



## LIFE LESSONS FROM OLD TESTAMENT HEROES WEEK #7 JEPHTHAH

In this sermon series on Courageous Faith, we have seen how God often chooses to display His glory through the most unlikely and unqualified candidates. It is no different with Jephthah, the leader who had a rough past and made an unwise vow with God.

Jephthah's life began with a big disadvantage. He was pushed aside and looked down upon for who his parents were. He was not like the other sons of Gilead, so he was rejected by his own family. He was denied his father's inheritance and fled from home.

Despite Jephthah's past, he was called by God to be a leader and used by God to bring victory for Israel by defeating the Ammonites. God's Spirit gave him the strength and wisdom he needed to face the battle before him, but that does not mean God condoned everything Jephthah did.

It is the same for us. Instead of doing what is right in our own eyes, like what Jephthah and the other judges did, we must rely upon God to be our leader. Instead of making rash decisions based upon what we think is right, we should take the time to contemplate our actions. Our promises should be bathed in prayer so our words are honorable to God and never contradicting His word.

## CAN I BUY A VOW? - JEPHTHAH

*Judges 11:1-7, 29-30, 34-36    Judges 17:6    James 1:19-27*

Jephthah was called to be a leader, but was approached by the very people who had written him off, so he had to face his past.

- Have you ever been written off because of something that is outside of your control?
- Have you ever been judged or pushed away by others or even by your own family?
- Are there things from your past that have put you at a disadvantage in life?
- Have you addressed the hurts and setbacks from your past?
- Will they ever hold you back from the calling God has placed upon your life?

Jephthah was willing to deal with his past and confront his setbacks in order to step into the calling God had for him. Here are some questions to lead us into deeper reflection:

1. Why do you think Jephthah made the vow he did with God? Is this what God wanted? What would your response be if you were Jephthah's daughter and your father made this vow?
2. Read Ecclesiastes 5:1-7. Do you believe the importance of following through with a vow to God is stronger than the importance of obeying His laws?
3. Read Leviticus 18:21 and 20:1-3. Read Deuteronomy 12:31 and 18:9-10. Why do you think Jephthah chose to follow through with this vow even though human sacrifice was detestable to God and His law directly forbids it?
4. Do you think Jephthah's past had anything to do with the vow he made? Is it possible that his past contributed to a need to earn God's favor, leading to his bargaining? Have you ever bargained with God in an attempt to earn His favor or so that He might get you out of a situation?