



Jephthah: The Danger of Designer Faith

Judges 10-12

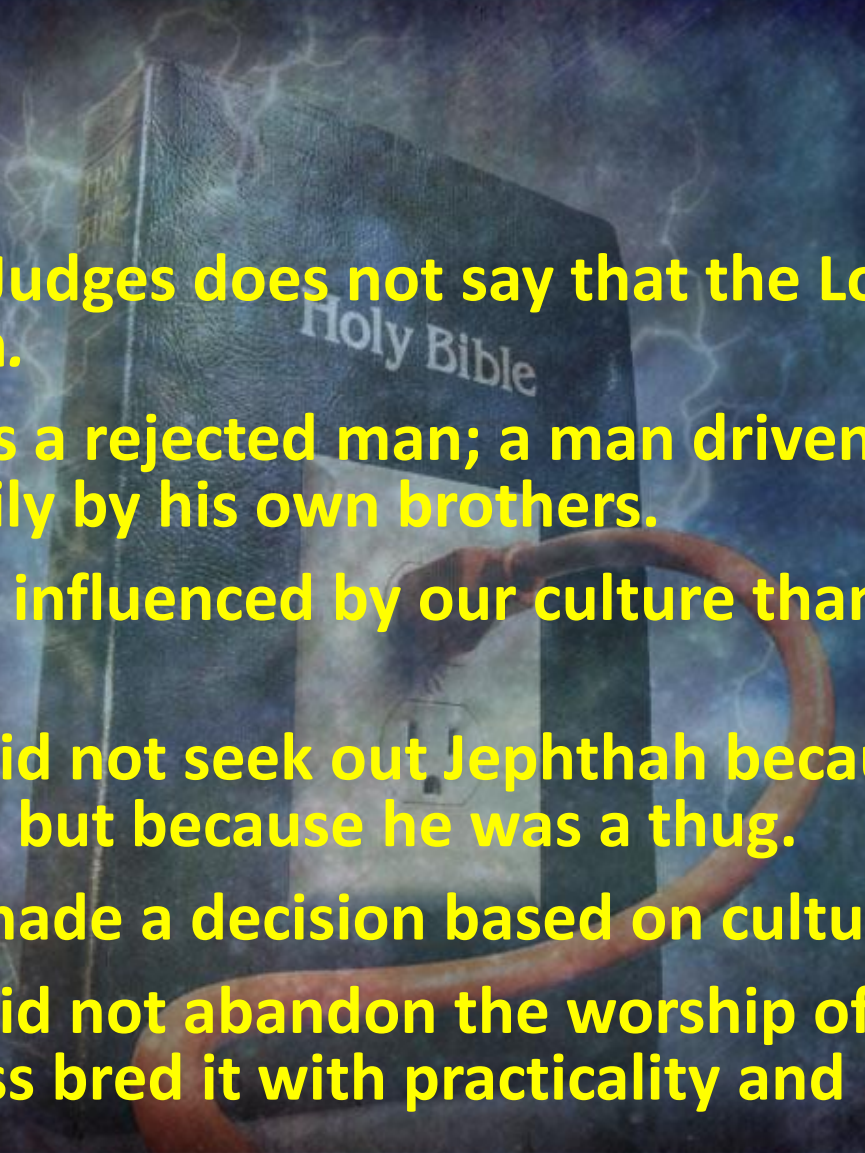
Designer Religion

The background of the slide features a dark, atmospheric scene. In the center, a book with 'Holy Bible' written on its cover is plugged into a wall outlet. A power cord loops around the outlet and extends towards the right. The scene is lit with dramatic, blue-toned lighting, with faint lightning bolts visible in the background, creating a sense of divine power or a modern, technological twist on the sacred text.

- Israel completely abandoned God.
- God sold them into the hand of the Philistines and the Ammonites.
- The Israelites were serving the gods of the Ammonites and the Philistines.
- The Israelites hated the consequences of their sin, but they did not hate the sin itself.
- Designer religion is where you mix and match what you like about Christianity with what you like from materialism or self-fulfillment.
- The Israelites actually realize their sin and truly repented.

Jephthah

- The Book of Judges does not say that the Lord “*raised up*” Jephthah.
- Jephthah was a rejected man; a man driven away from his family by his own brothers.
- We are more influenced by our culture than we realize.
- The people did not seek out Jephthah because God told them to, but because he was a thug.
- The people made a decision based on culture.
- The people did not abandon the worship of Yahweh, they just cross bred it with practicality and pragmatism.



Human Sacrifice

- We can know facts about God and still miss the heart of God.
- We get our timeline for the book of Judges from Jephthah.
- Jephthah knew God's Word, but he did not have a clue about the heart of God or the character of God.
- The spirit of the Lord was on Jephthah BEFORE he made his vow, NOT as a result of it.
- Jephthah took what he knew about Yahweh and combined it with some of what he had heard about other gods.
- Jephthah was talking about a human sacrifice, expecting the first one out of his house to be one of his many servants or comrades-in-arms.
- Jephthah had become desensitized to the idea that he was supposed to live by a different set of values.

God's Grace

The background of the slide features a dark, stormy sky with several bright, jagged lightning bolts. In the center, a dark blue book with the words 'HOLY BIBLE' printed on its cover is visible. A glowing orange ribbon or cord loops around the book, starting from the bottom right and curving upwards towards the top left.

- It is not enough to have head knowledge about the Bible if that knowledge is not transforming you.
- Jephthah had a works-righteousness understanding of God's character.
- Jephthah felt that if he did not keep his horrific vow, God would punish him.
- God does not give victory, favor or salvation because we earn it.
- God's grace runs deeper than we will ever understand.

Faith in God



- Deliverance from the oppressors did not come because of Jephthah's vow, it came because of God's great mercy.
- You never have to make promises or sacrifices to God to earn His favor.
- There is only one way to please God: Faith!
- The tribe of Ephraim got upset that Jephthah did not call on them to fight against the Ammonites, so the Israelites turned on each other.
- The men of Israel wound up killing 42,000 of their own countrymen because they had a different accent.

Conclusion

- As long as we keep looking to human saviors and human solutions, we are going to be more divided.
- A recurring theme in Judges is that human saviors fall short.
- Purebred Christianity is the grace of God received as a free gift.
- God's acceptance is given as a gift not as a reward.

