

# Jephthah

Judges 10:6-12:7

# Judges Recap

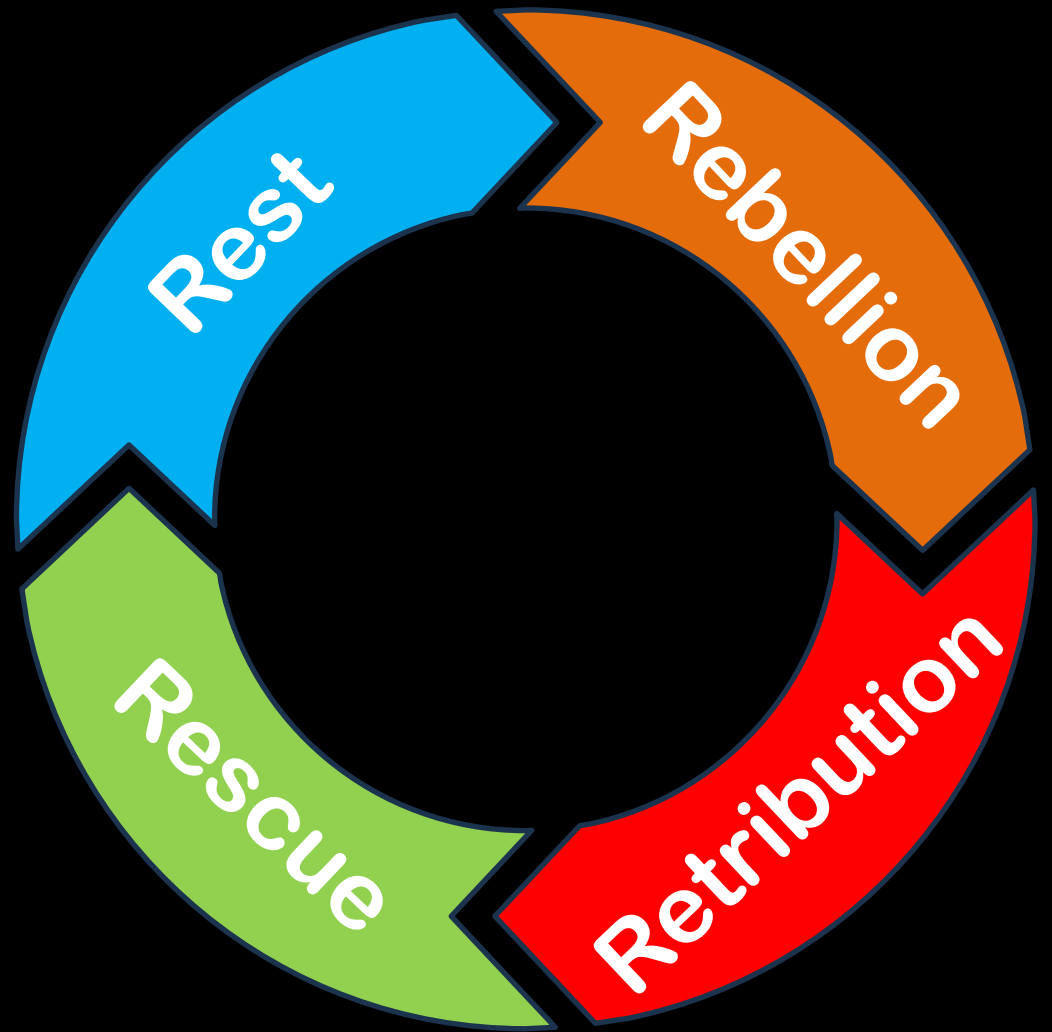
Period: about 1400 – 1050 BC

Definition: Judges = a ruler or leader

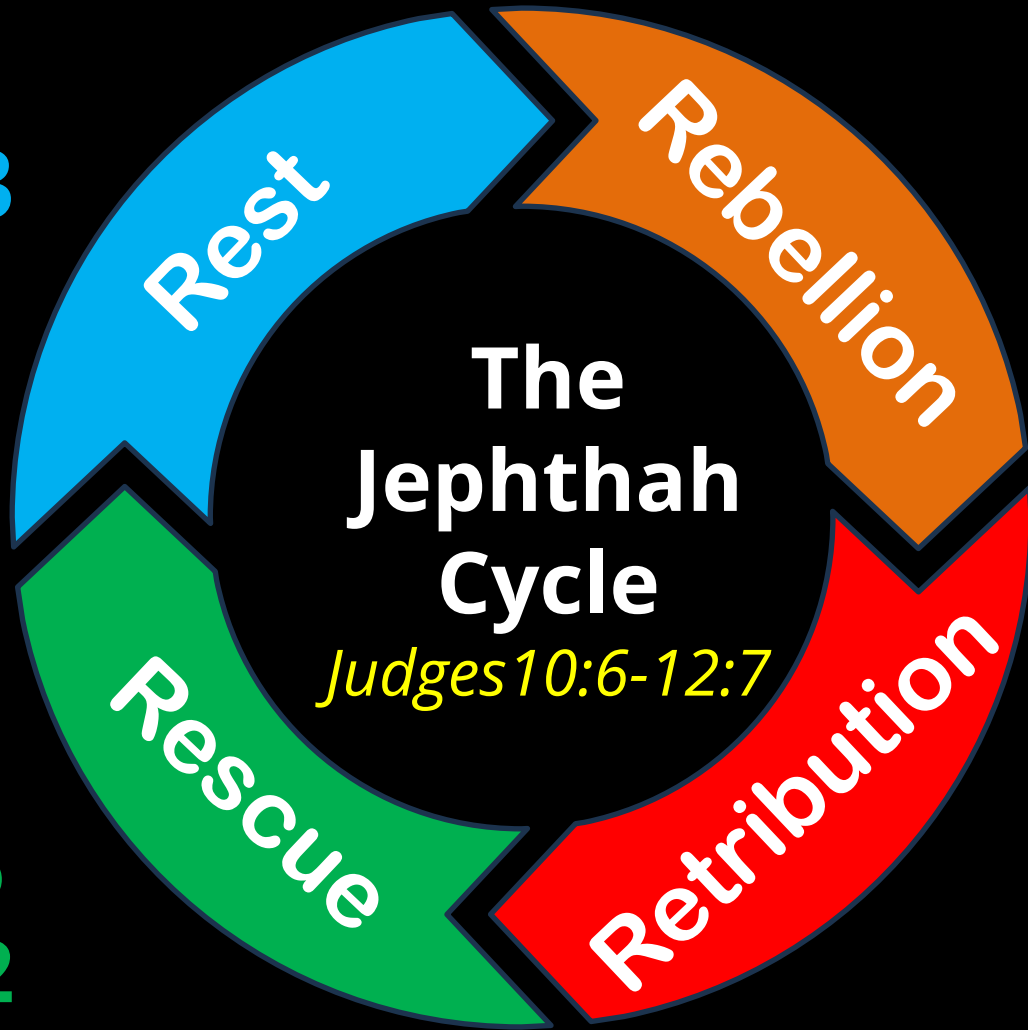
Key words/phrases: “again did evil...” & “the LORD...”

Main message: God’s faithfulness – grace & redemption

# The cycle in Judges



**Judges  
11:32-33**



**Judges  
10:6**

**Judges  
10:10-16  
11:29, 32**

**Judges  
10:7-9**

## Rebellion: (Judges 10:6)

*The people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals and the Ashtaroth, 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.*

## Retribution: (Judges 10:7-9)

*<sup>7</sup> So 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, <sup>8</sup> and they crushed and oppressed the people of Israel that year. For eighteen years they oppressed all the people of Israel who were beyond the Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. <sup>9</sup> And the Ammonites crossed the Jordan to fight also against Judah and against Benjamin and against the house of Ephraim, so that Israel was severely distressed.*

## Rescue: (Judges 10:10-14)

*<sup>10</sup> And the people of Israel cried out to the Lord, saying, "We have sinned against you, because we have forsaken our God and have served the Baals." <sup>11</sup> And the Lord said to the people of Israel, "Did I not save you from the Egyptians and from the Amorites, from the Ammonites and from the Philistines? <sup>12</sup> The Sidonians also, and the Amalekites and the Maonites oppressed you, and you cried out to me, and I saved you out of their hand. <sup>13</sup> Yet you have forsaken me and served other gods; therefore I will save you no more. <sup>14</sup> Go and cry out to the gods whom you have chosen; let them save you in the time of your distress."*

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**Lesson 1.**

**God IS gracious!**

# 1. God IS gracious!

- Grace is unmerited favour or kindness.
- Grace is getting what we DO NOT deserve.
- Israel had no right to be rescued.
- God's kindness towards them was entirely His choice.

God rescuing rebellious people for no other reason than because He chooses too – THIS IS GRACE!!



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## What this means for us...

- Don't presume upon it, or think we are deserving of it, lest we cheapen it. **Don't reject God's grace.**
- Don't be comfortable with sin in our lives. Don't forget how serious sin is. **Remember Jesus died for our sins.**

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What this means for us...

*<sup>1</sup>What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? <sup>2</sup> By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?*

*Romans 6:1-2 (ESV)*

# 1. God IS gracious!

What this means for us...

*<sup>6</sup> For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— <sup>7</sup> because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.*

*Romans 6:6-7 (NIV)*

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What this means for us...

*<sup>15</sup> What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!*

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## What this means for us...

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- Don't be comfortable with sin in our lives. Don't forget how serious sin is. **Remember Jesus died for our sins.**

**Remember that grace is a gift God chooses to give!**

# 1. God IS gracious!

*<sup>16</sup> Then the Lord raised up judges, who saved them out of the hand of those who plundered them. <sup>17</sup> Yet they did not listen to their judges, for they whored after other gods and bowed down to them. They soon turned aside from the way in which their fathers had walked, who had obeyed the commandments of the Lord, and they did not do so.*

*Judges 1:16-17 (ESV)*

**God desires relationship with His people!**

## Rescue: (Judges 10:15-16)

*<sup>15</sup> And the people of Israel said to the Lord, "We have sinned; do to us whatever seems good to you. Only please deliver us this day." <sup>16</sup> So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the Lord, and **he became impatient over the misery of Israel.***

## Rescue: (Judges 10:17-18)

*17 Then the Ammonites were called to arms, and they encamped in Gilead. And the people of Israel came together, and they encamped at Mizpah. 18 And the people, the leaders of Gilead, said one to another, "Who is the man who will begin to fight against the Ammonites? He shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead."*

## Rescue: (Judges 11:1-3)

*<sup>1</sup> Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty warrior, but he was the son of a prostitute. Gilead was the father of Jephthah. <sup>2</sup> And Gilead's wife also bore him sons. And when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out and said to him, "You shall not have an inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman." <sup>3</sup> Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob, and worthless fellows collected around Jephthah and went out with him.*

## Rescue: (Judges 11:4-7)

*<sup>4</sup> After a time the Ammonites made war against Israel. <sup>5</sup> And when the Ammonites made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to bring Jephthah from the land of Tob. <sup>6</sup> And they said to Jephthah, "Come and be our leader, that we may fight against the Ammonites." <sup>7</sup> But Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "Did you not hate me and drive me out of my father's house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?"*

## Rescue: (Judges 11:8-11)

*<sup>8</sup> And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "That is why we have turned to you now, that you may go with us and fight against the Ammonites and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead." <sup>9</sup> Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, "If you bring me home again to fight against the Ammonites, and the Lord gives them over to me, I will be your head." <sup>10</sup> And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, "The Lord will be witness between us, if we do not do as you say." <sup>11</sup> So Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and leader over them. And Jephthah spoke all his words before the Lord at Mizpah.*

# Some observations about Jephthah

- He was an unlikely choice for Judge.
  - *a chequered past (11:1)*
  - *despised & rejected (11:2)*
  - *no longer living with the people (11:2)*
  - *surrounded by worthless fellows (11:3)*



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- He was a mighty warrior with a capable band of followers (11:1,3)
- He was the people's choice (11:6)

## Rescue: (Judges 11:12-27)

Jephthah attempts diplomacy with the Ammonite King. (v.12-27)

- Asks *“what do you have against us?”* (v.12)
- *Argues the facts* (v.14-22)
- *Presents a theological case* (v.23-24)
- Asks *“why now?”*, after 300 years? (v.25-26)

## Rescue: (Judges 11:27-28)

*27 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 people of Ammon.”*

*28 But the king of the Ammonites did not listen to the words of Jephthah that he sent to him.*

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**Jephthah had faith in God  
as their ultimate Judge!**

# Jephthah's faith

## **Hebrews 11:32-34**

*<sup>32</sup> And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, <sup>33</sup> who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, <sup>34</sup> quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies.*

# Rescue: (Judges 11:29)

*<sup>29</sup> Then the Spirit of the Lord was upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh and passed on to Mizpah of Gilead, and from Mizpah of Gilead he passed on to the Ammonites.*

Lesson 2.

**God REDEEMS!**



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- Jephthah's story is one of redemption.
- God can (*and does*), use broken people (*who put their faith in Him*), to do extraordinary things for His name and for His glory! (*Remember: God +1 is always the right way*)
- God is a God who REDEEMS!

## 2. God REDEEMS!

### What this means for us...

- Our past rejections and hurts don't have to prevent us from serving the Lord.
- Our past, our history doesn't disqualify us from being used by God for His glory!

What matters is not our past,  
but our faith in Him!

## 2 Corinthians 5:17 (ESV)

*17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

## 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

*21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

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- What matters is not our past, but our faith in Him!
- God's grace is sufficient for all our sin. His power is made perfect in our weakness, as we trust in Him!

## Rescue: (Judges 11:30-32)

*<sup>30</sup> And Jephthah made a vow to the Lord and said, "If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, <sup>31</sup> then whatever comes out from the doors of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the Ammonites shall be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering." <sup>32</sup> So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight against them, and the Lord gave them into his hand.*

## Rest: (Judges 11:33)

*<sup>32</sup> So Jephthah crossed over to the Ammonites to fight against them, and **the Lord gave them into his hand.** <sup>33</sup> And he struck them from Aroer to the neighborhood of Minnith, twenty cities, and as far as Abel-keramim, with a great blow. **So the Ammonites were subdued before the people of Israel.***



## Jephthah's foolish vow – tragic consequences

*<sup>34</sup> Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah. And behold, his daughter came out to meet him with tambourines and with dances. She was his only child; besides her he had neither son nor daughter. <sup>35</sup> And as soon as he saw her, he tore his clothes and said, "Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low, and you have become the cause of great trouble to me. For I have opened my mouth to the LORD, and I cannot take back my VOW."*

**Lesson 3.**

**God is NOT for sale!**

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- When we lose the fact that grace is a gift, all that is left is to try and bargain with God. **Yet this is totally insecure!**
- **We cannot bargain with God.** We have nothing of value to offer that isn't already a gift from Him!
- **God offers us security & certainty in His grace!**
- God offers us forgiveness based not on our merit, but on what He has done for us!

## Philippians 3:4-6

*<sup>4</sup> though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless*

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*<sup>7</sup> But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.*

## Romans 8:32

*<sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?*



# The problem in Judges

