

## Judges

After the death of Joshua the people of Israel inquired of the LORD, "Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?" The LORD said, "Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand." And Judah said to Simeon his brother, "Come up with me into the

5 territory allotted to me, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with you into the territory allotted to you." So Simeon went with him. Then Judah went up and the LORD gave the Canaanites and the Per'izzites into their hand; and they defeated ten thousand of them at Bezek. They came upon Ado'ni-be'zek at Bezek, and fought against him, and

10 defeated the Canaanites and the Per'izzites. Ado'ni-be'zek fled; but they pursued him, and caught him, and cut off his thumbs and his great toes. And Ado'ni-be'zek said, "Seventy kings with their thumbs and their great toes cut off used to pick up scraps under my table; as I have done, so God has requited me." And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there. And

15 the men of Judah fought against Jerusalem, and took it, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and set the city on fire. And afterward the men of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who dwelt in the hill country, in the Negeb, and in the lowland. And Judah went against the Canaanites who dwelt in Hebron (now the name of Hebron was formerly

20 Kir'iath-ar'ba); and they defeated She'shai and Ahi'man and Talmai. From

there they went against the inhabitants of Debir. The name of Debir was formerly Kir'iath-se'pher. And Caleb said, "He who attacks Kir'iath-se'pher and takes it, I will give him Achsah my daughter as wife." And Oth'ni-el the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it; and he gave him Achsah his

5 daughter as wife. When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field; and she alighted from her ass, and Caleb said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to him, "Give me a present; since you have set me in the land of the Negeb, give me also springs of water." And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs. And the descendants of the Ken'ite,

10 Moses' father-in-law, went up with the people of Judah from the city of palms into the wilderness of Judah, which lies in the Negeb near Arad; and they went and settled with the people. And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they defeated the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. So the name of the city was called Hormah. Judah also took

15 Gaza with its territory, and Ash'kelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory. And the LORD was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain, because they had chariots of iron. And Hebron was given to Caleb, as Moses had said; and he drove out from it the three sons of Anak. But the people of

20 Benjamin did not drive out the Jeb'usites who dwelt in Jerusalem; so the

Jeb'usites have dwelt with the people of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

The house of Joseph also went up against Bethel; and the LORD was with them. And the house of Joseph sent to spy out Bethel. (Now the name of the city was formerly Luz.) And the spies saw a man coming out of the

5 city, and they said to him, "Pray, show us the way into the city, and we will deal kindly with you." And he showed them the way into the city; and they smote the city with the edge of the sword, but they let the man and all his family go. And the man went to the land of the Hittites and built a city, and called its name Luz; that is its name to this day. Manas'seh did not

10 drive out the inhabitants of Beth-she'an and its villages, or Ta'a-nach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megid'do and its villages; but the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land. When Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not utterly drive them out.

15 And E'phraim did not drive out the Canaanites who dwelt in Gezer; but the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them. Zeb'ulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Na'halol; but the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became subject to forced labor. Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Acco, or the inhabitants of Sidon, or of Ahlab, or of Achzib,

20 or of Helbah, or of Aphik, or of Rehob; but the Asherites dwelt among the

Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; for they did not drive them out.

Naph'tali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-she'mesh, or the inhabitants of Beth-anath, but dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land; nevertheless the inhabitants of Beth-she'mesh and of Beth-anath became

5 subject to forced labor for them. The Amorites pressed the Danites back into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the plain; the Amorites persisted in dwelling in Har-heres, in Ai'jalon, and in Sha-al'bim, but the hand of the house of Joseph rested heavily upon them, and they became subject to forced labor. And the border of the Amorites ran from the

10 ascent of Akrah'bim, from Sela and upward. Now the angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you into the land which I swore to give to your fathers. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you, and you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall break down their altars.'

15 But you have not obeyed my command. What is this you have done? So now I say, I will not drive them out before you; but they shall become adversaries to you, and their gods shall be a snare to you." When the angel of the LORD spoke these words to all the people of Israel, the people lifted up their voices and wept. And they called the name of that place Bochim;

20 and they sacrificed there to the LORD. When Joshua dismissed the people,

the people of Israel went each to his inheritance to take possession of the land. And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work which the LORD had done for Israel. And Joshua the son of Nun, the

5 servant of the LORD, died at the age of one hundred and ten years. And they buried him within the bounds of his inheritance in Tim'nath-he'res, in the hill country of E'phraim, north of the mountain of Ga'ash. And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them, who did not know the LORD or the work which he

10 had done for Israel. And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Ba'als; and they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt; they went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were round about them, and bowed down to them; and they provoked the LORD to anger.

15 They forsook the LORD, and served the Ba'als and the Ash'taroth. So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them; and he sold them into the power of their enemies round about, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies. Whenever they marched out, the hand of the LORD was against them for

20 evil, as the LORD had warned, and as the LORD had sworn to them; and

they were in sore straits. Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the power of those who plundered them. And yet they did not listen to their judges; for they played the harlot after other gods and bowed down to them; they soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had

5 walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the LORD, and they did not do so. Whenever the LORD raised up judges for them, the LORD was with the judge, and he saved them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for the LORD was moved to pity by their groaning because of those who afflicted and oppressed them. But whenever the judge died, they

10 turned back and behaved worse than their fathers, going after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them; they did not drop any of their practices or their stubborn ways. So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel; and he said, "Because this people have transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers, and have not obeyed my voice, I

15 will not henceforth drive out before them any of the nations that Joshua left when he died, that by them I may test Israel, whether they will take care to walk in the way of the LORD as their fathers did, or not." So the LORD left those nations, not driving them out at once, and he did not give them into the power of Joshua. Now these are the nations which the LORD left,

20 to test Israel by them, that is, all in Israel who had no experience of any

war in Canaan; it was only that the generations of the people of Israel might know war, that he might teach war to such at least as had not known it before. These are the nations: the five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sido'nians, and the Hivites who dwelt on Mount

5 Lebanon, from Mount Ba'al-her'mon as far as the entrance of Hamath. They were for the testing of Israel, to know whether Israel would obey the commandments of the LORD, which he commanded their fathers by Moses.

So the people of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Per'izzites, the Hivites, and the Jeb'usites; and they took their

10 daughters to themselves for wives, and their own daughters they gave to their sons; and they served their gods. And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, forgetting the LORD their God, and serving the Ba'als and the Ashe'roth. Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cu'shan-rishatha'im king of

15 Mesopota'mia; and the people of Israel served Cu'shan-rishatha'im eight years.

But when the people of Israel cried to the LORD, the LORD raised up a deliverer for the people of Israel, who delivered them, Oth'ni-el the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. The Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel; he went out to war, and the LORD gave Cu'shan-

20 rishatha'im king of Mesopota'mia into his hand; and his hand prevailed over

Cu'shan-rishatha'im. So the land had rest forty years. Then Oth'ni-el the son of Kenaz died. And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel, because they had done what was evil in the sight of the LORD. He

5 gathered to himself the Ammonites and the Amal'ekites, and went and defeated Israel; and they took possession of the city of palms. And the people of Israel served Eglon the king of Moab eighteen years. But when the people of Israel cried to the LORD, the LORD raised up for them a deliverer, Ehud, the son of Gera, the Benjaminite, a left-handed man. The

10 people of Israel sent tribute by him to Eglon the king of Moab. And Ehud made for himself a sword with two edges, a cubit in length; and he girded it on his right thigh under his clothes. And he presented the tribute to Eglon king of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man. And when Ehud had finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people that carried the tribute. But

15 he himself turned back at the sculptured stones near Gilgal, and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king." And he commanded, "Silence." And all his attendants went out from his presence. And Ehud came to him, as he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber. And Ehud said, "I have a message from God for you." And he arose from his seat. And Ehud reached

20 with his left hand, took the sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into his



belly; and the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out of his belly; and the dirt came out. Then Ehud went out into the vestibule, and closed the doors of the roof chamber upon him, and locked them. When he had gone, the servants came;

5 and when they saw that the doors of the roof chamber were locked, they thought, "He is only relieving himself in the closet of the cool chamber." And they waited till they were utterly at a loss; but when he still did not open the doors of the roof chamber, they took the key and opened them; and there lay their lord dead on the floor. Ehud escaped while they delayed, and

10 passed beyond the sculptured stones, and escaped to Se-i'rah. When he arrived, he sounded the trumpet in the hill country of E'phraim; and the people of Israel went down with him from the hill country, having him at their head. And he said to them, "Follow after me; for the LORD has given your enemies the Moabites into your hand." So they went down after him,

15 and seized the fords of the Jordan against the Moabites, and allowed not a man to pass over. And they killed at that time about ten thousand of the Moabites, all strong, able-bodied men; not a man escaped. So Moab was subdued that day under the hand of Israel. And the land had rest for eighty years. After him was Shamgar the son of Anath, who killed six hundred of

20 the Philistines with an oxgoad; and he too delivered Israel. And the people

of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, after Ehud died.

And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; the commander of his army was Sis'era, who dwelt in Haro'sheth-ha-goiim. Then the people of Israel cried to the LORD for help;

5 for he had nine hundred chariots of iron, and oppressed the people of Israel cruelly for twenty years. Now Deb'orah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapp'idoth, was judging Israel at that time. She used to sit under the palm of Deb'orah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of E'phraim; and the people of Israel came up to her for judgment. She sent and summoned Barak the son

10 of Abin'o-am from Kedesh in Naph'tali, and said to him, "The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you, 'Go, gather your men at Mount Tabor, taking ten thousand from the tribe of Naph'tali and the tribe of Zeb'ulun. And I will draw out Sis'era, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the river Kishon with his chariots and his troops; and I will give him into your

15 hand.'" Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go." And she said, "I will surely go with you; nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, for the LORD will sell Sis'era into the hand of a woman." Then Deb'orah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh. And Barak summoned

20 Zeb'ulun and Naph'tali to Kedesh; and ten thousand men went up at his

heels; and Deb'orah went up with him. Now Heber the Ken'ite had separated from the Ken'ites, the descendants of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent as far away as the oak in Za-anan'nim, which is near Kedesh. When Sis'era was told that Barak the son of Abin'o-am had gone up

5 to Mount Tabor, Sis'era called out all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the men who were with him, from Haro'sheth-ha-goiim to the river Kishon. And Deb'orah said to Barak, "Up! For this is the day in which the LORD has given Sis'era into your hand. Does not the LORD go out before you?" So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men

10 following him. And the LORD routed Sis'era and all his chariots and all his army before Barak at the edge of the sword; and Sis'era alighted from his chariot and fled away on foot. And Barak pursued the chariots and the army to Haro'sheth-ha-goiim, and all the army of Sis'era fell by the edge of the sword; not a man was left. But Sis'era fled away on foot to the tent of Ja'el,

15 the wife of Heber the Ken'ite; for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Ken'ite. And Ja'el came out to meet Sis'era, and said to him, "Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; have no fear." So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. And he said to her, "Pray, give me a little water to drink; for I am

20 thirsty." So she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered

him. And he said to her, "Stand at the door of the tent, and if any man comes and asks you, 'Is any one here?' say, No." But Ja'el the wife of Heber took a tent peg, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, till it went down into the ground, as he

5 was lying fast asleep from weariness. So he died. And behold, as Barak pursued Sis'era, Ja'el went out to meet him, and said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking." So he went in to her tent; and there lay Sis'era dead, with the tent peg in his temple. So on that day God subdued Jabin the king of Canaan before the people of Israel. And the

10 hand of the people of Israel bore harder and harder on Jabin the king of Canaan, until they destroyed Jabin king of Canaan. Then sang Deb'orah and Barak the son of Abin'o-am on that day: "That the leaders took the lead in Israel, that the people offered themselves willingly, bless the LORD! "Hear, O kings; give ear, O princes; to the LORD I will sing, I will make melody

15 to the LORD, the God of Israel. "LORD, when thou didst go forth from Se'ir, when thou didst march from the region of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, yea, the clouds dropped water. The mountains quaked before the LORD, yon Sinai before the LORD, the God of Israel. "In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, in the days of Ja'el, caravans ceased and

20 travelers kept to the byways. The peasantry ceased in Israel, they ceased until

you arose, Deb'orah, arose as a mother in Israel. When new gods were  
chosen, then war was in the gates. Was shield or spear to be seen among  
forty thousand in Israel? My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel who  
offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless the LORD. "Tell of it,  
5 you who ride on tawny asses, you who sit on rich carpets and you who  
walk by the way. To the sound of musicians at the watering places, there  
they repeat the triumphs of the LORD, the triumphs of his peasantry in  
Israel. "Then down to the gates marched the people of the LORD. "Awake,  
awake, Deb'orah! Awake, awake, utter a song! Arise, Barak, lead away your  
10 captives, O son of Abin'o-am. Then down marched the remnant of the noble;  
the people of the LORD marched down for him against the mighty. From  
E'phraim they set out thither into the valley, following you, Benjamin, with  
your kinsmen; from Machir marched down the commanders, and from  
Zeb'ulun those who bear the marshal's staff; the princes of Is'sachar came  
15 with Deb'orah, and Is'sachar faithful to Barak; into the valley they rushed  
forth at his heels. Among the clans of Reuben there were great searchings of  
heart. Why did you tarry among the sheepfolds, to hear the piping for the  
flocks? Among the clans of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.  
Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan; and Dan, why did he abide with the ships?  
20 Asher sat still at the coast of the sea, settling down by his landings.

Zeb'ulun is a people that jeopardized their lives to the death; Naph'tali too, on the heights of the field. "The kings came, they fought; then fought the kings of Canaan, at Ta'anach, by the waters of Megid'do; they got no spoils of silver. From heaven fought the stars, from their courses they fought against

5 Sis'era. The torrent Kishon swept them away, the onrushing torrent, the torrent Kishon. March on, my soul, with might! "Then loud beat the horses' hoofs with the galloping, galloping of his steeds. "Curse Meroz, says the angel of the LORD, curse bitterly its inhabitants, because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty. "Most

10 blessed of women be Ja'el, the wife of Heber the Ken'ite, of tent-dwelling women most blessed. He asked water and she gave him milk, she brought him curds in a lordly bowl. She put her hand to the tent peg and her right hand to the workmen's mallet; she struck Sis'era a blow, she crushed his head, she shattered and pierced his temple. He sank, he fell, he lay still at

15 her feet; at her feet he sank, he fell; where he sank, there he fell dead. "Out of the window she peered, the mother of Sis'era gazed through the lattice: 'Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the hoofbeats of his chariots?' Her wisest ladies make answer, nay, she gives answer to herself, 'Are they not finding and dividing the spoil? --A maiden or two for every

20 man; spoil of dyed stuffs for Sis'era, spoil of dyed stuffs embroidered, two

pieces of dyed work embroidered for my neck as spoil?" "So perish all thine enemies, O LORD! But thy friends be like the sun as he rises in his might."

And the land had rest for forty years. The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD gave them into the hand of

5 Mid'ian seven years. And the hand of Mid'ian prevailed over Israel; and because of Mid'ian the people of Israel made for themselves the dens which are in the mountains, and the caves and the strongholds. For whenever the Israelites put in seed the Mid'ianites and the Amal'ekites and the people of the East would come up and attack them; they would encamp against them

10 and destroy the produce of the land, as far as the neighborhood of Gaza, and leave no sustenance in Israel, and no sheep or ox or ass. For they would come up with their cattle and their tents, coming like locusts for number; both they and their camels could not be counted; so that they wasted the land as they came in. And Israel was brought very low because of Mid'ian;

15 and the people of Israel cried for help to the LORD. When the people of Israel cried to the LORD on account of the Mid'ianites, the LORD sent a prophet to the people of Israel; and he said to them, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: I led you up from Egypt, and brought you out of the house of bondage; and I delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians, and

20 from the hand of all who oppressed you, and drove them out before you,

and gave you their land; and I said to you, 'I am the LORD your God; you shall not pay reverence to the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell.' But you have not given heed to my voice." Now the angel of the LORD came and sat under the oak at Ophrah, which belonged to Jo'ash the

5 Abiez'rite, as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press, to hide it from the Mid'ianites. And the angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor." And Gideon said to him, "Pray, sir, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this befallen us? And where are all his wonderful deeds which our fathers

10 recounted to us, saying, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' But now the LORD has cast us off, and given us into the hand of Mid'ian." And the LORD turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Mid'ian; do not I send you?" And he said to him, "Pray, Lord, how can I deliver Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in

15 Manas'sseh, and I am the least in my family." And the LORD said to him, "But I will be with you, and you shall smite the Mid'ianites as one man." And he said to him, "If now I have found favor with thee, then show me a sign that it is thou who speakest with me. Do not depart from here, I pray thee, until I come to thee, and bring out my present, and set it before thee."

20 And he said, "I will stay till you return." So Gideon went into his house and



prepared a kid, and unleavened cakes from an ephah of flour; the meat he put in a basket, and the broth he put in a pot, and brought them to him under the oak and presented them. And the angel of God said to him, "Take the meat and the unleavened cakes, and put them on this rock, and pour the  
5 broth over them." And he did so. Then the angel of the LORD reached out the tip of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the meat and the unleavened cakes; and there sprang up fire from the rock and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight. Then Gideon perceived that he was the angel of the LORD; and  
10 Gideon said, "Alas, O Lord GOD! For now I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face." But the LORD said to him, "Peace be to you; do not fear, you shall not die." Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and called it, The LORD is peace. To this day it still stands at Ophrah, which belongs to the Abiez'rites. That night the LORD said to him, "Take your  
15 father's bull, the second bull seven years old, and pull down the altar of Ba'al which your father has, and cut down the Ashe'rah that is beside it; and build an altar to the LORD your God on the top of the stronghold here, with stones laid in due order; then take the second bull, and offer it as a burnt offering with the wood of the Ashe'rah which you shall cut down." So  
20 Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the LORD had told him;

but because he was too afraid of his family and the men of the town to do it by day, he did it by night. When the men of the town rose early in the morning, behold, the altar of Ba'al was broken down, and the Ashe'rah beside it was cut down, and the second bull was offered upon the altar which had

5 been built. And they said to one another, "Who has done this thing?" And after they had made search and inquired, they said, "Gideon the son of Jo'ash has done this thing." Then the men of the town said to Jo'ash, "Bring out your son, that he may die, for he has pulled down the altar of Ba'al and cut down the Ashe'rah beside it." But Jo'ash said to all who were arrayed against

10 him, "Will you contend for Ba'al? Or will you defend his cause? Whoever contends for him shall be put to death by morning. If he is a god, let him contend for himself, because his altar has been pulled down." Therefore on that day he was called Jerubba'al, that is to say, "Let Ba'al contend against him," because he pulled down his altar. Then all the Mid'ianites and the

15 Amal'ekites and the people of the East came together, and crossing the Jordan they encamped in the Valley of Jezreel. But the Spirit of the LORD took possession of Gideon; and he sounded the trumpet, and the Abiez'rites were called out to follow him. And he sent messengers throughout all

20 Manas'seh; and they too were called out to follow him. And he sent messengers to Asher, Zeb'ulun, and Naph'tali; and they went up to meet

them. Then Gideon said to God, "If thou wilt deliver Israel by my hand, as thou hast said, behold, I am laying a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece alone, and it is dry on all the ground, then I shall know that thou wilt deliver Israel by my hand, as thou hast said." And

5 it was so. When he rose early next morning and squeezed the fleece, he wrung enough dew from the fleece to fill a bowl with water. Then Gideon said to God, "Let not thy anger burn against me, let me speak but this once; pray, let me make trial only this once with the fleece; pray, let it be dry only on the fleece, and on all the ground let there be dew." And God did so

10 that night; for it was dry on the fleece only, and on all the ground there was dew. Then Jerubba'al (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him rose early and encamped beside the spring of Harod; and the camp of Mid'ian was north of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the valley. The LORD said to Gideon, "The people with you are too many for me to give the

15 Mid'ianites into their hand, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, 'My own hand has delivered me.' Now therefore proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, 'Whoever is fearful and trembling, let him return home.'" And Gideon tested them; twenty-two thousand returned, and ten thousand remained. And the LORD said to Gideon, "The people are still too many;

20 take them down to the water and I will test them for you there; and he of

whom I say to you, 'This man shall go with you,' shall go with you; and  
any of whom I say to you, 'This man shall not go with you,' shall not go."  
So he brought the people down to the water; and the LORD said to Gideon,  
"Every one that laps the water with his tongue, as a dog laps, you shall set  
5 by himself; likewise every one that kneels down to drink." And the number  
of those that lapped, putting their hands to their mouths, was three hundred  
men; but all the rest of the people knelt down to drink water. And the  
LORD said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men that lapped I will  
deliver you, and give the Mid'ianites into your hand; and let all the others  
10 go every man to his home." So he took the jars of the people from their  
hands, and their trumpets; and he sent all the rest of Israel every man to his  
tent, but retained the three hundred men; and the camp of Mid'ian was below  
him in the valley. That same night the LORD said to him, "Arise, go down  
against the camp; for I have given it into your hand. But if you fear to go  
15 down, go down to the camp with Purah your servant; and you shall hear  
what they say, and afterward your hands shall be strengthened to go down  
against the camp." Then he went down with Purah his servant to the  
outposts of the armed men that were in the camp. And the Mid'ianites and  
the Amal'ekites and all the people of the East lay along the valley like  
20 locusts for multitude; and their camels were without number, as the sand

which is upon the seashore for multitude. When Gideon came, behold, a man was telling a dream to his comrade; and he said, "Behold, I dreamed a dream; and lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Mid'ian, and came to the tent, and struck it so that it fell, and turned it upside down, so

5 that the tent lay flat." And his comrade answered, "This is no other than the sword of Gideon the son of Jo'ash, a man of Israel; into his hand God has given Mid'ian and all the host." When Gideon heard the telling of the dream and its interpretation, he worshiped; and he returned to the camp of Israel, and said, "Arise; for the LORD has given the host of Mid'ian into your

10 hand." And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and put trumpets into the hands of all of them and empty jars, with torches inside the jars. And he said to them, "Look at me, and do likewise; when I come to the outskirts of the camp, do as I do. When I blow the trumpet, I and all who are with me, then blow the trumpets also on every side of all the

15 camp, and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon.'" So Gideon and the hundred men who were with him came to the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, when they had just set the watch; and they blew the trumpets and smashed the jars that were in their hands. And the three companies blew the trumpets and broke the jars, holding in their left

20 hands the torches, and in their right hands the trumpets to blow; and they

cried, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" They stood every man in his place round about the camp, and all the army ran; they cried out and fled. When they blew the three hundred trumpets, the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow and against all the army; and the army fled as far

5 as Beth-shit'tah toward Zer'erah, as far as the border of A'bel-meho'lah, by Tabbath. And the men of Israel were called out from Naph'tali and from Asher and from all Manas'seh, and they pursued after Mid'ian. And Gideon sent messengers throughout all the hill country of E'phraim, saying, "Come down against the Mid'ianites and seize the waters against them, as far as

10 Beth-bar'ah, and also the Jordan." So all the men of E'phraim were called out, and they seized the waters as far as Beth-bar'ah, and also the Jordan. And they took the two princes of Mid'ian, Oreb and Zeeb; they killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb, and Zeeb they killed at the wine press of Zeeb, as they pursued Mid'ian; and they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon

15 beyond the Jordan. And the men of E'phraim said to him, "What is this that you have done to us, not to call us when you went to fight with Mid'ian?" And they upbraided him violently. And he said to them, "What have I done now in comparison with you? Is not the gleanings of the grapes of E'phraim better than the vintage of Abi-e'zer? God has given into your hands the

20 princes of Mid'ian, Oreb and Zeeb; what have I been able to do in

comparison with you?" Then their anger against him was abated, when he had said this. And Gideon came to the Jordan and passed over, he and the three hundred men who were with him, faint yet pursuing. So he said to the men of Succoth, "Pray, give loaves of bread to the people who follow me; 5 for they are faint, and I am pursuing after Zebah and Zalmun'na, the kings of Mid'ian." And the officials of Succoth said, "Are Zebah and Zalmun'na already in your hand, that we should give bread to your army?" And Gideon said, "Well then, when the LORD has given Zebah and Zalmun'na into my hand, I will flail your flesh with the thorns of the wilderness and with 10 briers." And from there he went up to Penu'el, and spoke to them in the same way; and the men of Penu'el answered him as the men of Succoth had answered. And he said to the men of Penu'el, "When I come again in peace, I will break down this tower." Now Zebah and Zalmun'na were in Karkor with their army, about fifteen thousand men, all who were left of all the 15 army of the people of the East; for there had fallen a hundred and twenty thousand men who drew the sword. And Gideon went up by the caravan route east of Nobah and Jog'behah, and attacked the army; for the army was off its guard. And Zebah and Zalmun'na fled; and he pursued them and took the two kings of Mid'ian, Zebah and Zalmun'na, and he threw all the army 20 into a panic. Then Gideon the son of Jo'ash returned from the battle by the

ascent of Heres. And he caught a young man of Succoth, and questioned him; and he wrote down for him the officials and elders of Succoth, seventy-seven men. And he came to the men of Succoth, and said, "Behold Zebah and Zalmun'na, about whom you taunted me, saying, 'Are Zebah and

5 Zalmun'na already in your hand, that we should give bread to your men who are faint?'" And he took the elders of the city and he took thorns of the wilderness and briers and with them taught the men of Succoth. And he broke down the tower of Penu'el, and slew the men of the city. Then he said to Zebah and Zalmun'na, "Where are the men whom you slew at

10 Tabor?" They answered, "As you are, so were they, every one of them; they resembled the sons of a king." And he said, "They were my brothers, the sons of my mother; as the LORD lives, if you had saved them alive, I would not slay you." And he said to Jether his first-born, "Rise, and slay them." But the youth did not draw his sword; for he was afraid, because he

15 was still a youth. Then Zebah and Zalmun'na said, "Rise yourself, and fall upon us; for as the man is, so is his strength." And Gideon arose and slew Zebah and Zalmun'na; and he took the crescents that were on the necks of their camels. Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us, you and your son and your grandson also; for you have delivered us out of the hand

20 of Mid'ian." Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, and my son will



not rule over you; the LORD will rule over you." And Gideon said to them,  
"Let me make a request of you; give me every man of you the earrings of  
his spoil." (For they had golden earrings, because they were Ish'maelites.)  
And they answered, "We will willingly give them." And they spread a  
5 garment, and every man cast in it the earrings of his spoil. And the weight  
of the golden earrings that he requested was one thousand seven hundred  
shekels of gold; besides the crescents and the pendants and the purple  
garments worn by the kings of Mid'ian, and besides the collars that were  
about the necks of their camels. And Gideon made an ephod of it and put it  
10 in his city, in Ophrah; and all Israel played the harlot after it there, and it  
became a snare to Gideon and to his family. So Mid'ian was subdued before  
the people of Israel, and they lifted up their heads no more. And the land  
had rest forty years in the days of Gideon. Jerubba'al the son of Jo'ash went  
and dwelt in his own house. Now Gideon had seventy sons, his own  
15 offspring, for he had many wives. And his concubine who was in Shechem  
also bore him a son, and he called his name Abim'elech. And Gideon the  
son of Jo'ash died in a good old age, and was buried in the tomb of Jo'ash  
his father, at Ophrah of the Abiez'rites. As soon as Gideon died, the people  
of Israel turned again and played the harlot after the Ba'als, and made Ba'al-  
20 be'rith their god. And the people of Israel did not remember the LORD their

God, who had rescued them from the hand of all their enemies on every side; and they did not show kindness to the family of Jerubba'al (that is, Gideon) in return for all the good that he had done to Israel. Now Abim'elech the son of Jerubba'al went to Shechem to his mother's kinsmen

5 and said to them and to the whole clan of his mother's family, "Say in the ears of all the citizens of Shechem, 'Which is better for you, that all seventy of the sons of Jerubba'al rule over you, or that one rule over you?' Remember also that I am your bone and your flesh." And his mother's kinsmen spoke all these words on his behalf in the ears of all the men of

10 Shechem; and their hearts inclined to follow Abim'elech, for they said, "He is our brother." And they gave him seventy pieces of silver out of the house of Ba'al-be'rith with which Abim'elech hired worthless and reckless fellows, who followed him. And he went to his father's house at Ophrah, and slew his brothers the sons of Jerubba'al, seventy men, upon one stone; but Jotham the

15 youngest son of Jerubba'al was left, for he hid himself. And all the citizens of Shechem came together, and all Beth-millo, and they went and made Abim'elech king, by the oak of the pillar at Shechem. When it was told to Jotham, he went and stood on the top of Mount Ger'izim, and cried aloud and said to them, "Listen to me, you men of Shechem, that God may listen

20 to you. The trees once went forth to anoint a king over them; and they said

to the olive tree, 'Reign over us.' But the olive tree said to them, 'Shall I leave my fatness, by which gods and men are honored, and go to sway over the trees?' And the trees said to the fig tree, 'Come you, and reign over us.' But the fig tree said to them, 'Shall I leave my sweetness and my good

5 fruit, and go to sway over the trees?' And the trees said to the vine, 'Come you, and reign over us.' But the vine said to them, 'Shall I leave my wine which cheers gods and men, and go to sway over the trees?' Then all the trees said to the bramble, 'Come you, and reign over us.' And the bramble said to the trees, 'If in good faith you are anointing me king over you, then

10 come and take refuge in my shade; but if not, let fire come out of the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon.' "Now therefore, if you acted in good faith and honor when you made Abim'elech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerubba'al and his house, and have done to him as his deeds deserved-- for my father fought for you, and risked his life, and rescued you

15 from the hand of Mid'ian; and you have risen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, seventy men on one stone, and have made Abim'elech, the son of his maidservant, king over the citizens of Shechem, because he is your kinsman-- if you then have acted in good faith and honor with Jerubba'al and with his house this day, then rejoice in Abim'elech, and

20 let him also rejoice in you; but if not, let fire come out from Abim'elech,

and devour the citizens of Shechem, and Beth-millo; and let fire come out from the citizens of Shechem, and from Beth-millo, and devour Abim'elech."

And Jotham ran away and fled, and went to Beer and dwelt there, for fear of Abim'elech his brother. Abim'elech ruled over Israel three years. And God

5 sent an evil spirit between Abim'elech and the men of Shechem; and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abim'elech; that the violence done to the seventy sons of Jerubba'al might come and their blood be laid upon Abim'elech their brother, who slew them, and upon the men of Shechem, who strengthened his hands to slay his brothers. And the men of Shechem

10 put men in ambush against him on the mountain tops, and they robbed all who passed by them along that way; and it was told Abim'elech. And Ga'al the son of Ebed moved into Shechem with his kinsmen; and the men of Shechem put confidence in him. And they went out into the field, and gathered the grapes from their vineyards and trod them, and held festival,

15 and went into the house of their god, and ate and drank and reviled Abim'elech. And Ga'al the son of Ebed said, "Who is Abim'elech, and who are we of Shechem, that we should serve him? Did not the son of Jerubba'al and Zebul his officer serve the men of Hamor the father of Shechem? Why then should we serve him? Would that this people were under my hand! then

20 I would remove Abim'elech. I would say to Abim'elech, 'Increase your army,

and come out.'" When Zebul the ruler of the city heard the words of Ga'al the son of Ebed, his anger was kindled. And he sent messengers to Abim'elech at Aru'mah, saying, "Behold, Ga'al the son of Ebed and his kinsmen have come to Shechem, and they are stirring up the city against you. Now therefore, go by night, you and the men that are with you, and lie in wait in the fields. Then in the morning, as soon as the sun is up, rise early and rush upon the city; and when he and the men that are with him come out against you, you may do to them as occasion offers." And Abim'elech and all the men that were with him rose up by night, and laid wait against Shechem in four companies. And Ga'al the son of Ebed went out and stood in the entrance of the gate of the city; and Abim'elech and the men that were with him rose from the ambush. And when Ga'al saw the men, he said to Zebul, "Look, men are coming down from the mountain tops!" And Zebul said to him, "You see the shadow of the mountains as if they were men." Ga'al spoke again and said, "Look, men are coming down from the center of the land, and one company is coming from the direction of the Diviners' Oak." Then Zebul said to him, "Where is your mouth now, you who said, 'Who is Abim'elech, that we should serve him?' Are not these the men whom you despised? Go out now and fight with them." And Ga'al went out at the head of the men of Shechem, and fought with Abim'elech.

And Abim'elech chased him, and he fled before him; and many fell wounded, up to the entrance of the gate. And Abim'elech dwelt at Aru'mah; and Zebul drove out Ga'al and his kinsmen, so that they could not live on at Shechem. On the following day the men went out into the fields. And

5 Abim'elech was told. He took his men and divided them into three companies, and laid wait in the fields; and he looked and saw the men coming out of the city, and he rose against them and slew them. Abim'elech and the company that was with him rushed forward and stood at the entrance of the gate of the city, while the two companies rushed upon all who were

10 in the fields and slew them. And Abim'elech fought against the city all that day; he took the city, and killed the people that were in it; and he razed the city and sowed it with salt. When all the people of the Tower of Shechem heard of it, they entered the stronghold of the house of El-be'rith. Abim'elech was told that all the people of the Tower of Shechem were gathered

15 together. And Abim'elech went up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the men that were with him; and Abim'elech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bundle of brushwood, and took it up and laid it on his shoulder. And he said to the men that were with him, "What you have seen me do, make haste to do, as I have done." So every one of the people cut down his

20 bundle and following Abim'elech put it against the stronghold, and they set

the stronghold on fire over them, so that all the people of the Tower of Shechem also died, about a thousand men and women. Then Abim'elech went to Thebez, and encamped against Thebez, and took it. But there was a strong tower within the city, and all the people of the city fled to it, all the men  
5 and women, and shut themselves in; and they went to the roof of the tower. And Abim'elech came to the tower, and fought against it, and drew near to the door of the tower to burn it with fire. And a certain woman threw an upper millstone upon Abim'elech's head, and crushed his skull. Then he called hastily to the young man his armor-bearer, and said to him, "Draw  
10 your sword and kill me, lest men say of me, 'A woman killed him.'" And his young man thrust him through, and he died. And when the men of Israel saw that Abim'elech was dead, they departed every man to his home. Thus God requited the crime of Abim'elech, which he committed against his father in killing his seventy brothers; and God also made all the wickedness of the  
15 men of Shechem fall back upon their heads, and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubba'al. After Abim'elech there arose to deliver Israel Tola the son of Pu'ah, son of Dodo, a man of Is'sachar; and he lived at Shamir in the hill country of E'phraim. And he judged Israel twenty-three years. Then he died, and was buried at Shamir. After him arose Ja'ir the  
20 Gileadite, who judged Israel twenty-two years. And he had thirty sons who

rode on thirty asses; and they had thirty cities, called Hav'voth-ja'ir to this day, which are in the land of Gilead. And Ja'ir died, and was buried in Kamon. And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD, and served the Ba'als and the Ash'taroth, the gods of Syria, the gods of Sidon, the gods of Moab, the gods of the Ammonites, and the gods of the Philistines; and they forsook the LORD, and did not serve him. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of the Philistines and into the hand of the Ammonites, and they crushed and oppressed the children of Israel that year. For eighteen years they oppressed all the people of Israel that were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. And the Ammonites crossed the Jordan to fight also against Judah and against Benjamin and against the house of E'phraim; so that Israel was sorely distressed. And the people of Israel cried to the LORD, saying, "We have sinned against thee, because we have forsaken our God and have served the Ba'als." And the LORD said to the people of Israel, "Did I not deliver you from the Egyptians and from the Amorites, from the Ammonites and from the Philistines? The Sido'nians also, and the Amal'ekites, and the Ma'onites, oppressed you; and you cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand. Yet you have forsaken me and served other gods; therefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry to the gods



whom you have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your distress."

And the people of Israel said to the LORD, "We have sinned; do to us whatever seems good to thee; only deliver us, we pray thee, this day." So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD; and

5 he became indignant 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 one to another, "Who is the man that will begin to fight against the Ammonites? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead." Now

10 Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior, but he was the son of a harlot. Gilead was the father of Jephthah. And Gilead's wife also bore him sons; and when his wife's sons grew up, they thrust Jephthah out, and said to him, "You shall not inherit in our father's house; for you are the son of another woman." Then Jephthah fled from his brothers, and dwelt in the land of Tob;

15 and worthless fellows collected round Jephthah, and went raiding with him. 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 with the Ammonites." But Jephthah said to the

20 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 trouble?" 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 with the Ammonites, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead." Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If  
5 you bring me home again to fight with 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; we will surely 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  
10 LORD at Mizpah. Then Jephthah sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites and said, "What have you against me, that you have come to me to fight against my land?" And the king of the Ammonites answered the messengers of Jephthah, "Because Israel on coming from Egypt took away my land, from the Arnon to the Jabbok and to the Jordan; now therefore  
15 restore it peaceably." And Jephthah sent messengers again to the king of the Ammonites and said to him, "Thus says Jephthah: Israel did not take away the land of Moab or the land of the Ammonites, but when they came up from Egypt, Israel went through the wilderness to the Red Sea and came to Kadesh. Israel then sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, 'Let us  
20 pass, we pray, through your land'; but the king of Edom would not listen.

And they sent also to the king of Moab, but he would not consent. So Israel remained at Kadesh. Then they journeyed through the wilderness, and went around the land of Edom and the land of Moab, and arrived on the east side of the land of Moab, and camped on the other side of the Arnon; but they

5 did not enter the territory of Moab, for the Arnon was the boundary of Moab. Israel then sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, king of Heshbon; and Israel said to him, 'Let us pass, we pray, through your land to our country.' But Sihon did not trust Israel to pass through his territory; so Sihon gathered all his people together, and encamped at Jahaz, and fought

10 with Israel. And the LORD, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they defeated them; so Israel took possession of all the land of the Amorites, who inhabited that country. And they took possession of all the territory of the Amorites from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan. So then the LORD, the God of Israel,

15 dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel; and are you to take possession of them? Will you not possess what Chemosh your god gives you to possess? And all that the LORD our God has dispossessed before us, we will possess. Now are you any better than Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he ever strive against Israel, or did he ever go to war with

20 them? While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aro'er and its

villages, and in all the cities that are on the banks of the Arnon, three hundred years, why did you not recover them within that time? I therefore have not sinned against you, and you do me wrong by making war on me; the LORD, the Judge, decide this day between the people of Israel and the

5 people of Ammon." But the king of the Ammonites did not heed the message of Jephthah which he sent to him. Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manas'sseh, 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 thou

10 wilt give the Ammonites into my hand, then whoever comes forth from the doors of my house to meet me, when I return victorious from the Ammonites, shall be the LORD's, and I will offer him up for a burnt offering." So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight against them; and the LORD gave them into his hand. And he smote them from Aro'er to

15 the neighborhood of Minnith, twenty cities, and as far as Abel-keramim, with a very great slaughter. So the Ammonites were subdued before the people of Israel. Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah; and behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances; she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter. And when he saw her, he

20 rent 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." And she  
said to him, "My father, if you have opened your mouth to the LORD, do  
to me according to what has gone forth from your mouth, now that the  
5 LORD has avenged you on your enemies, on the Ammonites." And she said  
to her father, "Let this thing be done for me; let me alone two months, that  
I may go and wander on the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my  
companions." 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  
10 mountains. And at the end of two months, she returned to her father, who  
did with her according to his vow which 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. The men of Ephraim were called to arms, and they crossed to  
15 Zaphon and said to Jephthah, "Why did you cross over to fight against the  
Ammonites, and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house  
over you with fire." And Jephthah said to them, "I and my people had a  
great feud with the Ammonites; and when I called you, you did not deliver  
me from their hand. And when I saw that you would not deliver me, I took  
20 my life in my hand, and crossed over against the Ammonites, and the LORD

gave them into my hand; why then have you come up to me this day, to fight against me?" Then Jephthah gathered all the men of Gilead and fought with E'phraim; and the men of Gilead smote E'phraim, because they said, "You are fugitives of E'phraim, you Gileadites, in the midst of E'phraim and

5 Manas'seh." And the Gileadites took the fords of the Jordan against the E'phraimites. And when any of the fugitives of E'phraim said, "Let me go over," the men of Gilead said to him, "Are you an E'phraimite?" When he said, "No," they said to him, "Then say Shibboleth," and he said, "Sibboleth," for he could not pronounce it right; then they seized him and slew him at

10 the fords of the Jordan. And there fell at that time forty-two thousand of the E'phraimites. Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died, and was buried in his city in Gilead. After him Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Israel. He had thirty sons; and thirty daughters he gave in marriage outside his clan, and thirty daughters he brought in from outside for his sons.

15 And he judged Israel seven years. Then Ibzan died, and was buried at Bethlehem. After him Elon the Zeb'ulunite judged Israel; and he judged Israel ten years. Then Elon the Zeb'ulunite died, and was buried at Ai'jalon in the land of Zeb'ulun. After him Abdon the son of Hillel the Pira'thonite judged Israel. He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, who rode on seventy asses;

20 and he judged Israel eight years. Then Abdon the son of Hillel the

Pira'thonite died, and was buried at Pira'thon in the land of E'phraim, in the hill country of the Amal'ekites. And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD gave them into the hand of the Philistines for forty years. And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the

5 tribe of the Danites, whose name was Mano'ah; and his wife was barren and had no children. And the angel of the LORD appeared to the woman and said to her, "Behold, you are barren and have no children; but you shall conceive and bear a son. Therefore beware, and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for lo, you shall conceive and bear a son. No

10 razor shall come upon his head, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from birth; and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines."

Then the woman came and told her husband, "A man of God came to me, and his countenance was like the countenance of the angel of God, very terrible; I did not ask him whence he was, and he did not tell me his name;

15 but he said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive and bear a son; so then drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, for the boy shall be a Nazirite to God from birth to the day of his death.'" Then Mano'ah entreated the LORD, and said, "O, LORD, I pray thee, let the man of God whom

20 thou didst send come again to us, and teach us what we are to do with the boy that will be born." And God listened to the voice of Mano'ah, and the

angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field; but Mano'ah  
her husband was not with her. And the woman ran in haste and told her  
husband, "Behold, the man who came to me the other day has appeared to  
me." And Mano'ah arose and went after his wife, and came to the man and  
5 said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to this woman?" And he said, "I  
am." And Mano'ah said, "Now when your words come true, what is to be  
the boy's manner of life, and what is he to do?" And the angel of the  
LORD said to Mano'ah, "Of all that I said to the woman let her beware.  
She may not eat of anything that comes from the vine, neither let her drink  
10 wine or strong drink, or eat any unclean thing; all that I commanded her let  
her observe." Mano'ah said to the angel of the LORD, "Pray, let us detain  
you, and prepare a kid for you." And the angel of the LORD said to  
Mano'ah, "If you detain me, I will not eat of your food; but if you make  
ready a burnt offering, then offer it to the LORD." (For Mano'ah did not  
15 know that he was the angel of the LORD.) And Mano'ah said to the angel  
of the LORD, "What is your name, so that, when your words come true, we  
may honor you?" And the angel of the LORD said to him, "Why do you  
ask my name, seeing it is wonderful?" So Mano'ah took the kid with the  
cereal offering, and offered it upon the rock to the LORD, to him who  
20 works wonders. And when the flame went up toward heaven from the altar,



the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame of the altar while Mano'ah and his wife looked on; and they fell on their faces to the ground. The angel of the LORD appeared no more to Mano'ah and to his wife. Then Mano'ah knew that he was the angel of the LORD. And Mano'ah said to his

5 wife, "We shall surely die, for we have seen God." But his wife said to him, "If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted a burnt offering and a cereal offering at our hands, or shown us all these things, or now announced to us such things as these." And the woman bore a son, and called his name Samson; and the boy grew, and the LORD

10 blessed him. And the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him in Ma'haneh-dan, between Zorah and Esh'ta-ol. Samson went down to Timnah, and at Timnah he saw one of the daughters of the Philistines. Then he came up, and told his father and mother, "I saw one of the daughters of the Philistines at Timnah; now get her for me as my wife." But his father and mother said to

15 him, "Is there not a woman among the daughters of your kinsmen, or among all our people, that you must go to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" But Samson said to his father, "Get her for me; for she pleases me well." His father and mother did not know that it was from the LORD; for he was seeking an occasion against the Philistines. At that time the

20 Philistines had dominion over Israel. Then Samson went down with his father

and mother to Timnah, and he came to the vineyards of Timnah. And  
behold, a young lion roared against him; and the Spirit of the LORD came  
mightily upon him, and he tore the lion asunder as one tears a kid; and he  
had nothing in his hand. But he did not tell his father or his mother what  
5 he had done. Then he went down and talked with the woman; and she  
pleased Samson well. 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. He scraped it out into his hands,  
and went on, eating as he went; and he came to his father and mother, and  
10 gave some to them, and they ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken  
the honey from the carcass of the lion. And his father went down to the  
woman, and Samson made a feast there; for so the young men used to do.  
And when the people saw him, they brought thirty companions to be with  
him. And Samson said to them, "Let me now put a riddle to you; if you  
15 can tell me what it is, within the seven days of the feast, and find it out,  
then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty festal garments; but if  
you cannot tell me what it is, then you shall give me thirty linen garments  
and thirty festal garments." And they said to him, "Put your riddle, that we  
20 may hear it." And he said to them, "Out of the eater came something to eat.  
Out of the strong came something sweet." And they could not in three days

tell what the riddle was. On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife,  
"Entice your husband to tell us what the riddle is, lest we burn you and  
your father's house with fire. Have you invited us here to impoverish us?"  
And Samson's wife wept before him, and said, "You only hate me, you do  
5 not love me; you have put a riddle to my countrymen, and you have not  
told me what it is." And he said to her, "Behold, I have not told my father  
nor my mother, and shall I tell you?" She wept before him the seven days  
that their feast lasted; and on the seventh day he told her, because she  
pressed him hard. Then she told the riddle to her countrymen. And the men  
10 of the city said to him on the seventh day before the sun went down, "What  
is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion?" And he said to them,  
"If you had not plowed with my heifer, you would not have found out my  
riddle." And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he went  
down to Ash'kelon and killed thirty men of the town, and took their spoil  
15 and gave the festal garments to those who had told the riddle. In hot anger  
he went back to his father's house. And Samson's wife was given to his  
companion, who had been his best man. After a while, at the time of wheat  
harvest, Samson went to visit his wife with a kid; and he said, "I will go in  
to my wife in the chamber." But her father would not allow him to go in.  
20 And her father said, "I really thought that you utterly hated her; so I gave

her to your companion. Is not her younger sister fairer than she? Pray take her instead." And Samson said to them, "This time I shall be blameless in regard to the Philistines, when I do them mischief." So Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took torches; and he turned them tail to tail, and put a torch between each pair of tails. And when he had set fire to the torches, he let the foxes go into the standing grain of the Philistines, and burned up the shocks and the standing grain, as well as the olive orchards. Then the Philistines said, "Who has done this?" And they said, "Samson, the son-in-law of the Timnite, because he has taken his wife and given her to his companion." And the Philistines came up, and burned her and her father with fire. And Samson said to them, "If this is what you do, I swear I will be avenged upon you, and after that I will quit." And he smote them hip and thigh with great slaughter; and he went down and stayed in the cleft of the rock of Etam. Then the Philistines came up and encamped in Judah, and made a raid on Lehi. And the men of Judah said, "Why have you come up against us?" They said, "We have come up to bind Samson, to do to him as he did to us." Then three thousand men of Judah went down to the cleft of the rock of Etam, and said to Samson, "Do you not know that the Philistines are rulers over us? What then is this that you have done to us?" And he said to them, "As they did to me, so have I done to them." And they said

to him, "We have come down to bind you, that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines." And Samson said to them, "Swear to me that you will not fall upon me yourselves." They said to him, "No; we will only bind you and give you into their hands; we will not kill you." So they bound him

5 with two new ropes, and brought him up from the rock. When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and the ropes which were on his arms became as flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. And he found a fresh jawbone of an ass, and put out his hand and seized it, and with it

10 he slew a thousand men. And Samson said, "With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jawbone of an ass have I slain a thousand men." When he had finished speaking, he threw away the jawbone out of his hand; and that place was called Ra'math-le'hi. And he was very thirsty, and he called on the LORD and said, "Thou hast granted this great deliverance by

15 the hand of thy servant; and shall I now die of thirst, and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?" And God split open the hollow place that is at Lehi, and there came water from it; and when he drank, his spirit returned, and he revived. Therefore the name of it was called En-hakkor'e; it is at

20 Lehi to this day. And he judged Israel in the days of the Philistines twenty years. Samson went to Gaza, and there he saw a harlot, and he went in to

her. The Gazites were told, "Samson has come here," and they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They kept quiet all night, saying, "Let us wait till the light of the morning; then we will kill him." But Samson lay till midnight, and at midnight he arose and

5 took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two posts, and pulled them up, bar and all, and put them on his shoulders and carried them to the top of the hill that is before Hebron. After this he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Deli'lah. And the lords of the Philistines came to her and said to her, "Entice him, and see wherein his great strength

10 lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him to subdue him; and we will each give you eleven hundred pieces of silver."

And Deli'lah said to Samson, "Please tell me wherein your great strength lies, and how you might be bound, that one could subdue you." And Samson said to her, "If they bind me with seven fresh bowstrings which have not been

15 dried, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man." Then the lords of the Philistines brought her seven fresh bowstrings which had not been dried, and she bound him with them. Now she had men lying in wait in an inner chamber. And she said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!"

But he snapped the bowstrings, as a string of tow snaps when it touches the

20 fire. So the secret of his strength was not known. And Deli'lah said to

Samson, "Behold, you have mocked me, and told me lies; please tell me how you might be bound." And he said to her, "If they bind me with new ropes that have not been used, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man." So Deli'lah took new ropes and bound him with them, and said

5 to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And the men lying in wait were in an inner chamber. But he snapped the ropes off his arms like a thread. And Deli'lah said to Samson, "Until now you have mocked me, and told me lies; tell me how you might be bound." And he said to her, "If you weave the seven locks of my head with the web and make it tight with the

10 pin, then I shall become weak, and be like any other man." So while he slept, Deli'lah took the seven locks of his head and wove them into the web. And she made them tight with the pin, and said to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" But he awoke from his sleep, and pulled away the pin, the loom, and the web. And she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love

15 you,' when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and you have not told me wherein your great strength lies." And when she pressed him hard with her words day after day, and urged him, his soul was vexed to death. And he told her all his mind, and said to her, "A razor

20 has never come upon my head; for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I be shaved, then my strength will leave me, and I shall

become weak, and be like any other man." When Deli'lah saw that he had told her all his mind, she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up this once, for he has told me all his mind." Then the lords of the Philistines came up to her, and brought the money in their hands. She made  
5 him sleep upon her knees; and she called a man, and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. And she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" And he awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go out as at other times, and shake myself free." And he did not know that the LORD had left him. And the  
10 Philistines seized him and gouged out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with bronze fetters; and he ground at the mill in the prison. But the hair of his head began to grow again after it had been shaved. Now the lords of the Philistines gathered to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon their god, and to rejoice; for they said, "Our god has given Samson  
15 our enemy into our hand." And when the people saw him, they praised their god; for they said, "Our god has given our enemy into our hand, the ravager of our country, who has slain many of us." And when their hearts were merry, they said, "Call Samson, that he may make sport for us." So they called Samson out of the prison, and he made sport before them. They made  
20 him stand between the pillars; and Samson said to the lad who held him by



the hand, "Let me feel the pillars on which the house rests, that I may lean against them." Now the house was full of men and women; all the lords of the Philistines were there, and on the roof there were about three thousand men and women, who looked on while Samson made sport. Then Samson

5 called to the LORD and said, "O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be avenged upon the Philistines for one of my two eyes." And Samson grasped the two middle pillars upon which the house rested, and he leaned his weight upon them, his right hand on the one and his left hand on the other. And Samson

10 said, "Let me die with the Philistines." Then he bowed with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords and upon all the people that were in it. So the dead whom he slew at his death were more than those whom he had slain during his life. Then his brothers and all his family came down and took him and brought him up and buried him between Zorah and Esh'ta-ol in

15 the tomb of Mano'ah his father. He had judged Israel twenty years. There was a man of the hill country of E'phraim, whose name was Micah. And he said to his mother, "The eleven hundred pieces of silver which were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse, and also spoke it in my ears, behold, the silver is with me; I took it." And his mother said, "Blessed be

20 my son by the LORD." And he restored the eleven hundred pieces of silver

to his mother; and his mother said, "I consecrate the silver to the LORD  
from my hand for my son, to make a graven image and a molten image;  
now therefore I will restore it to you." So when he restored the money to  
his mother, his mother took two hundred pieces of silver, and gave it to the  
5 silversmith, who made it into a graven image and a molten image; and it  
was in the house of Micah. And the man Micah had a shrine, and he made  
an ephod and teraphim, and installed one of his sons, who became his priest.  
In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in  
his own eyes. Now there was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, of the  
10 family of Judah, who was a Levite; and he sojourned there. And the man  
departed from the town of Bethlehem in Judah, to live where he could find  
a place; and as he journeyed, he came to the hill country of E'phraim to the  
house of Micah. And Micah said to him, "From where do you come?" And  
he said to him, "I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to  
15 sojourn where I may find a place." And Micah said to him, "Stay with me,  
and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give you ten pieces of silver  
a year, and a suit of apparel, and your living." And the Levite was content  
to dwell with the man; and the young man became to him like one of his  
sons. And Micah installed the Levite, and the young man became his priest,  
20 and was in the house of Micah. Then Micah said, "Now I know that the

LORD will prosper me, because I have a Levite as priest." In those days there was no king in Israel. And in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking for itself an inheritance to dwell in; for until then no inheritance among the tribes of Israel had fallen to them. So the Danites sent five able  
5 men from the whole number of their tribe, from Zorah and from Esh'ta-ol, to spy out the land and to explore it; and they said to them, "Go and explore the land." And they came to the hill country of E'phraim, to the house of Micah, and lodged there. When they were by the house of Micah, they recognized the voice of the young Levite; and they turned aside and said to  
10 him, "Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What is your business here?" And he said to them, "Thus and thus has Micah dealt with me: he has hired me, and I have become his priest." And they said to him, "Inquire of God, we pray thee, that we may know whether the journey on which we are setting out will succeed." And the priest said to them, "Go  
15 in peace. The journey on which you go is under the eye of the LORD." Then the five men departed, and came to La'ish, and saw the people who were there, how they dwelt in security, after the manner of the Sido'nians, quiet and unsuspecting, lacking nothing that is in the earth, and possessing wealth, and how they were far from the Sido'nians and had no dealings with  
20 any one. And when they came to their brethren at Zorah and Esh'ta-ol, their

brethren said to them, "What do you report?" They said, "Arise, and let us go up against them; for we have seen the land, and behold, it is very fertile. And will you do nothing? Do not be slow to go, and enter in and possess the land. When you go, you will come to an unsuspecting people. The land

5 is broad; yea, God has given it into your hands, a place where there is no lack of anything that is in the earth." And six hundred men of the tribe of Dan, armed with weapons of war, set forth from Zorah and Esh'ta-ol, and went up and encamped at Kir'iath-je'arim in Judah. On this account that place is called Ma'haneh-dan to this day; behold, it is west of Kir'iath-je'arim. And

10 they passed on from there to the hill country of E'phraim, and came to the house of Micah. Then the five men who had gone to spy out the country of La'ish said to their brethren, "Do you know that in these houses there are an ephod, teraphim, a graven image, and a molten image? Now therefore consider what you will do." And they turned aside thither, and came to the

15 house of the young Levite, at the home of Micah, and asked him of his welfare. Now the six hundred men of the Danites, armed with their weapons of war, stood by the entrance of the gate; and the five men who had gone to spy out the land went up, and entered and took the graven image, the ephod, the teraphim, and the molten image, while the priest stood by the

20 entrance of the gate with the six hundred men armed with weapons of war.

And when these went into Micah's house and took the graven image, the ephod, the teraphim, and the molten image, the priest said to them, "What are you doing?" And they said to him, "Keep quiet, put your hand upon your mouth, and come with us, and be to us a father and a priest. Is it  
5 better for you to be priest to the house of one man, or to be priest to a tribe and family in Israel?" And the priest's heart was glad; he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people. So they turned and departed, putting the little ones and the cattle and the goods in front of them. When they were a good way from the home of  
10 Micah, the men who were in the houses near Micah's house were called out, and they overtook the Danites. And they shouted to the Danites, who turned round and said to Micah, "What ails you that you come with such a company?" And he said, "You take my gods which I made, and the priest, and go away, and what have I left? How then do you ask me, 'What ails  
15 you?'" And the Danites said to him, "Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest angry fellows fall upon you, and you lose your life with the lives of your household." Then the Danites went their way; and when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his home. And taking what Micah had made, and the priest who belonged to him, the  
20 Danites came to La'ish, to a people quiet and unsuspecting, and smote them

with the edge of the sword, and burned the city with fire. And there was no deliverer because it was far from Sidon, and they had no dealings with any one. It was in the valley which belongs to Beth-rehob. And they rebuilt the city, and dwelt in it. And they named the city Dan, after the name of Dan

5 their ancestor, who was born to Israel; but the name of the city was La'ish at the first. And the Danites set up the graven image for themselves; and Jonathan the son of Gershom, son of Moses, and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land. So they set up Micah's graven image which he made, as long as the house of God was at

10 Shiloh. In those days, when there was no king in Israel, a certain Levite was sojourning in the remote parts of the hill country of E'phraim, who took to himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. And his concubine became angry with him, and she went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there some four months. Then her husband

15 arose and went after her, to speak kindly to her and bring her back. He had with him his servant and a couple of asses. And he came to her father's house; and when the girl's father saw him, he came with joy to meet him. And his father-in-law, the girl's father, made him stay, and he remained with him three days; so they ate and drank, and lodged there. And on the fourth

20 day they arose early in the morning, and he prepared to go; but the girl's

father said to his son-in-law, "Strengthen your heart with a morsel of bread,  
and after that you may go." So the two men sat and ate and drank together;  
and the girl's father said to the man, "Be pleased to spend the night, and let  
your heart be merry." And when the man rose up to go, his father-in-law  
5 urged him, till he lodged there again. And on the fifth day he arose early in  
the morning to depart; and the girl's father said, "Strengthen your heart, and  
tarry until the day declines." So they ate, both of them. And when the man  
and his concubine and his servant rose up to depart, his father-in-law, the  
girl's father, said to him, "Behold, now the day has waned toward evening;  
10 pray tarry all night. Behold, the day draws to its close; lodge here and let  
your heart be merry; and tomorrow you shall arise early in the morning for  
your journey, and go home." But the man would not spend the night; he  
rose up and departed, and arrived opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). He had  
with him a couple of saddled asses, and his concubine was with him. When  
15 they were near Jebus, the day was far spent, and the servant said to his  
master, "Come now, let us turn aside to this city of the Jeb'usites, and spend  
the night in it." And his master said to him, "We will not turn aside into  
the city of foreigners, who do not belong to the people of Israel; but we  
will pass on to Gib'e-ah." And he said to his servant, "Come and let us  
20 draw near to one of these places, and spend the night at Gib'e-ah or at

Ramah." So they passed on and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gib'e-ah, which belongs to Benjamin, and they turned aside there, to go in and spend the night at Gib'e-ah. And he went in and sat down in the open square of the city; for no man took them into his house to spend

5 the night. And behold, an old man was coming from his work in the field at evening; the man was from the hill country of E'phraim, and he was sojourning in Gib'e-ah; the men of the place were Benjaminites. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw the wayfarer in the open square of the city; and the old man said, "Where are you going? and whence do you come?" And

10 he said to him, "We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah to the remote parts of the hill country of E'phraim, from which I come. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; and I am going to my home; and nobody takes me into his house. We have straw and provender for our asses, with bread and wine for me and your maidservant and the young man with your servants; there is

15 no lack of anything." And the old man said, "Peace be to you; I will care for all your wants; only, do not spend the night in the square." So he brought him into his house, and gave the asses provender; and they washed their feet, and ate and drank. As they were making their hearts merry,

20 behold, the men of the city, base fellows, beset the house round about, beating on the door; and they said to the old man, the master of the house,



"Bring out the man who came into your house, that we may know him."

And the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them,

"No, my brethren, do not act so wickedly; seeing that this man has come into my house, do not do this vile thing. Behold, here are my virgin

5 daughter and his concubine; let me bring them out now. Ravish them and do with them what seems good to you; but against this man do not do so vile a thing." But the men would not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine, and put her out to them; and they knew her, and abused her all night until the morning. And as the dawn began to break, they let her go.

10 And as morning appeared, the woman came and fell down at the door of the man's house where her master was, till it was light. And her master rose up in the morning, and when he opened the doors of the house and went out to go on his way, behold, there was his concubine lying at the door of the house, with her hands on the threshold. He said to her, "Get up, let us be

15 going." But there was no answer. Then he put her upon the ass; and the man rose up and went away to his home. And when he entered his house, he took a knife, and laying hold of his concubine he divided her, limb by limb, into twelve pieces, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel.

And all who saw it said, "Such a thing has never happened or been seen

20 from the day that the people of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt

until this day; consider it, take counsel, and speak." Then all the people of Israel came out, from Dan to Beer-sheba, including the land of Gilead, and the congregation assembled as one man to the LORD at Mizpah. And the chiefs of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in

5 the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand men on foot that drew the sword. (Now the Benjaminites heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.) And the people of Israel said, "Tell us, how was this wickedness brought to pass?" And the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, "I came to Gib'e-ah that belongs to

10 Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night. And the men of Gib'e-ah rose against me, and beset the house round about me by night; they meant to kill me, and they ravished my concubine, and she is dead. 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 abomination and

15 wantonness in Israel. Behold, you people of Israel, all of you, give your advice and counsel here." And all the people arose as one man, saying, "We will not any of us go to his tent, and none of us will return to his house. But now this is what we will do to Gib'e-ah: we will go up against it by lot, and we will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of

20 Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand of ten thousand, to

bring provisions for the people, that when they come they may requite Gib'e-ah of Benjamin, for all the wanton crime which they have committed in Israel." So all the men of Israel gathered against the city, united as one man. And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying,

5 "What wickedness is this that has taken place among you? Now therefore give up the men, the base fellows in Gib'e-ah, that we may put them to death, and put away evil from Israel." But the Benjaminites would not listen to the voice of their brethren, the people of Israel. And the Benjaminites came together out of the cities to Gib'e-ah, to go out to battle against the

10 people of Israel. And the Benjaminites mustered out of their cities on that day twenty-six thousand men that drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gib'e-ah, who mustered seven hundred picked men. Among all these were seven hundred picked men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair, and not miss. And the men of Israel, apart from Benjamin,

15 mustered four hundred thousand men that drew sword; all these were men of war. The people of Israel arose and went up to Bethel, and inquired of God, "Which of us shall go up first to battle against the Benjaminites?" And the LORD said, "Judah shall go up first." Then the people of Israel rose in the morning, and encamped against Gib'e-ah. And the men of Israel went out to

20 battle against Benjamin; and the men of Israel drew up the battle line against

them at Gib'e-ah. The Benjaminites came out of Gib'e-ah, and felled to the ground on that day twenty-two thousand men of the Israelites. But the people, the men of Israel, took courage, and again formed the battle line in the same place where they had formed it on the first day. And the people of

5 Israel went up and wept before the LORD until the evening; and they inquired of the LORD, "Shall we again draw near to battle against our brethren the Benjaminites?" And the LORD said, "Go up against them." So the people of Israel came near against the Benjaminites the second day. And Benjamin went against them out of Gib'e-ah the second day, and felled to

10 the ground eighteen thousand men of the people of Israel; all these were men who drew the sword. Then all the people of Israel, the whole army, went up and came to Bethel and wept; they sat there before the LORD, and fasted that day until evening, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. And the people of Israel inquired of the LORD (for the

15 ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, and Phin'eh as the son of Elea'zar, son of Aaron, ministered before it in those days), saying, "Shall we yet again go out to battle against our brethren the Benjaminites, or shall we cease?" And the LORD said, "Go up; for tomorrow I will give them into your hand." So Israel set men in ambush round about Gib'e-ah. And the

20 people of Israel went up against the Benjaminites on the third day, and set

themselves in array against Gib'e-ah, as at other times. And the Benjaminites went out against the people, and were drawn away from the city; and as at other times they began to smite and kill some of the people, in the highways, one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gib'e-ah, and in

5 the open country, about thirty men of Israel. And the Benjaminites said, "They are routed before us, as at the first." But the men of Israel said, "Let us flee, and draw them away from the city to the highways." And all the men of Israel rose up out of their place, and set themselves in array at Ba'al-ta'mar; and the men of Israel who were in ambush rushed out of their

10 place west of Geba. And there came against Gib'e-ah ten thousand picked men out of all Israel, and the battle was hard; but the Benjaminites did not know that disaster was close upon them. And the LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel; and the men of Israel destroyed twenty-five thousand one hundred men of Benjamin that day; all these were men who drew the sword.

15 So the Benjaminites saw that they were defeated. The men of Israel gave ground to Benjamin, because they trusted to the men in ambush whom they had set against Gib'e-ah. And the men in ambush made haste and rushed upon Gib'e-ah; the men in ambush moved out and smote all the city with the edge of the sword. Now the appointed signal between the men of Israel

20 and the men in ambush was that when they made a great cloud of smoke

rise up out of the city the men of Israel should turn in battle. Now Benjamin had begun to smite and kill about thirty men of Israel; they said, "Surely they are smitten down before us, as in the first battle." But when the signal began to rise out of the city in a column of smoke, the Benjaminites

5 looked behind them; and behold, the whole of the city went up in smoke to heaven. Then the men of Israel turned, and the men of Benjamin were dismayed, for they saw that disaster was close upon them. Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them, and those who came out of the cities destroyed

10 them in the midst of them. Cutting down the Benjaminites, they pursued them and trod them down from Nohah as far as opposite Gib'e-ah on the east. Eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell, all of them men of valor. And they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon; five thousand men of them were cut down in the highways, and they were

15 pursued hard to Gidom, and two thousand men of them were slain. So all who fell that day of Benjamin were twenty-five thousand men that drew the sword, all of them men of valor. But six hundred men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, and abode at the rock of Rimmon four months. And the men of Israel turned back against the

20 Benjaminites, and smote them with the edge of the sword, men and beasts

and all that they found. And all the towns which they found they set on  
fire. Now the men of Israel had sworn at Mizpah, "No one of us shall give  
his daughter in marriage to Benjamin." And the people came to Bethel, and  
sat there till evening before God, and they lifted up their voices and wept  
5 bitterly. And they said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, why has this come to  
pass in Israel, that there should be today one tribe lacking in Israel?" And  
on the morrow the people rose early, and built there an altar, and offered  
burnt offerings and peace offerings. And the people of Israel said, "Which of  
all the tribes of Israel did not come up in the assembly to the LORD?" For  
10 they had taken a great oath concerning him who did not come up to the  
LORD to Mizpah, saying, "He shall be put to death." And the people of  
Israel had compassion for Benjamin their brother, and said, "One tribe is cut  
off from Israel this day. What shall we do for wives for those who are left,  
since we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them any of our  
15 daughters for wives?" And they said, "What one is there of the tribes of  
Israel that did not come up to the LORD to Mizpah?" And behold, no one  
had come to the camp from Ja'bish-gil'ead, to the assembly. For when the  
people were mustered, behold, not one of the inhabitants of Ja'bish-gil'ead  
was there. So the congregation sent thither twelve thousand of their bravest  
20 men, and commanded them, "Go and smite the inhabitants of Ja'bish-gil'ead

with the edge of the sword; also the women and the little ones. This is what you shall do; every male and every woman that has lain with a male you shall utterly destroy." And they found among the inhabitants of Ja'bish-gil'ead four hundred young virgins who had not known man by lying with him; and

5 they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

Then the whole congregation sent word to the Benjaminites who were at the rock of Rimmon, and proclaimed peace to them. And Benjamin returned at that time; and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Ja'bish-gil'ead; but they did not suffice for them. And the people

10 had compassion on Benjamin because the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel. Then the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since the women are destroyed out of Benjamin?" And they said, "There must be an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe be not blotted out from Israel. Yet we cannot give

15 them wives of our daughters." For the people of Israel had sworn, "Cursed be he who gives a wife to Benjamin." So they said, "Behold, there is the yearly feast of the LORD at Shiloh, which is north of Bethel, on the east of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebo'nah."

And they commanded the Benjaminites, saying, "Go and lie in wait in the

20 vineyards, and watch; if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in the



dances, then come out of the vineyards and seize each man his wife from the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. And when their fathers or their brothers come to complain to us, we will say to them, 'Grant them graciously to us; because we did not take for each man of them his

5 wife in battle, neither did you give them to them, else you would now be guilty.'" And the Benjaminites did so, and took their wives, according to their number, from the dancers whom they carried off; then they went and returned to their inheritance, and rebuilt the towns, and dwelt in them. And the people of Israel departed from there at that time, every man to his tribe

10 and family, and they went out from there every man to his inheritance. In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes. \*

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