



*the* S T O R Y *of* J E P H T H A H

THE CAUTIONARY TALE OF A TRAGIC HERO

**”And the people of Israel said to the Lord,  
“We have sinned; do to us whatever seems  
good to you. Only please deliver us this day.”  
So they put away the foreign gods from  
among them and served the Lord, and he  
became impatient over the misery of Israel.**

**Then the Ammonites were called to arms, and they encamped in Gilead. And the people of Israel came together, and they encamped at Mizpah. And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said to one another, “Who is the man who will begin to fight against the Ammonites? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.”**

*Judges 10:15-18 ESV*

**”Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior, but he was the son of a prostitute. Gilead was the father of Jephthah. And Gilead's wife also bore him sons. And when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out and said to him, “You shall not have an inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman.”**

**Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob, and worthless fellows collected around Jephthah and went out with him.”**

*Judges 11:1-3 ESV*

**”After a time the Ammonites made war against Israel. And when the Ammonites made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring Jephthah from the land of Tob. And they said to Jephthah, “Come and be our leader, that we may fight against the Ammonites.” But Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “Did you not hate me and drive me out of my father's house?”**

**Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?” And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “That is why we have turned to you now, that you may go with us and fight against the Ammonites and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.”**

*Judges 11:4-8 ESV*

**“Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “If you bring me home again to fight against the Ammonites, and the LORD gives them over to me, I will be your head.” And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “The LORD will be witness between us, if we do not do as you say.” So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and leader over them. And Jephthah spoke all his words before the LORD at Mizpah.”**

*Judges 11:9-11 ESV*



# TAKEAWAYS

1. **Selfish ambition can be disguised as spiritual ability.**

**“Then the Spirit of the LORD was upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh and passed on to Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he passed on to the Ammonites. And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD and said, “If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, then whatever comes out from the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the Ammonites shall be the LORD's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.”**

*Judges 11:29-31 ESV*

**“So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight against them, and the LORD gave them into his hand. And he struck them from Aroer to the neighborhood of Minnith, twenty cities, and as far as Abel-keramim, with a great blow. So the Ammonites were subdued before the people of Israel.”**

*Judges 11:32-33 ESV*

# TAKEAWAYS

- 1. Selfish ambition can be disguised as spiritual ability.**
- 2. Sinful people are used to accomplish God's sovereign purposes.**

**“Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah. And behold, his daughter came out to meet him with tambourines and with dances. She was his only child; besides her he had neither son nor daughter. And as soon as he saw her, he tore his clothes and said, “Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low, and you have become the cause of great trouble to me. For I have opened my mouth to the LORD, and I cannot take back my vow.”**

*Judges 11:34-35 ESV*

**” And she said to him, “My father, you have opened your mouth to the LORD; do to me according to what has gone out of your mouth, now that the LORD has avenged you on your enemies, on the Ammonites.” So she said to her father, “Let this thing be done for me: leave me alone two months, that I may go up and down on the mountains and weep for my virginity, I and my companions.” So he said, “Go.”**

**Then he sent her away for two months, and she departed, she and her companions, and wept for her virginity on the mountains. And at the end of two months, she returned to her father, who did with her according to his vow that he had made. She had never known a man, and it became a custom in Israel that the daughters of Israel went year by year to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in the year.”**

*Judges 11:36-40 ESV*

# TAKEAWAYS

- 1. Selfish ambition can be disguised as spiritual ability.**
- 2. Sinful people are used to accomplish God's sovereign purposes.**
- 3. Syncretism has serious consequences.**



# TAKEAWAYS

- 1. Selfish ambition can be disguised as spiritual ability.**
- 2. Sinful people are used to accomplish God's sovereign purposes.**
- 3. Syncretism has serious consequences.**
- 4. Salvation is only found through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.**



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