand. 10 But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Purah thy servant down to the camp: 11 and thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thy hands be strengthened to go down into the camp. Then went he down with Purah his servant unto *the* outermost part of the armed men that *were* in the camp. 12 And *the* Midianites and *the* Amalekites and all *the* children of *the* east lay along in the valley like locusts for multitude; and their camels *were* without number, as the sand which is upon the seashore for multitude. 13 And when Gideon was come, behold, *there was* a man telling a dream unto his fellow: and he said, Behold, I dreamed a dream; and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into *the* camp of Midian, and came unto the tent, and smote it so that it fell, and turned it upside down, so that the tent lay flat. 14 And his fellow answered and said, This *is* nothing else save *the* sword of Gideon *the* son of Joash, a man of Israel: into his hand God hath delivered Midian, and all the host.

15 And it was *so*, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped; and he returned into *the* camp of Israel, and said, Arise; for Jehovah hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian. 16 And he divided the three hundred men *into* ⁷¹three companies, and he put into *the* hands of all of them trumpets, and empty pitchers, with torches within the pitchers. 17 And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to *the* outermost part of the camp, it shall be *that*, as I do, so shall ye do. 18 When I blow the trumpet, I and all that *are* with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, For Jehovah and for Gideon.

⁶⁹ *Perhaps leaving the Midianites to worry where the other 31,700 Israelites might now be.*

⁷⁰ *Or,* against

⁷¹ *Logically, with the river to the south, one company blocking upstream (west), one downstream (east), and the third between the two hills to the north.*

19 So Gideon, and *the* hundred men that *were* with him, came unto *the* outermost part of the camp in *the* beginning of the middle watch, when they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake in pieces the pitchers that *were* in their hands. 20 And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the torches in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands wherewith to blow; and they cried, ⁷²*The sword of Jehovah and of Gideon.* 21 And they stood every man in his place round about the camp; and all the host ran; and they shouted, and ⁷³put *them* to flight. 22 And they blew the three hundred trumpets, and Jehovah ⁷⁴set every man's sword against his fellow, and against all the host; and the host fled as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as *the* ⁷⁵border of Abel-meholah, by Tabbath. 23 And *the* men of Israel were gathered together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after Midian.

24 And Gideon sent messengers throughout all *the* hill-country of Ephraim, saying, Come down against Midian, and take before them the waters, as far as Beth-barah, ⁷⁶even the Jordan. So all *the* men of Ephraim were gathered together, and took the waters as far as Beth-barah, even the Jordan. 25 And they took *the* two princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb; and they slew Oreb at *the* rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they slew at *the* winepress of Zeeb, and pursued Midian: and they brought *the* heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon beyond the Jordan.

8 And *the* men of Ephraim said unto him, ⁷⁷Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with Midian? And they did chide with him sharply. 2 And he said unto them, What have I now done in comparison with you? *Is* not *the* gleaning of *the* grapes of Ephraim better than *the* vintage of Abiezer? 3 God hath delivered into your hand the princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb: and what was I able to do in comparison with you? Then their ⁷⁸anger was abated toward him, when he had said that.

4 And Gideon came to the Jordan, ⁷⁹and passed over, he, and the three hundred men that *were* with him,

⁷² Or, A sword for Jehovah and for Gideon

⁷³ Or, seized *their goods*. Hb^{mg}, Sept., Aram., Vg. read fled.

⁷⁴ *Soldiers fleeing from the Israelites at night would appear to the rest of the camp to be invading Israelites.*

⁷⁵ Hb. lip

⁷⁶ Or, and also the Jordan. (*both times*)

⁷⁷ *Ephraim's pride of preeminence staked its claim on Ge 48:20, Joshua and Deborah, and later reached its worst at the time of Jephthah, in ch. 12:1-6.*

⁷⁸ Hb. spirit

⁷⁹ Or, to pass over,

faint, yet pursuing. 5 And he said unto *the* men of Sukkoth, Give, I pray you, loaves of bread unto the people that follow me; for they *are* faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmunna, *the* kings of Midian. 6 And *the* princes of Sukkoth said, *Are* the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thy hand, that we should give bread unto thine army? 7 And Gideon said, Therefore when Jehovah hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, then I will ⁸⁰tear your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with briers. 8 And he went up thence to Penuel, and spake unto them in like manner; and *the* men of Penuel answered him as *the* men of Sukkoth had answered. 9 And he spake also unto *the* men of Penuel, saying, When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower.

10 Now Zebah and Zalmunna *were* in Karkor, and their hosts with them, about fifteen thousand *men*, all that were left of all *the* host of *the* children of *the* east; for there fell a hundred twenty thousand men that drew sword. 11 And Gideon went up by *the* way of them that dwelt in tents on *the* east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and smote the host; for the host was secure. 12 And Zebah and Zalmunna fled; and he pursued after them; and he took the two kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and ⁸¹discomfited all the host.

13 And Gideon *the* son of Joash returned from the battle from the ascent of Heres. 14 And he caught a young man of *the* men of Sukkoth, and inquired of him: and he ⁸²described for him the princes of Sukkoth, and the elders thereof, seventy-seven men. 15 And he came unto *the* men of Sukkoth, and said, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, concerning whom ye did taunt me, saying, *Are* the hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thy hand, that we should give bread unto thy men that *are* weary? 16 And he took the elders of the city, and thorns of the wilderness and briers, and with them he taught the men of Sukkoth *a lesson*. 17 And he brake down *the* tower of Penuel, and slew the men of the city.

18 Then said he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of men *were they* whom ye slew at Tabor? And they answered, As thou *art*, so *were* they; each one resembled *the* children of a king. 19 And he said, They *were* my brethren, *the* sons of my mother: as Jehovah liveth, if ye had saved them alive, I would not slay you. 20 And he said unto Jether his firstborn, *Get* up, and slay them. But the youth drew not his sword; for he feared, because he *was* yet a youth. 21 Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, Rise thou, and fall upon us; for as the man *is*, so *is* his strength. And Gideon arose, and slew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took the crescents that *were* on their camels' necks.

⁸⁰ Hb. thresh

⁸¹ Hb. terrified

⁸² Or, wrote down for him

22 Then *the* men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also; for thou hast saved us out of *the* hand of Midian. 23 And Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: Jehovah shall rule over you. 24 And Gideon said unto them, I would make a request of you, that ye would give me every man *the* ⁸³ear-rings of his spoil. (For they had golden ear-rings, because they *were* Ishmaelites.) 25 And they answered, We will willingly give *them*. And they spread *a* garment, and did cast therein every man *the* ear-rings of his spoil. 26 And *the* weight of the golden ear-rings that he requested was ⁸⁴a thousand seven hundred *shekels* of gold; besides the crescents, and the pendants, and the purple raiment that *was* on *the* kings of Midian, and besides the chains that *were* about their camels' necks. 27 And Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, *even* in Ophrah: and all Israel played *the* harlot after it there; and it became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house. 28 So Midian was subdued before *the* children of Israel, and they lifted up their heads no more. And the land had rest ⁸⁵forty years in *the* days of Gideon.

⁸³ Or, nose-rings (*both times, and elsewhere below*)

⁸⁴ About 19.7 kg, (at least 1,000 cm³), of gold.

⁸⁵ Likely coinciding with the 40 years of ch 5:31.

While Israel's land had peace, the rest of Canaan was filled with fighting, treachery, and great fear of the Hebrews. These are all reflected in the el-Amarna letters to three 18th-dynasty pharaohs of Egypt, with quotations selected below:

"Thus Milkilu [*prince of Gezer*], thy servant... Let the king [*Akhenaton of Egypt*], my lord, protect his land from the hand of the Habiru [*or, Apiru*]." [EA 271]

"Thus Shuwardata [*prince of the Hebron region*], thy servant, servant of the king and the dirt *under* his two feet, the ground *on* which thou dost tread!... Let the king, my lord, learn that the chief of the Habiru has risen *in arms* against the lands which the god of the king, my lord, gave me; but I have smitten him... All my brethren have abandoned me, and it is I and 'Abdu-Heba [*prince of Jerusalem*] who fight against the chief of the Habiru. And Zurata, prince of Accho, and Indaruta, prince of Achshaph, it was they *who* hastened with fifty chariots – for I had been robbed *by the Habiru* – to my help; but behold, they are fighting against me... let [*Akhenaton*] send Yanhamu, and let us make war in earnest, and let the lands of the king, my lord, be restored to their *former* limits!" [RA XIX]

"Thus 'Abdu-Heba, thy servant... Ilimilku [*Elimelech*] is causing the loss of all the king's land... let the king, my lord, send out troops of archers, *for* the king has no lands *left*! The Habiru plunder all the lands of the king." [EA 286] "Or, shall we do like Lab'ayu [*prince of Shechem*], who gave the land of

29 And Jerubbaal *the* son of Joash went and dwelt in his own house. 30 And Gideon had seventy sons of his body begotten; for he had many wives. 31 And his concubine that *was* in ⁸⁶Shechem, she also bare him a son, and he ⁸⁷called his name Abimelech. 32 And Gideon *the* son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in *the* sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.

33 And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that *the* children of Israel turned again, and played *the* harlot after the Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god. 34 And *the* children of Israel remembered not Jehovah their God, who had delivered them out of *the* hand of all their enemies on every side; 35 neither showed they kindness to *the* house of Jerubbaal, *who is* Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had showed unto Israel.

9 And Abimelech *the* son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem unto his mother's brethren, and spake with them, and with all *the* family of *the* house of his mother's father, saying, 2 Speak, I pray you, in *the*

Shechem to the Habiru? Milkilu has written to Tagu [*prince of the north coastal plain*] and the sons of <Lab'ayu>, saying, 'Ye are members of my house. Yield all of their demands to the men of Keilah [*Shuwardata?*], and let us break our alliance <with> Jerusalem!'" [EA 289] "Behold, this is the deed of Milkilu and the deed of the sons of Lab'ayu who have given the land of the king to the Habiru." [EA 287] "Behold the deed which Milkilu and Shuwardata did to the land of the king, my lord! They rushed troops of Gezer, troops of Gath and troops of Keilah; they took the land of Rubutu; the land of the king went over to the Habiru people. But now even a town of the land of Jerusalem, Bit-Lahmi [*Beth-lehem*] by name, a town belonging to the king, has gone over to the side of the people of Keilah. Let my king...send archers... But if there are no archers, the land of the king will pass over to the Habiru people." [EA 290] See J.B. Pritchard, "Ancient Near Eastern Texts."

If the surprise victories of Barak and Gideon were in BC 1378, the corresponding Dynasty 18 Egyptian kings were, according to R.A. Parker's dates:

Amenhotep III	BC 1397-1360
Amenhotep IV (Akhenaton)	1370-1353
Semenkhare	1355-1352
Tutankhamon ("King Tut")	1352-1343
Ay	1343-1339

The 18th dynasty kings and Israel had both opposed the 15th dynasty Hyksos at the time of the Exodus. These kings knew of the Exodus plagues and hence likely dreaded to tangle with Israel. See footnote on Ex 12:30.

⁸⁶ *The chief city of Ephraim (before Omri and Ahab).*

⁸⁷ *Hb. set*

ears of all *the* men of Shechem, Whether is *it* better for you, that all *the* sons of Jerubbaal, *who are* seventy persons, rule over you, or that one rule over you? remember also that I *am* your bone and your flesh. 3 And his mother's brethren spake of him in *the* ears of all *the* men of Shechem all these words: and their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech; for they said, He *is* our brother. 4 And they gave him seventy *pieces* of silver out of *the* house of Baal-berith, wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light fellows, who followed him. 5 And he went unto his father's house at Ophrah, and slew his brethren *the* sons of Jerubbaal, *being* seventy persons, upon one stone: but Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left; for he hid himself. 6 And all *the* men of Shechem assembled themselves together, and all ⁸⁸*the* house of Millo, and went and made Abimelech king, by *the* ⁸⁹oak of *the* ⁹⁰pillar that *was* in Shechem.

7 And when they told *it* to Jotham, he went and stood on *the* top of mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. 8 The trees went forth *on a time* to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive-tree, Reign thou over us. 9 But the olive-tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, ⁹¹wherewith by me they honor God and man, and go to wave to and fro over the trees? 10 And the trees said to the fig-tree, Come thou, *and* reign over us. 11 But the fig-tree said unto them, Should I leave my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to wave to and fro over the trees? 12 And the trees said unto the vine, Come thou, *and* reign over us. 13 And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my new wine, that cheereth God and man, and go to wave to and fro over the trees? 14 Then said all the trees unto the ⁹²bramble, Come thou, *and* reign over us. 15 And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, *then* come *and* take refuge in my shade; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon. 16 Now therefore, if ye have dealt truly and uprightly, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to *the* deserving of his hands 17 (for my father fought for you, and adventured his soul, and delivered you out of *the* hand of Midian: 18 and ye are risen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, seventy persons, upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, *the* son of his maid-servant, king over *the* men of Shechem, because he *is* your

⁸⁸ *Or*, Beth-millo

⁸⁹ *Or*, terebinth

⁹⁰ *Or*, garrison

⁹¹ *Or*, which God and man honor in me,

⁹² *Or*, thorn, *And similarly below.*

brother); 19 if ye then have dealt truly and uprightly with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, *then* rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you: 20 but if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from *the* men of Shechem, and from *the* house of Millo, and devour Abimelech. 21 And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his *half*-brother.

22 And Abimelech was prince over Israel three years. 23 And God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and *the* men of Shechem; and *the* men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech: 24 that *the* violence *done* to *the* seventy sons of Jerubbaal might come, and that their blood might be laid upon Abimelech their brother, who slew them, and upon *the* men of Shechem, who strengthened his hands to slay his brethren. 25 And *the* men of Shechem set liers-in-wait for him on *the* tops of the mountains, and they robbed all that came along that way by them: and it was told Abimelech.

26 And Gaal *the* son of Ebed came with his brethren, and went over to Shechem; and *the* men of Shechem put their trust in him. 27 And they went out into the field, and gathered their vineyards, and trod *the grapes*, and ⁹³held festival, and went into *the* house of their god, and did eat and drink, and cursed Abimelech. 28 And Gaal *the* son of Ebed said, Who *is* Abimelech, and who *is* Shechem, that we should serve him? *Is* not *he* *the* son of Jerubbaal? And Zebul his officer? Serve ye the men of Hamor *the* father of Shechem: but why should we serve him? 29 And would that this people were under my hand! Then would I remove Abimelech. And he said ⁹⁴to Abimelech, Increase thine army, and come out.

30 And when Zebul *the* ruler of the city heard the words of Gaal *the* son of Ebed, his anger was kindled. 31 And he sent messengers unto Abimelech ⁹⁵craftily, saying, Behold, Gaal *the* son of Ebed and his brethren are come to Shechem; and, behold, they ⁹⁶constrain the city to *take part* against thee. 32 Now therefore, *get* up by night, thou and the people that *are* with thee, and lie in wait in the field: 33 and it shall be, *that* in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, thou shalt rise early, and rush upon the city; and, behold, *when* he and the people that are with him come out against thee, then mayest thou do to them ⁹⁷as thou shalt find occasion.

34 And Abimelech rose up, and all the people that *were* with him, by night, and they laid wait against Shechem in four companies. 35 And Gaal *the* son of

⁹³ *Or*, offered praise-offerings,

⁹⁴ *Or*, of

⁹⁵ *Or*, in Tormah,

⁹⁶ *Or*, oppress the city on thy account.

⁹⁷ *Hb.* as thy hand shall find.

Ebed went out, and stood in *the* entrance of *the* gate of the city: and Abimelech rose up, and the people that were with him, from the ambushment. 36 And when Gaal saw the people, he said to Zebul, Behold, there come people down from *the* tops of the mountains. And Zebul said unto him, Thou seest the shadow of the mountains as *if they were* men. 37 And Gaal spake again and said, See, there come people down by *the* ⁹⁸middle of the land, and one company cometh by *the* way of ⁹⁹*the* oak of Meonenim. 38 Then said Zebul unto him, Where *is* now thy mouth, that thou saidst, Who *is* Abimelech, that we should serve him? *Is* not this the people that thou hast despised? Go out now, I pray, and fight with them. 39 And Gaal went out before *the* men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech. 40 And Abimelech chased him, and he fled before him, and there fell many wounded, *even* unto *the* entrance of the gate.

41 And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah: and Zebul drove out Gaal and his brethren, that they should not dwell in Shechem. 42 And it came to pass on *the* morrow, that the people went out into the field; and they told Abimelech. 43 And he took the people, and divided them into three companies, and laid wait in the field; and he looked, and, behold, the people came forth out of the city; and he rose up against them, and smote them. 44 And Abimelech, and the companies that *were* with him, rushed forward, and stood in *the* entrance of *the* gate of the city: and the two companies rushed upon all that *were* in the field, and smote them. 45 And Abimelech fought against the city all that day; and he took the city, and slew the people that *were* therein: and he beat down the city, and sowed it with salt.

46 And when all *the* men of *the* tower of Shechem heard *thereof*, they entered into *the* stronghold of *the* house of ¹⁰⁰Elberith. 47 And it was told Abimelech that all *the* men of *the* tower of Shechem were gathered together. 48 And Abimelech gat him up to mount Zalmon, he and all the people that *were* with him; and Abimelech took ¹⁰¹*an* axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from *the* trees, and took it up, and laid *it* on his shoulder: and he said unto the people that *were* with him, what ye have seen me do, make haste, *and* do as *I have done*. 49 And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough, and followed Abimelech, and put *them* to the stronghold, and set the stronghold on fire upon them; so that all *the* men of *the* tower of Shechem died also, about a thousand men and women.

50 Then went Abimelech to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it. 51 But there was a strong

tower within the city, and thither fled all the men and women, and all they of the city, and shut themselves in, and gat them up to *the* roof of the tower. 52 And Abimelech came unto the tower, and fought against it, and drew near unto *the* door of the tower to burn it with fire. 53 And a certain woman cast an upper millstone upon Abimelech's head, and brake his skull. 54 Then he called hastily unto the young man his armorbearer, and said unto him, Draw thy sword, and kill me, that men say not of me, A woman slew him. And his young man thrust him through, and he died. 55 And when *the* men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every man unto his place. 56 Thus God requited the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren; 57 and all the wickedness of *the* men of Shechem did God requite upon their heads: and upon them came *the* curse of Jotham *the* son of Jerubbaal.

10 And after Abimelech there arose to save Israel Tola *the* son of Puah, *the* son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in *the* hill-country of Ephraim. 2 And he judged Israel twenty-three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.

3 And after him arose Jair, the Gileadite; and he judged Israel twenty-two years. 4 And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called ¹⁰²Havvoth-jair unto this day, which *are* in the land of Gilead. 5 And Jair died, and was buried in Kamon.

6 And *the* children of Israel again did *that* which was evil in *the* sight of Jehovah, and served the Baalim, and the Ashtaroth, and the gods of ¹⁰³Syria, and the gods of Sidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook Jehovah, and served him not. 7 And *the* anger of Jehovah was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into *the* hand of *the* Philistines, and into *the* hand of *the* children of Ammon. 8 And they vexed and oppressed the children of Israel that year: eighteen years *oppressed they* all the children of Israel that *were* beyond the Jordan in *the* land of the Amorites, which *is* in Gilead. 9 And *the* children of Ammon passed over the Jordan to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against *the* house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed.

10 And *the* children of Israel cried unto Jehovah, saying, We have sinned against thee, even because we have forsaken our God, and have served the Baalim. 11 And Jehovah said unto *the* children of Israel, *Did* not *I* save you from *the* Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from *the* children of Ammon, and from *the* Philistines? 12 *The* Sidonians also, and *the* Amalekites, and *the* Maonites, did oppress you; and ye

⁹⁸ *Hb.* navel

⁹⁹ *That is, the* augurs' oak (*or, terebinth*).

¹⁰⁰ *Or, the* god Berith. *Cf.* vs. 4, ch. 8:33.

¹⁰¹ *Hb.* the axes in his hand,

¹⁰² *That is, The* towns of Jair

¹⁰³ *Hb.* Aram,

cried unto me, and I saved you out of their hand. 13 Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will save you no more. 14 Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them save you in *the* time of your distress. 15 And *the* children of Israel said unto Jehovah, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; only deliver us, we pray thee, this day. 16 And they put away the foreign gods from among them, and served Jehovah; and his soul was grieved for *the* misery of Israel.

17 Then *the* children of Ammon were gathered together, and encamped in Gilead. And *the* children of Israel assembled themselves together, and encamped in Mizpah. 18 And the people, *the* princes of Gilead, said one to another, What man *is he* that will begin to fight against *the* children of Ammon? he shall be head over all *the* inhabitants of Gilead.

11 Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, and he *was the* son of a harlot: and Gilead begat Jephthah. 2 And Gilead's wife bare him sons; and when *his* wife's sons grew up, they drove out Jephthah, and said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house; for thou *art the* son of another woman. 3 Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in *the* land of Tob: and there were gathered vain fellows to Jephthah, and they went out with him.

4 And it came to pass after a while, that *the* children of Ammon made war against Israel. 5 And it was so, that, when *the* children of Ammon made war against Israel, *the* elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of *the* land of Tob; 6 and they said unto Jephthah, Come and be our chief, that we may fight with *the* children of Ammon. 7 And Jephthah said unto *the* elders of Gilead, did not ye hate me, and drive me out of my father's house? And why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress? 8 And *the* elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore are we turned again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight with *the* children of Ammon; and thou shalt be our head over all *the* inhabitants of Gilead. 9 And Jephthah said unto *the* elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight with *the* children of Ammon, and Jehovah deliver them before me, shall I be your head? 10 And *the* elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Jehovah shall be ¹⁰⁴witness between us; surely according to thy word so will we do. 11 Then Jephthah went with *the* elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and chief over them: and Jephthah spake all his words before Jehovah in Mizpah.

12 And Jephthah sent messengers unto *the* king of *the* children of Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come unto me to fight against my land? 13 And *the* king of *the* children of Ammon answered unto *the* messengers of Jephthah, Because

Israel took away my land, when he came up out of Egypt, from *the* Arnon even unto the Jabbok, and unto the Jordan: now therefore restore those *lands* again peaceably. 14 And Jephthah sent messengers again unto *the* king of *the* children of Ammon; 15 and he said unto him, Thus saith Jephthah: Israel took not away the land of Moab, nor the land of *the* children of Ammon, 16 but when they came up from Egypt, and Israel went through the wilderness unto *the* Red Sea, and came to Kadesh; 17 then Israel sent messengers unto *the* king of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land; but *the* king of Edom hearkened not. And in like manner he sent unto *the* king of Moab; but he would not, and Israel abode in Kadesh. 18 Then they went through the wilderness, and went around the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and came by *the* east side of *the* land of Moab, and they encamped on *the* other side of *the* Arnon; but they came not within *the* border of Moab, for *the* Arnon *was the* border of Moab. 19 And Israel sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, *the* king of Heshbon; and Israel said unto him, Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy land unto my place. 20 But Sihon trusted not Israel to pass through his border; but Sihon gathered all his people together, and encamped in Jahaz, and fought against Israel. 21 And Jehovah, *the* God of Israel, delivered Sihon and all his people into *the* hand of Israel, and they smote them: so Israel possessed all the land of the Amorites, *the* inhabitants of that country. 22 And they possessed all the border of the Amorites, from *the* Arnon even unto the Jabbok, and from the wilderness even unto the Jordan. 23 So now Jehovah, *the* God of Israel, hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel, and shouldest thou possess them? 24 Wilt not thou possess *that* which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever Jehovah our God hath dispossessed from before us, them will we possess. 25 And now *art* thou anything better than Balak *the* son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he ever strive against Israel, or did he ever fight against them? 26 While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and its ¹⁰⁵towns, and in Aroer and its towns, and in all the cities that *are* along by *the* sides of *the* Arnon, three hundred years; wherefore did ye not recover *them* within that time? 27 I therefore have not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong to war against me: Jehovah, the Judge, be judge *this* day between *the* children of Israel and *the* children of Ammon. 28 Howbeit *the* king of *the* children of Ammon hearkened not unto *the* words of Jephthah which he sent him.

29 Then *the* Spirit of Jehovah came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead and Manasse, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto *the* children of Ammon. 30 And

¹⁰⁴ *Hb.* hearer

¹⁰⁵ *Hb.* daughters, (*both times*)

Jephthah vowed a vow unto Jehovah, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver the children of Ammon into my hand, 31 then it shall be, that ¹⁰⁶whatsoever cometh forth from *the* doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from *the* children of Ammon, it shall be Jehovah's, and I will offer it up *for* a burnt-offering. 32 So Jephthah passed over unto *the* children of Ammon to fight against them; and Jehovah delivered them into his hand. 33 And he smote them from Aroer until thou come to Minnith, *even* twenty cities, and unto ¹⁰⁷Abel-Keramim, with a very great slaughter. So *the* children of Ammon were subdued before *the* children of Israel.

34 And Jephthah came to Mizpah unto his house; and, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she *was his* only child; besides her he had neither son nor daughter. 35 And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! Thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me; for I have opened my mouth unto Jehovah, and I cannot go back. 36 And she said unto him, My father, thou hast opened thy mouth unto Jehovah; do unto me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth, forasmuch as Jehovah hath taken vengeance for thee on thine enemies, *even* on *the* children of Ammon. 37 And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may depart and go down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my companions. 38 And he said, Go. And he sent her away *for* two months: and she departed, she and her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. 39 And it came to pass at *the* end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her ¹⁰⁸according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew not man. And it was ¹⁰⁹a custom in Israel, 40 *that the* daughters of Israel went yearly to ¹¹⁰celebrate *the* daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

12 And *the* men of Ephraim were gathered together, and passed ¹¹¹northward; and they said unto Jephthah, Wherefore passedst thou over to fight against *the* children of Ammon, and ¹¹²didst not call us to go with

¹⁰⁶ Or, whosoever *But humans are unclean for slain offerings* (Ge 8:20; Lv 11:3-6.).

¹⁰⁷ That is, *The* meadow of vineyards,

¹⁰⁸ *Burning live people was absolutely forbidden* (Dt 12:31, 18:10; Is 66:24). *Only the abhorred or contagious dead were burned* (Mt 5:29-30; Rv 20:15). *Jephthah's daughter was not slain, as it was not her life that was bewailed, but she was likely devoted to a service of the LORD.*

¹⁰⁹ Or, an ordinance in Israel,

¹¹⁰ Or, lament

¹¹¹ Or, to Zaphon;

¹¹² See footnote on ch. 8:1.

thee? We will burn thy house upon thee with fire. 2 And Jephthah said unto them, I and my people were at great strife with *the* children of Ammon; and when I called you, ye saved me not out of their hand. 3 And when I saw that ye saved *me* not, I put my soul in my hand, and passed over against *the* children of Ammon, and Jehovah delivered them into my hand: wherefore then are ye come up unto me this day, to fight against me? 4 Then Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim; and *the* men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye *are* fugitives of Ephraim, ye Gileadites, in *the* midst of Ephraim, *and* in *the* midst of Manasseh. 5 And the Gileadites took the fords of the Jordan ¹¹³against *the* Ephraimites. And it was *so*, that, when *any of the* fugitives of Ephraim said, Let me go over, *the* men of Gilead said unto him, *Art* thou an Ephraimite? If he said, No; 6 then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth; and he said Sibboleth; for he could not frame to pronounce *it* right: then they laid hold on him, and slew him at *the* fords of the Jordan. And there fell at that time of Ephraim forty-two thousand.

7 And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in *one of the* cities of Gilead.

8 And after him Ibzan of Beth-lehem judged Israel. 9 And he had thirty sons; and thirty daughters he sent abroad, and thirty daughters he brought in from abroad for his sons. And he judged Israel seven years. 10 And Ibzan died, and was buried at Beth-lehem.

11 And after him Elon the Zebulunite judged Israel; and he judged Israel ten years. 12 And Elon the Zebulunite died, and was buried in Aijalon in *the* land of Zebulun.

13 And after him Abdon *the* son of Hillel the Pirathonite judged Israel. 14 And he had forty sons and thirty sons' sons, that rode on seventy ass colts: and he judged Israel eight years. 15 And Abdon *the* son of Hillel the Pirathonite died, and was buried in Pirathon in *the* land of Ephraim, in *the* hill-country of the Amalekites.

13 And *the* children of Israel again did that which was evil in *the* sight of Jehovah; and Jehovah delivered them into ¹¹⁴*the* hand of *the* Philistines forty years.

2 And there was a certain man of Zorah, of *the* family of the Danites, whose name *was* Manoah; and his wife *was* barren, and bare not. 3 And *the* angel of Jehovah appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold

¹¹³ Or, toward Ephraim.

¹¹⁴ *Pharaoh Merneptah of Egypt records on a stone stele, "Israel is laid waste, his seed is not." It simply means that during the Philistine captivity Israel was not a sovereign nation. Likely dates for the Philistine captivity are BC 1246-1207, and the R.A. Parker dates for Merneptah are 1223-1211.*

now, thou art barren, and bearest not; but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. 4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink no wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean *thing*: 5 for, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come upon his head; for the child shall be a Nazirite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to save Israel out of *the* hand of *the* Philistines. 6 Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance *was* like *the* countenance of the angel of God, very awesome; and I asked him not whence he *was*, neither told he me his name: 7 but he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean *thing*; for the child shall be a Nazirite unto God from the womb to *the* day of his death.

8 Then Manoah entreated Jehovah, and said, Oh, ¹¹⁵Jehovah, I pray thee, let the man of God whom thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. 9 And God hearkened to *the* voice of Manoah; and the angel of God came again unto the woman as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband *was* not with her. 10 And the woman made haste, and ran, and told her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the *other* day. 11 And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, *Art* thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I *am*. 12 And Manoah said, ¹¹⁶Now let thy words come to pass: what shall be *the* ordering of the child, and *how* shall we do unto him? 13 And *the* angel of Jehovah said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. 14 She may not eat of *anything* that cometh of the ¹¹⁷vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean *thing*; all that I commanded her let her observe.

15 And Manoah said unto *the* angel of Jehovah, I pray thee, let us detain thee, that we may make ready a kid for thee. 16 And *the* angel of Jehovah said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread; and if thou wilt make ready a *burnt-offering*, thou must offer it unto Jehovah. For Manoah knew not that he *was the* angel of Jehovah. 17 And Manoah said unto *the* angel of Jehovah, what *is* thy name, that, when thy words come to pass, we may do thee honor? 18 And *the* angel of Jehovah said unto him, Wherefore askest thou after my name, seeing it *is* ¹¹⁸wonderful? 19 So Manoah took the kid with the meal-offering, and offered *it* upon the rock unto Jehovah: and *the* angel did wondrously, and Manoah and his wife looked on. 20 For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward

¹¹⁵ Sopherim *changed to* Lord,

¹¹⁶ *Or*, Now when thy words come to pass, what *etc.*

¹¹⁷ *Or*, grape-vine,

¹¹⁸ *Or*, secret

heaven from off the altar, that *the* angel of Jehovah ascended in *the* flame of the altar: and Manoah and his wife looked on; and they fell on their faces to *the* ground.

21 But *the* angel of Jehovah did no more appear to Manoah or to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he *was the* angel of Jehovah. 22 And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God. 23 But his wife said unto him, If Jehovah were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt-offering and a meal-offering at our hand, neither would he have showed us all these *things*, nor would at *this* time have told *such things* as these. 24 And the woman bare a son, and called his name ¹¹⁹Samson: and the child grew, and Jehovah blessed him. 25 And *the* Spirit of Jehovah began to move him in ¹²⁰Mahanehdan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

14 And Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of *the* daughters of *the* Philistines. 2 And he came up, and told his father and his mother, and said, I have seen a woman in Timnah of *the* daughters of *the* Philistines: now therefore get her for me to wife. 3 Then his father and his mother said unto him, *Is there* never a woman among *the* daughters of thy brethren, or among all my people, that thou goest to take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines? And Samson said unto his father, Get her for me; for she pleaseth me well. 4 But his father and his mother knew not that it *was* of Jehovah; for he sought an occasion against *the* Philistines. Now at that time *the* Philistines had rule over Israel.

5 Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnah, and came to *the* vineyards of Timnah: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. 6 And *the* Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid; and *he had* nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done. 7 And he went down, and talked with the woman, and she pleased Samson well. 8 And after a while he returned to take her; and he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion: and, behold, *there was* a swarm of bees in *the* body of the lion, and honey. 9 And he took it into his hands, and went on, eating as he went; and he came to his father and mother, and gave unto them, and they did eat: but he told them not that he had taken the honey out of *the* body of the lion.

10 And his father went down unto the woman: and Samson made there a feast; for so used the young men to do. 11 And it came to pass, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him. 12 And Samson said unto them, Let me now put forth a riddle unto you: if ye can declare it unto me within *the*

¹¹⁹ *Hb.* Shimshon:

¹²⁰ *That is, The* camp of Dan, *Also in* ch. 18:12.

seven days of the feast, and find *it* out, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of raiment; 13 but if ye cannot declare *it* unto me, then shall ye give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of raiment. And they said unto him, Put forth thy riddle, that we may hear it. 14 And he said unto them,

Out of the eater came forth food,

And out of *the* strong came forth sweetness.

And they could not in three days declare the riddle.

15 And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire: have ye called us to ¹²¹impoverish us? *is it not so?* 16 And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto *the* children of my people, and hast not told *it* me. And he said unto her, Behold, I have not told it my father nor my mother, and shall I tell thee? 17 And she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted: and it came to pass on the seventh day, that he told her, because she pressed him sore; and she told the riddle to *the* children of her people. 18 And *the* men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down, What *is* sweeter than honey? and what *is* stronger than a lion? And he said unto them,

If ye had not plowed with my heifer,

Ye had not found out my riddle.

19 And *the* Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon him, and he went down to Ashkelon, and smote thirty men of them, and took their ¹²²spoil, and gave the changes of raiment unto them that declared the riddle. And his anger was kindled, and he went up to his father's house. 20 But Samson's wife was *given* to his companion, whom he had used as his friend.

15 But it came to pass after a while, in *the* time of wheat harvest, that Samson visited his wife with a kid; and he said, I will go in to my wife into the chamber. But her father would not suffer him to go in. 2 And her father said, I truly thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion: *is* not her younger sister fairer than she? take her, I pray thee, instead of her. 3 And Samson said unto them, This time ¹²³shall I be blameless in regard of *the* Philistines, when I do them a mischief. 4 And Samson went and caught three hundred ¹²⁴foxes, and took ¹²⁵firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between every two tails. 5 And when he had set the brands on fire, he let *them* go into *the* standing grain of

¹²¹ *Or*, take that which we have

¹²² *Or*, apparel,

¹²³ *Or*, shall I be quits with *the* Philistines,

¹²⁴ *Or*, jackals,

¹²⁵ *Or*, torches,

the Philistines, and burnt up both *the* shocks and *the* standing grain, and also *the* oliveyards. 6 Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? And they said, Samson, *the* son-in-law of the Timnite, because he hath taken his wife, and given her to his companion. And *the* Philistines came up, and burnt her and her father with fire. 7 And Samson said unto them, If ye do after this manner, surely I will be avenged of you, and after that I will cease. 8 And he smote them hip and thigh with a great slaughter: and he went down and dwelt in the cleft of *the* rock of Etam.

9 Then *the* Philistines went up, and encamped in Judah, and spread themselves in Lehi. 10 And *the* men of Judah said, Why are ye come up against us? And they said, To bind Samson are we come up, to do to him as he hath done to us. 11 Then three thousand men of Judah went down to *the* cleft of *the* rock of Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest thou not that *the* Philistines *are* rulers over us? what then *is* this *that* thou hast done unto us? And he said unto them, As they did unto me, so have I done unto them. 12 And they said unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into *the* hand of *the* Philistines. And Samson said unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me yourselves. 13 And they spake unto him, saying, No; but we will bind thee fast, and deliver thee into their hand: but surely we will not kill thee. And they bound him with two new ropes, and brought him up from the rock.

14 When he came unto Lehi, *the* Philistines shouted as they met him: and *the* Spirit of Jehovah came mightily upon him, and the ropes that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands ¹²⁶dropped from off his hands. 15 And he found a fresh jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and smote a thousand men therewith. 16 And Samson said,

With the jawbone of an ass, heap upon two heaps,

With the jawbone of an ass have I smitten a thousand men.

17 And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jawbone out of his hand; and ¹²⁷that place was called ¹²⁸Ramath-lehi. 18 And he was sore athirst, and called on Jehovah, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance by *the* hand of thy servant; and now shall I die for thirst, and fall into *the* hand of the uncircumcised. 19 But God clave the hollow place that *is* in ¹²⁹Lehi, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived: wherefore ¹³⁰*the* name thereof

¹²⁶ *Hb.* were melted from off his hands.

¹²⁷ *Or*, he called that place Ramath-lehi,

¹²⁸ *That is, The* hill of *the* jawbone.

¹²⁹ *Or*, the jawbone,

¹³⁰ *Or*, he called *the* name thereof En-hakkore,

was called ¹³¹En-hakkore, which *is* in Lehi, unto this day. 20 And he judged Israel in *the* days of *the* Philistines twenty years.

16 And Samson went to Gaza, and saw there a harlot, and went in unto her. 2 And *it was told* the Gazites, saying, Samson *is* come hither. And they compassed *him* in, and laid wait for him all night in *the* gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, ¹³²*Let be* till morning light, then we will kill him. 3 And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and laid hold of *the* doors of *the* gate of the city, and the two posts, and plucked them up, bar and all, and put *them* upon his shoulders, and carried them up to *the* top of the mountain that *is* before Hebron.

4 And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman ¹³³in *the* valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. 5 And *the* lords of *the* Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength *lieth*, and by what *means* we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to ¹³⁴afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred *pieces* of silver. 6 And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength *lieth*, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee. 7 And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven ¹³⁵green withes that were never dried, then shall I become weak, and be as another man. 8 Then *the* lords of *the* Philistines brought up to her seven green withes which had not been dried, and she bound him with them. 9 Now *she had* liers-in-wait abiding in the inner chamber. And she said unto him, *The* Philistines *are* upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withes, as a string of tow is broken when it ¹³⁶toucheth *the* fire. So his strength was not known.

10 And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound. 11 And he said unto her, If they only bind me with new ropes wherewith no work hath been done, then shall I become weak, and be as another man. 12 So Delilah took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, *The* Philistines *are* upon thee, Samson. And the liers-in-wait *were* abiding in the inner chamber. And he brake them from off his arms like *a* thread.

13 And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web. 14 And she fastened *it* with the pin, and said unto him,

¹³¹ *That is*, The spring of him that called,

¹³² *Or*, When (*or*, Before) the morning is light,

¹³³ *Or*, by *the* brook of Sorek,

¹³⁴ *Or*, humble

¹³⁵ *Or*, new bowstrings that were never dried,

¹³⁶ *Hb.* smelleth *the* fire.

The Philistines *are* upon thee, Samson. And he awaked out of his sleep, and plucked away the pin of the beam, and the web.

15 And she said unto him, How canst thou say, I love thee, when thy heart *is* not with me? thou hast mocked me these three times, and hast not told me wherein thy great strength *lieth*. 16 And it came to pass, when she pressed him daily with her words, and urged him, that his soul was vexed unto death. 17 And he told her all his heart, and said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon my head; for I *have been* a Nazirite unto God from my mother's womb: if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak, and be like any *other* man.

18 And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for *the* lords of *the* Philistines, saying, Come up *this* once, for ¹³⁷he hath told me all his heart. Then *the* lords of *the* Philistines came up unto her, and brought the money in their hand. 19 And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for ¹³⁸*a* man, and shaved off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him. 20 And she said, *The* Philistines *are* upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times, and shake myself free. But he knew not that Jehovah was departed from him. 21 And *the* Philistines laid hold on him, and put out his eyes, and they brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of copper; and he did grind in the prison-house. 22 Howbeit *the* hair of his head began to grow again after he was shaven.

23 And *the* lords of *the* Philistines gathered them together to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice; for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand. 24 And when the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said, Our god hath delivered into our hand our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, who hath slain many of us. 25 And it came to pass, when their hearts were merry, that they said, Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. And they called for Samson out of the prison-house; and he made sport before them. And they set him between the pillars: 26 and Samson said unto the lad *that* held him by *the* hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house resteth, that I may lean upon them. 27 Now the house was full of men and women; and all *the* lords of *the* Philistines *were* there; and *there were* upon the roof about three thousand men and women, *that* beheld while Samson made sport.

28 And Samson called unto Jehovah, and said, O Lord Jehovah, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that

¹³⁷ *Hb*^{txt} *alone reads* he had told her all

¹³⁸ *Or*, the men,

I may ¹³⁹be at once avenged of *the* Philistines for my two eyes. 29 And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house rested, and leaned upon them, *the* one with his right *hand*, and *the* other with his left. 30 And Samson said, Let my soul die with *the* Philistines. And he bowed himself with *all his* might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that *were* therein. So the dead that he slew at his death were more than *they* that he slew in his life. 31 Then his brethren and all *the* house of his father came down, and took him, and brought *him* up, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol in *the* burying place of Manoah his father. And he judged Israel twenty years.

17 And there was a man of *the* hill-country of Ephraim, whose name *was* Micah. 2 And he said unto his mother, The eleven hundred *pieces* of silver that were taken from thee, about which thou didst utter ¹⁴⁰a curse, and didst also speak it in mine ears, behold, the silver *is* with me; I took it. And his mother said, Blessed *be* my son of Jehovah. 3 And he restored the eleven hundred *pieces* of silver to his mother; and his mother said, I truly ¹⁴¹sanctify the silver unto Jehovah from my hand for my son, to make a graven image and a molten image: now therefore I will restore it unto thee. 4 And when he restored the silver unto his mother, his mother took two hundred *pieces* of silver, and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image: and it was in *the* house of Micah. 5 And the man Micah had a house of ¹⁴²gods, and he made an ephod, and teraphim, and ¹⁴³consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. 6 In those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did that *which was* right in his own eyes.

7 And there was a young man out of Beth-lehem-judah, of *the* family of Judah, who *was* a Levite; and he sojourned there. 8 And the man departed out of the city, out of Beth-lehem-judah, to sojourn ¹⁴⁴where he could find *a place*, and he came to *the* hill-country of Ephraim to *the* house of Micah, as he journeyed. 9 And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, I *am* a Levite of Beth-lehem-judah, and I go to sojourn where I may find *a place*. 10 And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten *pieces* of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Levite went in. 11 And the Levite

¹³⁹ *Or*, be avenged of *the* Philistines for one of my two eyes.

¹⁴⁰ *Or*, an adjuration,

¹⁴¹ *Or*, had sanctified *or*, dedicated *or*, had dedicated

¹⁴² *Or*, God,

¹⁴³ *Hb.* filled the hand of one of his sons, *That is, he had his hands full with priestly work.* And in vs. 12

¹⁴⁴ *That is, he was looking for employment.*

was content to dwell with the man; and the young man was unto him as one of his sons. 12 And Micah consecrated the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and was in *the* house of Micah. 13 Then said Micah, Now know I that Jehovah will do me good, seeing I have *a* Levite to *be* my priest.

18 In those days *there was* no king in Israel: and in those days *the* tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in; for ¹⁴⁵unto that day *their* inheritance had not fallen unto them among *the* tribes of Israel. 2 And *the* children of Dan sent of their family five men from their whole number, men of valor, from Zorah, and from Eshtaol, to spy out the land, and to search it; and they said unto them, Go, search the land. And they came to *the* hill-country of Ephraim, unto *the* house of Micah, and lodged there. 3 When they *were* by *the* house of Micah, they knew the voice of the young man the Levite: and they turned aside thither, and said unto him, Who brought thee hither? and what doest thou in this *place*: and what hast thou here? 4 And he said unto them, Thus and thus hath Micah dealt with me, and he hath hired me, and I am become his priest. 5 And they said unto him, Ask counsel we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous. 6 And the priest said unto them, Go in peace: before Jehovah *is* your way wherein ye go.

7 Then the five men departed, and came to ¹⁴⁶Laish, and saw the people that *were* therein, how they dwelt in security, after *the* manner of *the* Sidonians, quiet and secure; for *there was* none in the land, possessing ¹⁴⁷authority, ¹⁴⁸that might put *them* to shame in *anything*, and they *were* far from *the* Sidonians, and had no dealings with *any* man. 8 And they came unto their brethren to Zorah and Eshtaol: and their brethren said unto them, What *say* ye? 9 And they said, Arise, and let us go up against them; for we have seen the land, and, behold, it *is* very good: and *are* ye still? be not slothful to go and to enter in to possess the land. 10 When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and the land is large; for God hath given it into your hand, a place where *there is* no want of anything that *is* in the earth.

11 And there set forth from thence of *the* family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, six hundred men girt with weapons of war. 12 And they went up, and encamped in Kiriath-jearim, in Judah: wherefore they called that place Mahaneh-dan unto this day; behold, *it is* behind Kiriath-jearim. 13 And they passed thence unto *the* hill-country of Ephraim, and came unto *the* house of Micah.

¹⁴⁵ *Thus, during the life of Joshua.* See Josh 13:1, 19:47

¹⁴⁶ *In* Josh 19:47, Leshem

¹⁴⁷ *Hb.* power of restraint,

¹⁴⁸ *Or*, that might do any hurt,

14 Then answered the five men that went to spy out the country of Laish, and said unto their brethren, Do ye know that there is in these houses an ephod, and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image? now therefore consider what ye have to do. 15 And they turned aside thither, and came to *the* house of the young man the Levite, *even* unto *the* house of Micah, and asked him of his welfare, 16 And *the* six hundred men girt with their weapons of war, who *were* of *the* children of Dan, stood by *the* entrance of the gate. 17 And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, *and* came in thither, *and* took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood by *the* entrance of the gate with the six hundred men girt with weapons of war. 18 And when these went into Micah's house, and fetched the graven image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image, the priest said unto them, What do ye? 19 And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thy hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest: *is it* better for thee to be priest unto *the* house of one man, or to be priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel? 20 And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in *the* midst of the people.

21 So they turned and departed, and put the little ones and the cattle and the goods before them. 22 When they were a good way from *the* house of Micah, the men that *were* in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan. 23 And they cried unto *the* children of Dan. And they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, What aileth thee, ¹⁴⁹that thou comest with such a company? 24 And he said, ¹⁵⁰Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and are gone away, and what have I more? and how then say ye unto me, What aileth thee? 25 And *the* children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest ¹⁵¹angry fellows fall upon you, and thou lose thy soul, with *the* souls of thy household. 26 And *the* children of Dan went their way: and when Micah saw that they *were* too strong for him, he turned and went back into his house.

27 And they took *that* which Micah had made, and the priest whom he had, and came unto Laish, unto a people quiet and secure, and smote them with *the* edge of *the* sword; and they burnt the city with fire. 28 And *there was* no deliverer, because it *was* far from Sidon, and they had no dealings with *any* man; and it was in the valley that *lieth* by Beth-rehob. And they built the city, and dwelt therein. 29 And they called *the* name of the city Dan, after *the* name of Dan their father, who was born unto Israel: howbeit *the* name of the city was

¹⁴⁹ *Hb.* that thou art gathered together with

¹⁵⁰ *Perhaps fulfilling the curse of ch. 17:2.*

¹⁵¹ *Hb.* fellows bitter of soul fall upon you,

Laish at the first. 30 And *the* children of Dan set up for themselves the graven image; and Jonathan, *the* son of Gershom, *the* son of ¹⁵²Moses, he and his sons were priests to *the* tribe of the Danites until *the* day of the captivity of the land. 31 So they set them up Micah's graven image which he made, all *the* time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

19 And it came to pass in those days, when *there was* no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on *the* farther side of *the* hill-country of Ephraim, who took to him a concubine out of Beth-lehem-judah. 2 And his concubine played *the* harlot against him, and went away from him unto her father's house to Beth-lehem-judah, and was there *the* space of four months. 3 And her husband arose, and went after her, to speak ¹⁵³kindly unto her, to bring her again, having his servant with them, and a couple of asses: and she brought him into her father's house; and when *the* father of the damsel saw him, he rejoiced to meet him. 4 And his father-in-law, the damsel's father, retained him; and he abode with him three days: so they did eat and drink, and lodged there. 5 And it came to pass on the fourth day, that they arose early in the morning, and he rose up to depart: and the damsel's father said unto his son-in-law, Strengthen thy heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward ye shall go your way. 6 So they sat down, and did eat and drink, both of them together: and the damsel's father said unto the man, Be pleased, I pray thee, to tarry all night, and let thy heart be merry. 7 And the man rose up to depart; but his father-in-law urged him, and he lodged there again. 8 And he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart; and the damsel's father said, Strengthen thy heart, I pray thee, and tarry ye until the day declineth; and they did eat, both of them. 9 And when the man rose up to depart, he, and his concubine, and his servant, his father-in-law, the damsel's father, said unto him, Behold, now the day draweth toward evening, I pray you tarry all night: behold, the day groweth to an end, lodge here, that thy heart may be merry; and tomorrow get you early on your way, that thou mayest go ¹⁵⁴home.

10 But the man would not tarry that night, but he rose up and departed, and came over against Jebus (*the same is* Jerusalem): and *there were* with him a couple of asses saddled; his concubine also *was* with him. 11 When they *were* by Jebus, the day was far spent; and the servant said unto his master, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn aside into this city of the Jebusites, and lodge in it. 12 And his master said unto him, We will

¹⁵² *Hb*^{superscript} (*added by the Sopherim*) Sept. Aram.

read Manasseh, *See note in Companion Bible.*

¹⁵³ *Hb.* to her heart,

¹⁵⁴ *Hb.* to thy tent. *Some Hb. mss. read* to thy tents.

not turn aside into *the* city of a foreigner, ¹⁵⁵that is not of *the* children of Israel; but we will pass over to Gibeah. 13 And he said unto his servant, Come and let us draw near to one of *these* places; and we will lodge in Gibeah, or in Ramah. 14 So they passed on and went their way; and the sun went down upon them near to Gibeah, which *belongeth* to Benjamin. 15 And they turned aside thither, to go in to lodge in Gibeah: and he went in, and sat him down in *the* street of the city; for *there was* no man that took them into *his* house to lodge.

16 And, behold, there came an old man from his work out of the field in the evening: now the man *was* of *the* hill-country of Ephraim, and he sojourned in Gibeah; but *the* men of the place *were* Benjamites. 17 And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the wayfaring man in *the* street of the city; and the old man said, Whither goest thou? and whence comest thou? 18 And he said unto him, *We are* passing from Beth-lehem-judah unto *the* farther side of *the* hill-country of Ephraim; from thence *am* I, and I went to Beth-lehem-judah: and *I am now* going to the house of Jehovah; and there *is* no man that taketh me into *his* house. 19 Yet there is both straw and provender for our asses; and there is bread and wine also for me, and for thy handmaid, and for the young man *that is* with thy servants: *there is* no want of anything. 20 And the old man said, Peace *be* unto thee; howsoever *let* all thy wants *lie* upon me; only lodge not in the street. 21 So he brought him into his house, and gave *the* asses fodder; and they washed their feet, and did eat and drink.

22 As they were making their hearts merry, behold, *the* men of the city, certain ¹⁵⁶base fellows, beset the house round about, beating at the door; and they spake to *the* master of the house, the old man, saying, Bring forth the man that came into thy house, that we may know him. 23 And the man, *the* master of the house, went out unto them, and said unto them, No, my brethren, I pray you, do not *so* wickedly; seeing that this man is come into my house, do not this folly. 24 Behold, *here is* my daughter a virgin, and his concubine; them I will bring out now, and humble ye them, and do with them what seemeth good unto you: but unto this man do not any such folly. 25 But the men would not hearken to him: so the man laid hold on his concubine, and brought her forth unto them; and they knew her, and abused her all the night until the morning: and when the day began to spring, they let her go. 26 Then came the woman at *the* dawning of the day, and fell down at *the* door of the man's house where her lord *was*, till it was light.

27 And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened *the* doors of the house, and went out to go his way;

¹⁵⁵ *Or*, where there are none of *the* children of Israel;

¹⁵⁶ *Hb.* sons of worthlessness, *And in* ch. 20:13.

and, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down at *the* door of the house, with her hands upon the threshold. 28 And he said unto her, *Get* up, and let us be going; but none answered: then he took her *up* upon the ass; and the man rose up, and gat him unto his place. 29 And when he was come into his house, he took *a* knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and divided her, ¹⁵⁷limb by limb, into twelve pieces, and sent her throughout all *the* borders of Israel. 30 and it was so, *that* all that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen from *the* day that *the* children of Israel came up out of *the* land of Egypt unto this day: consider it, take counsel, and speak.

20 Then all *the* children of Israel went out, and the congregation was assembled as one man, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, with the land of Gilead, unto Jehovah at Mizpah. 2 And *the* ¹⁵⁸chiefs of all the people, ¹⁵⁹*even* of all *the* tribes of Israel, presented themselves in *the* assembly of *the* people of God, four hundred thousand footmen that drew sword. 3 (*Now the* children of Benjamin heard that *the* children of Israel were gone up to Mizpah.) And *the* children of Israel said, Tell *us*, how was this wickedness brought to pass? 4 And the Levite, the husband of the woman that was murdered, answered and said, I came into Gibeah that *belongeth* to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to lodge. 5 And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and beset the house round about me by night; me they thought to have slain, and my concubine they forced, and she is dead. 6 And I took my concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all *the* country of *the* inheritance of Israel; for they have committed lewdness and folly in Israel. 7 Behold, ye children of Israel, all of you, give here your advice and counsel.

8 And all the people arose as one man, saying, We will not any *of us* go to his tent, neither will we any *of us* turn unto his house. 9 But now this *is* the thing which we will do to Gibeah: *we will go up* against it by lot; 10 and we will take ten men of *a* hundred throughout all *the* tribes of Israel, and a hundred of *a* thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to fetch victuals for the people, that they may do, when they come to ¹⁶⁰Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have wrought in Israel. 11 So all *the* men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as one man.

12 And *the* tribes of Israel sent men through all *the* ¹⁶¹tribe of Benjamin, saying, What wickedness *is* this that is come to pass among you? 13 Now therefore deliver up the men, *the* base fellows, that *are* in Gibeah,

¹⁵⁷ *Hb.* according to her bones,

¹⁵⁸ *Hb.* corners

¹⁵⁹ *Or*, *even* all *the* tribes of Israel,

¹⁶⁰ *Hb.* Geba

¹⁶¹ *Hb.* tribes *See* Nu 4:18; 1Sa 9:21.

that we may put them to death, and put away evil from Israel. But ¹⁶²Benjamin would not hearken to *the* voice of their brethren *the* children of Israel. 14 And *the* children of Benjamin gathered themselves together out of the cities unto Gibeah, to go out to battle against *the* children of Israel. 15 And *the* children of Benjamin were numbered on that day out of the cities twenty-six thousand men that drew sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who were numbered seven hundred chosen men. 16 Among all this people *there were* seven hundred chosen men lefthanded; every one could sling stones at a hair-breadth, and not miss.

17 And *the* men of Israel, besides Benjamin, were numbered four hundred thousand men that drew sword: all these *were* men of war. 18 And *the* children of Israel arose, and went up to Beth-el, and asked counsel of God; and they said, Who shall go up for us first to battle against *the* children of Benjamin? And Jehovah said, Judah *shall go up* first.

19 And *the* children of Israel rose up in the morning, and encamped against Gibeah. 20 And *the* men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin; and *the* men of Israel set the battle in array against them at Gibeah. 21 And *the* children of Benjamin came forth out of Gibeah, and destroyed down to *the* ground of *the* Israelites on that day twenty-two thousand men. 22 And the people, *the* men of Israel, encouraged themselves, and set *the* battle again in array in the place where they set themselves in array the first day. 23 And *the* children of Israel went up and wept before Jehovah until even; and they asked of Jehovah, saying, Shall I again draw nigh to battle against *the* children of Benjamin my brother? And Jehovah said, Go up against him.

24 And *the* children of Israel came near against *the* children of Benjamin the second day. 25 And Benjamin went forth against them out of Gibeah the second day, and destroyed down to *the* ground of *the* children of Israel again eighteen thousand men; all these drew *the* sword. 26 Then all *the* children of Israel, and all the people, went up, and came unto Beth-el, and wept, and sat there before Jehovah, and fasted that day until even; and they offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before Jehovah. 27 And *the* children of Israel asked of Jehovah (for *the* ark of the covenant of God *was* there in those days, 28 and Phinehas, *the* son of Eleazar, *the* son of Aaron, stood before it in those days), saying, Shall I yet again go out to battle against *the* children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I cease? And Jehovah said, Go up; for tomorrow I will deliver him into thy hand.

29 And Israel set liers-in-wait against Gibeah round about. 30 And *the* children of Israel went up against *the* children of Benjamin on the third day, and set

themselves in array against Gibeah, as at *other* times. 31 And *the* children of Benjamin went out against the people, *and* were drawn away from the city; and they began to smite *and* kill of the people, as at *other* times, in the highways, of which one goeth up to Beth-el, and *the* other to Gibeah, in the field, about thirty men of Israel. 32 And *the* children of Benjamin said, *They are* smitten down before us, as at the first. But *the* children of Israel said, Let us flee, and draw them away from the city unto the highways. 33 And all *the* men of Israel rose up out of their place, and set themselves in array at Baal-tamar: and *the* liers-in-wait of Israel brake forth out of their place, *even* out of ¹⁶³Maareh-geba. 34 And there came over against Gibeah ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel; and the battle was sore, but they knew not that evil *was* ¹⁶⁴close upon them. 35 And Jehovah smote Benjamin before Israel; and *the* children of Israel destroyed of Benjamin that day ¹⁶⁵twenty-five thousand one hundred men: all these drew *the* sword.

36 So *the* children of Benjamin saw that they were smitten; for *the* men of Israel gave place to Benjamin, because they trusted unto the liers-in-wait whom they had set against Gibeah. 37 And the liers-in-wait hastened, and rushed upon Gibeah; and the liers-in-wait drew *themselves* along, and smote *all* the city with *the* edge of *the* sword. 38 Now the appointed sign between *the* men of Israel and the liers-in-wait was, that they should make a great cloud of smoke rise up out of the city. 39 ¹⁶⁶And the men of Israel turned in the battle, and Benjamin began to smite *and* kill of *the* men of Israel about thirty persons; for they said, Surely they are smitten down before us, as *in* the first battle. 40 But when the cloud began to arise up out of the city in a pillar of smoke, *the* Benjamites looked behind them; and, behold, *the* whole of the city went up *in* smoke to heaven. 41 And *the* men of Israel turned, and *the* men of Benjamin were dismayed; for they saw that evil was come upon them. 42 Therefore they turned *their backs* before *the* men of Israel unto *the* way of the wilderness; but the battle followed hard after them; and ¹⁶⁷they that *came* out of the cities destroyed them in *the* midst thereof. 43 They inclosed the Benjamites round about, *and* chased them, *and* ¹⁶⁸trod them down ¹⁶⁹at *their* resting-place, as far as over against Gibeah

¹⁶³ Or, the meadow of Geba (or, Gibeah See vs. 10)

¹⁶⁴ Hb. touching them.

¹⁶⁵ Leaving only 1,600 from the 26,700 of vs. 15.

¹⁶⁶ Or, And the men of Israel turned in the battle; (now Benjamin began... 40 ...the city went up in smoke to heaven) 41 and the men of Israel turned, etc.

¹⁶⁷ Or, them that came out of the cities they destroyed in the midst thereof.

¹⁶⁸ Or, overtook them at their resting place,

¹⁶⁹ Or, at Menuhah,

¹⁶² Sept., Aram. read the children of Benjamin

toward *the* sunrising. 44 And there fell of Benjamin eighteen thousand men; all these *were* men of valor. 45 And they turned and fled toward the wilderness unto the rock of Rimmon: and they gleaned of them in the highways five thousand men, and followed hard after them unto Gidom, and smote of them two thousand men. 46 So that all who fell that day of Benjamin were twenty-five thousand men that drew *the* sword; all these *were* men of valor. 47 But six hundred men turned and fled toward the wilderness unto the rock of Rimmon, and abode in *the* rock of Rimmon four months. 48 And *the* men of Israel turned again upon *the* children of Benjamin, and smote them with *the* edge of *the* sword, both ¹⁷⁰*the* entire city, and *the* cattle, and all that they found: moreover all the cities that they found they set on fire.

21 Now *the* men of Israel had sworn in Mizpah, saying, There shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife. 2 And the people came to Beth-el, and sat there till even before God, and lifted up their voices, and wept sore. 3 And they said, O Jehovah, *the* God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be today one tribe lacking in Israel? 4 And it came to pass on *the* morrow, that the people rose early, and built there an altar, and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. 5 And *the* children of Israel said, Who is there among all *the* tribes of Israel that came not up in the assembly unto Jehovah? For they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up unto Jehovah to Mizpah, saying, he shall surely be put to death. 6 And *the* children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said, There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day. 7 How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing we have sworn by Jehovah that we will not give them of our daughters to wives?

8 And they said, What one *is there* of *the* tribes of Israel that came not up unto Jehovah to Mizpah? And, behold, there came none to the camp from Jabesh-gilead to the assembly. 9 For when the people were numbered, behold, *there were* none of *the* inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead there. 10 And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with *the* edge of *the* sword, with the women and the little ones. 11 And this *is* the thing that ye shall do: ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man. 12 And they found among *the* inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins, that had not known man by lying with him, and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which *is* in *the* land of Canaan.

13 And the whole congregation sent and spake to *the* children of Benjamin that *were* in *the* rock of Rimmon,

¹⁷⁰ Some mss. read *the* inhabited city, See Dt 2:34.

and proclaimed peace unto them. 14 And Benjamin returned at that time; and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of *the* women of Jabesh-gilead and yet so they sufficed them not. 15 And the people repented them for Benjamin, because that Jehovah had made a breach in *the* tribes of Israel.

16 Then *the* elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing *the* women are destroyed out of Benjamin? 17 And they said, *There must be* an inheritance for them that are escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not blotted out from Israel. 18 Howbeit we may not give them wives of our daughters, for *the* children of Israel had sworn, saying, Cursed *be* he that giveth a wife to Benjamin. 19 And they said, Behold, *there is* ¹⁷¹a feast of Jehovah from year to year in Shiloh, which *is* on *the* north of Beth-el, on the east side of *the* highway that goeth up from Beth-el to Shechem, and on *the* south of Lebonah. 20 And they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards, 21 and see, and, behold, if *the* daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in the dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of *the* daughters of Shiloh, and go to *the* land of Benjamin. 22 And it shall be, when their fathers or their brethren come to ¹⁷²complain unto us, that we will say unto them, Grant them ¹⁷³graciously unto us, because we took not for each man of *them* his wife in battle, neither did ye give them unto them, *else* would ye now be guilty. 23 And *the* children of Benjamin did so, and took *them* wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they carried off: and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and built the cities, and dwelt in them. 24 And *the* children of Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe and to his family, and they went out from thence every man to his inheritance.

25 In those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did that *which was* right in his own eyes.

End of the Book of Judges

[Note: Chapters 17-21 refer to incidents earlier in the time of Judges, as ch. 20:28 mentions Phineas, the grandson of Aaron.]

¹⁷¹ Or possibly, *the* feast of Jehovah

¹⁷² Or, strive with us,

¹⁷³ Or, as a gift unto us,