

JEPHTHAH

UNSOUND VOWS

JUDGES 11



The Story (Judges 11)

Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, but he was the son of a harlot; and Gilead begot Jephthah.

² Gilead's wife bore sons; and when his wife's sons grew up, they drove Jephthah out, and said to him, "You shall have no inheritance in our father's house, for you are the son of another woman."

³ Then Jephthah fled from his brothers and dwelt in the land of Tob; and worthless men banded together with Jephthah and went out raiding with him.

⁴ It came to pass after a time that the people of Ammon made war against Israel.

When did Jephthah appear? after 18 years of Israel being subdued by the Philistines and when the Ammonites started to attack

Ammon: Son of Lot from one of his daughters just like Moab [two nations that always fought with Israel]

The Story (Judges 11)

⁵ And so it was, when the people of Ammon made war against Israel, that the elders of Gilead went to get Jephthah from the land of Tob.

⁶ Then they said to Jephthah, “Come and be our commander, that we may fight against the people of Ammon.”

⁷ So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “Did you not hate me, and expel me from my father’s house? Why have you come to me now when you are in distress?”

⁸ And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “That is why we have turned again to you now, that you may go with us and fight against the people of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.”

The Story (Judges 11)

⁹ So Jephthah said to the elders of Gilead, “If you take me back home to fight against the people of Ammon, and the Lord delivers them to me, shall I be your head?”

¹⁰ And the elders of Gilead said to Jephthah, “The Lord will be a witness between us, if we do not do according to your words.”

¹¹ Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and commander over them; and Jephthah spoke all his words before the Lord in Mizpah.

The Story (Judges 11)

²⁹ Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he passed through Gilead and Manasseh, and passed through Mizpah of Gilead; and from Mizpah of Gilead he advanced toward the people of Ammon.

³⁰ And Jephthah made a vow to the Lord, and said, "If You will indeed deliver the people of Ammon into my hands,

³¹ then it will be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the people of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering."

The Story (Judges 11)

³² So Jephthah advanced toward the people of Ammon to fight against them, and the Lord delivered them into his hands.

³³ And he defeated them from Aroer as far as Minnith—twenty cities—and to Abel Keramim,[a] with a very great slaughter. Thus the people of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

Jephthah's Daughter

³⁴ When Jephthah came to his house at Mizpah, there was his daughter, coming out to meet him with timbrels and dancing; and she was his only child. Besides her he had neither son nor daughter.

The Story (Judges 11)

³⁵ And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he tore his clothes, and said, "Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low! You are among those who trouble me! For I have given my word to the Lord, and I cannot go back on it."

³⁶ So she said to him, "My father, if you have given your word to the Lord, do to me according to what has gone out of your mouth, because the Lord has avenged you of your enemies, the people of Ammon."

³⁷ Then she said to her father, "Let this thing be done for me..."

³⁹and he carried out his vow with her which he had vowed

What is Good about Jephthah?

- He had some faith only seen by God [Just like St. Paul]
 - Who would stand if God only looks at the weaknesses of His people?
 - How do we look at those we serve?
 - Always remember that we serve to bring those we think are “bad”
- They used military language but he used spiritual language
 - What we say as servants has to be needed, useful and kind
 - be very careful with what we call “criticism” or “being straight forward”



What is Good about Jephthah?

- Spoke in front of God not those around him
 - Marriage
 - Service
- He wanted peace before going to the battle
 - Unfortunately many servants, especially those who have advanced responsibilities, use the word “zeal” to raise disputes and fights



What is Good about Jephthah?

- Longsuffering manifested in his negotiating skills with the Ammoniates
- He believed that God is the True Judge (who is the true servant?)

Patience is not an ability to wait, but the ability to keep a good attitude while waiting.

Quotes & Thoughts

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~ Joyce Meyer ~

His patience,
slowness to anger,
long-suffering
give us time to repent
and return to His arms.

Teaching what is Good .com

His Problems

- His mother was a harlot (not a source of respect)
- Kicked out by his brothers (very dangerous in service, like the sinner of Corinth)
- Became surrounded by a bad company
 - 1 Cor 15: 33 *“Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good habits.”*
 - Call to alertness
 - Deception: refers to something that takes place in the mind. It conveys the idea of perceiving something in such a way other than what it really is
 - Susceptibility to deception: The very presence of the alert assumes vulnerability

His Problems

- New to service
 - Did not take the time to understand how it works (who else made the same mistake?)
 - Did not ask for help or advise
 - Did not change his mode of operation

Mark 21-22: *“No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; or else the new piece pulls away from the old, and the tear is made worse. And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; or else the new wine bursts the wineskins, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins.”*



What is a Vow?

- It is a promise that someone makes to God for the sake of fulfilling a request
- A good vow is one that:
 - comes from someone who is aware of what he/she is promising
 - features a good request
 - is affordable (doable)
 - is done with a free will
 - is ethical
 - does not result in harming others or even committing them to fulfill the vow
 - does not conflict with God will
 - fulfilled in advance

Jephthah's Vow (Huge Mistake)

- Rushed in promising what he may not be able to afford

Ecc 5:2-6 *“Do not be rash with your mouth, And let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; Therefore let your words be few. For a dream comes through much activity, And a fool's voice is known by his many words. When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed— Better not to vow than to vow and not pay. Do not let your mouth cause your flesh to sin, nor say before the messenger of God that it was an error.”*

- Why vow to start with?



God's Position from THIS Vow

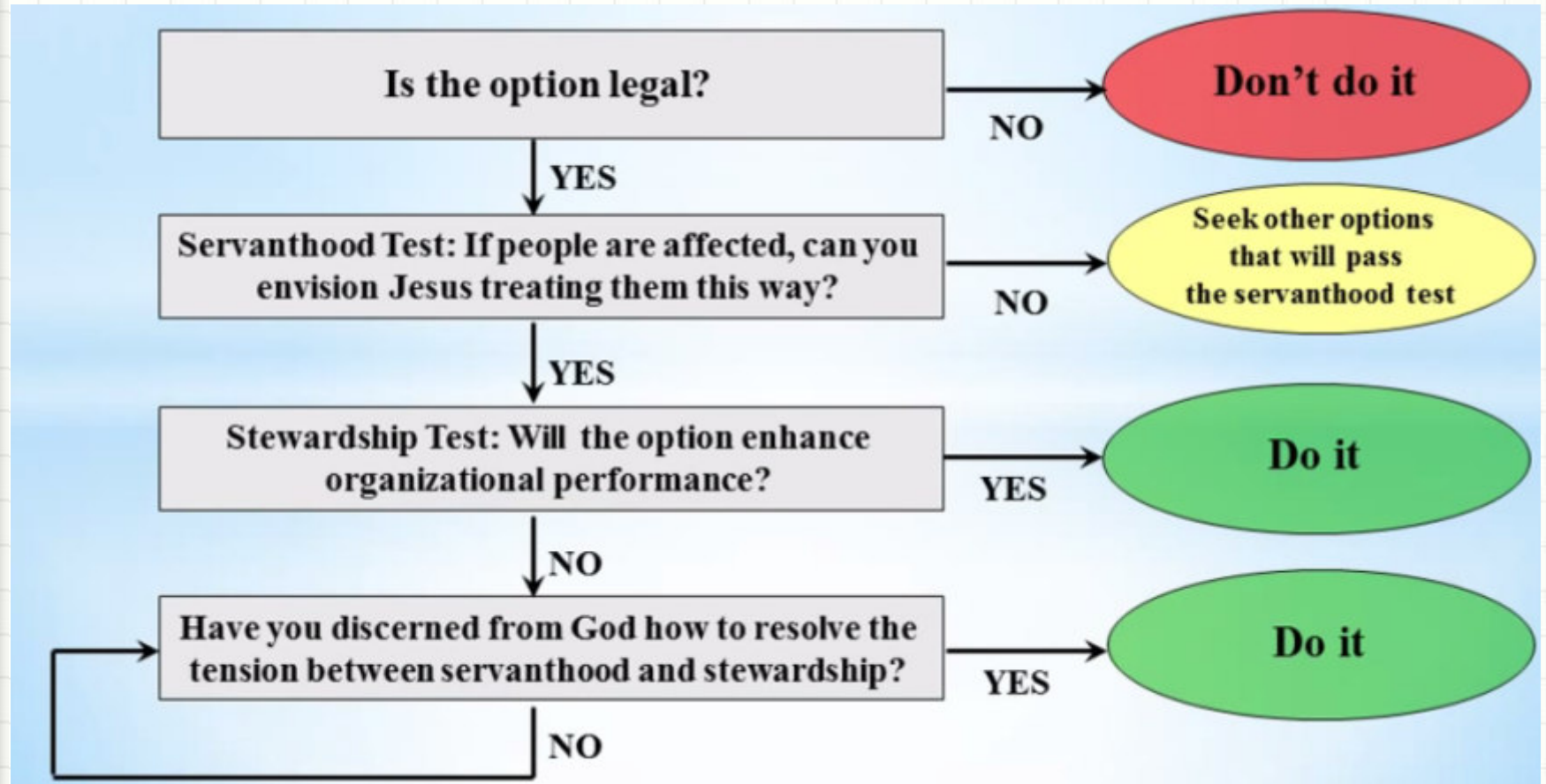
Jer 7:31 *"And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, which I did not command, nor did it come into My heart."*



But allowed it to warn us against rushed vows
(promises)

Jephthah did not have to fulfill his vow (1 Samuel 14)

Tips for Making Good Decisions



Summary

- The Story of Jephthah
- What is Good about Jephthah?
- His Problems
- What is a Vow?
- Jephthah's Vow (Huge Mistake)
- God's Position from THIS Vow
- Tips for Making Good Decisions