

JEPHTHAH – THE NEGOTIATOR – PART 1

--JUDGES 10:17-12:7--

INTRODUCTION:

When we speak of negotiation it is usually spoken of as a good thing, it is even hard to imagine what our world would be like without it. Where does negotiation fit in when you acknowledge God as your rightful ruler and understand that your life in relation to Him is meant to reflect His character in all areas and all relationships. Does negotiation truly have a place in the way we relate to our neighbors or to those outside our circle? What place does negotiation have in our relationship with God? Can we negotiate with Him? Is it a good idea? Of all the judges that we have looked at so far, Jephthah has the most when it comes to dialogue. We will find that his history unfolds in several episodes of negotiation. He does a lot of talking. As we look at his life, we will learn some important lessons about this issue in particular.

- I. BEFORE NEGOTIATIONS (Judges 10:17-18)
 - a. If you remember from last week, at the death of Jair, the sons of Israel again did _____ in the sight of the LORD.
 - b. In the end of chapter 10 we read that the sons of Ammon were called out and they came up into the land of Israel and camped in _____.
- II. NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE ELDERS OF GILEAD (Judges 11:1-11)
 - a. Verse one of chapter eleven tells us that Jephthah the Gileadite was a valiant _____, he was a man's man, he knew how to fight, he had experience in combat.
 - b. With no volunteers and the sons of Ammon beginning their raiding and pillaging again, the elders of Gilead were desperate for someone to _____ them against the Ammonites.
 - c. They tell Jephthah that they want him to come and fight for them, and if he does this for them, he will become _____ over all the people of Gilead.

- d. Satisfied with their oath that the LORD is the witness between them, Jephthah returns, and he is immediately made both _____ and _____ over the people of Gilead.
- e. I would like to bring to your attention the similarity between the apparent _____ between Jephthah and the people of Gilead and what took place between the Israelites and the LORD at the end of last week's message.

CONCLUSION:

Before we close, let's draw some conclusions from this passage. We have already looked at the similarities and the differences in how Israel approached the LORD and how the elders of Gilead approached Jephthah. It is interesting to note that in each case they were looking for a Savior. In Jephthah they found a human savior who promised to rescue them from those oppressing them. If they had sincerely repented when they confessed their sin, then they would have found a Supernatural Savior who would have forgiven them and would have lavished His love and grace and mercy on them. Did they deserve to be rescued, no, they had proven that over and over. An end is coming because the LORD could bear the misery of Israel no longer. What I love about this statement is the fact that even though Israel deserved what they were getting, the LORD never stopped loving them. The LORD does not want to see His people in misery because He loves them. It is because of that love, and because of the misery of sin that God sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.