



8. Why do you think that Jephthah's daughter sacrificed herself in the way that she did? What might her sacrifice point us to?

You may find it helpful to look at 2 Corinthians 5:18a and 21.

WHAT NEXT?

Whilst Jephthah did have faith in God (Hebrews 11:32) he also made some bad choices that could have been so much better if he had been more spiritually mature.

God calls each us to grow for Him and to become more spiritually mature, but how might we do this? As you think about this, consider and discuss what we can do as individuals and also what we can do together as a church.

Personal reflection

Jephthah's actions can challenge us to grow and become more mature for God. His daughters actions can challenge the extent to which we are prepared to make sacrifices for God in order to further His kingdom and bring blessing to others.

What might God be challenging you to do?

Meet the Judges

Week 5: Jephthah – The regretful leader

WELCOME

Spend time relaxing and sharing together.

In many cultures, elderly members of the community are often especially valued for their experience, wisdom and maturity. Many of us will have benefitted from being with people like that (although they don't necessarily have to be elderly!) at some point of own lives. Encourage people to share times when they have experienced this.

WORSHIP

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you." John 14:26 (ESV)

Following God, doing the right things and making wise Godly choices is not easy, but, through the Holy Spirit, we are each blessed with a personal Godly helper and guide.

Take time to praise God for ways in which the Holy Spirit has guided and shaped your life. You could sing or listen to Spirit of Holiness, Wisdom and Faithfulness:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P-QNMJsks74&ab_channel=DivineHymns

WORD

Many of the stories in the Bible are of people who, whilst they follow God, are far from perfect. Jephthah is one such person and some of the things that he does are distinctly unsettling. Nonetheless he is commended for his faith in Hebrews 11:32, so let's look at the story of Jephthah and his daughter.



Jephthah - his coming to power

Israel had yet again turned away from God and as a result they had been overrun and oppressed. When they finally repented God heard their cries, but they nonetheless found themselves facing the Ammonites in battle in the land of Gilead.

Read Judges 11:1-11

1. In verses 1-3 we are introduced to Jephthah. As you read the description we are given, what type of person do you imagine Jephthah to be?

Verses 6 to 10 detail a conversation between the elders of Gilead and Jephthah. From these verses:

2. What might the words of the elders tell us about their motives and also how they feel about Jephthah?
3. What might Jephthah's response to the elders tell us about how he feels and what his concerns are?

Meet the Judges

4. In verses 9 and 10 both Jephthah and the elders mention the Lord, but how do you think God felt about things?

Jephthar's daughter – her willing sacrifice

Read Judges 11:29-39

5. In verse 29 we read that the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, yet he then goes on to make his vow. Why do you think he did this?

6. Was Jephthah wise or right in making the vow that he did? Should he have subsequently broken his vow?

You may find it helpful to look at Hosea 6:6 and also Deuteronomy 18:10a and Leviticus 5:4-6.

7. Verses 34-37 detail the conversation that happens between Jephthah and his daughter. What differences do you see between the words and focus of Jephthah compared to those of his daughter?

The passage infers that Jephthah's daughter willingly sacrificed herself but some think that this wasn't the case, and that rather than being killed she left to live a monastic life-style dedicated to God. Either way, Jephthah 'lost' his daughter as she sacrificed the future life that was mapped out for her.