

June 18, 2017



# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks  
Baptist Church**  
Grand Prairie, Texas

**Lesson Leaders:**

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**Class Leaders:**

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**  
A qualified leader is one who has learned to serve

**POEM FOR THE WEEK:**  
The paths of leadership are trod  
By those who humbly walk with  
God, Their gracious spirit holds a  
sway That makes you want to go  
their way. —D. DeHaan

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**  
*And whoever of you desires to be  
first shall be slave of all*  
(Mark 10:44 NKJV)

*(from "Our Daily Bread", Jan 27, 2013)*

**Series: God's Urgent Call**  
**UNIT: Called to be Strong**

**NEXT WEEK**  
**Samson**

**(Judges 13:1-7, 24-25)**

## Jephthah Judges 11:4-11, 29-31

**Aim and Application of the Lesson**

The lesson explores the facts relating to the character of the person **Jephthah**. The **study's aim** is to demonstrate that God gives the results He wants despite the failures of the person He calls. The **study's application** is to encourage us to be prepared in heart and spirit for a call from God.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

**Lesson Introduction and Background**

Sin inevitably brings divine judgment, or discipline, in one form or another. For those who claim the name of the Lord, that discipline is specifically designed to bring them to repentance. In Judges 10, we learn that it took eighteen years of oppression at the hands of the powerful Ammonites to finally bring Israel to repentance from their idolatry (vss. 6-18). Not only did God's chastisement drive His people to confession of sin and repentance, but it also drove them to desperation. In seeking someone to lead them against their enemies, the Israelites, particularly those east of the Jordan, turned to a man they had previously rejected and disowned—Jephthah. They were no longer concerned about Jephthah's parentage or even his morality; they wanted a skilled military leader. Jephthah's initial response was what we might expect. These people who wanted nothing to do with him before now wanted him only because they needed him. The leaders of Gilead, now perhaps humbled, offered to make Jephthah "head over... Gilead" (Judg. 11:8). Jephthah's words in our text suggest a man who was looking out primarily for his own interests while maintaining some distrust toward his former countrymen. He wanted to make sure their promise to make him their head was in fact kept. It is even possible to take the Hebrew translation of Judges 11:9 as an affirmative statement rather than a question (Keil and Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament, Hendrickson). If so, Jephthah was asserting, almost in a threatening way, that he would be their head. While Jephthah's response does not indicate that he was a very spiritually minded man, and this is somewhat borne out by subsequent events, there is one glimmer of light in his words. He suggested that any victory that came would come by the hand of the Lord. Of course, this could be taken as empty words or conventional speech that lacked sincerity. Yet in his negotiations with the Ammonites, Jephthah demonstrated his knowledge of Israel's history and of Israel's God-given right to the land, and he called on the Lord to deliver the Ammonites into his hands. This is exactly what the Lord did. Our text thus reveals in a veiled way the two conflicting sides of Jephthah's character. He was driven by past hurts and distrustful of his fellow Israelites. He was looking out for himself, no doubt because he had learned that no one else would. Yet somewhere deep within him was a flickering spark of faith. He remembered what the Lord had done in the past, and he still believed the Lord was on the side of His people. For all his faults, he was a man of faith and enshrined as such in Hebrews 11:32. While Jephthah is something of a spiritual enigma to us, he is to some degree also a reflection of us. We are not as consistent as we should be in following the Lord, but we have a gracious, merciful, and powerful God who can use people like Jephthah and people like us when we simply trust Him.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **The Threat (Judges 11:4-5)**

#### *Fear of war (4)*

Fear of war because of previous disputes (2 Chron 27:5)

Fear of war because of great distress between the nations (Judg 10:9)

Fear of war because it would influence the future (2 Sam 10:6)

#### *Lack of trust in God (5)*

Lack of trust in God because there is no belief in Him (Ps 78:22)

Lack of trust in God because of trust in things that are worthless (Job 15:31)

Lack of trust in God because of forgetting about God (Job 8:13-15)

Lack of trust in God because of depending on own abilities and strength (Jer 17:5)

### **The Picking of a Leader (Judges 11:6-11)**

#### *Issues of picking based on human standards (6-8)*

Human standards that God frustrates (1 Cor 1:18-21)

Human standards that is empowered through the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:3-7)

Human standards that use human wisdom (1 Cor 2:12-14)

Human standards that are foolishness in God's sight (1 Cor 3:18-19)

#### *Issues of seeking God's approval of man's choices (9-11)*

Seeking approvals through deciding whose approval is more important, God or man (Gal 1:10)

Seeking approvals through the commendations of God (2 Cor 10:18)

Seeking approvals by trying to please God not men (1 Thess 2:4)

### **The Spirit's Protection and Human Vow (Judges 11:29-31)**

#### *God's attentiveness to His people (29)*

God is attentive to prayers (Ps 34:15)

God is attentive or the sake of His covenant (Ps 106:43-45)

God is attentive to the needs of obedient servants (Isa 58:6-11)

#### *Unwise vows (30-31)*

Unwise vows are those not kept (Eccl 5:4)

Unwise vows are slow about fulfilling (Deut 23:21)

Unwise vows be must kept even when it hurts (Ps 15:2-4)

Unwise vows are those hastily or rashly given (Prov 20:25)