

WATCHMAN'S TEACHING LETTER

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THOSE TO WHOM THE COVENANT BELONGS

This is my two hundred and twenty-sixth monthly teaching letter and continues my nineteenth year of publication. I have resolved to do a series of lessons providing clarifying criticism of Howard B. Rand's books, tracts and articles published in his *Destiny Magazine*, which includes several guest writers of varying degrees in excellence. Although I rate Rand and his associate writers only 50%, some of their articles are simply outstanding.

With this lesson, I will continue a critical review of a series entitled "The Book Of The Kingdom" found in *Destiny* magazines from January, 1949 until April, 1952, in 24 chapters, and oddly enough Rand does not identify an author. He may have written it all himself, or it might have been a team effort by him and some of his associated writers. So Rand either wrote it, or if by the help of others, at least he approved of it and is responsible for it (with revision where needed):

Continuing from WTL #225 and "**The Book Of The Kingdom**", *Destiny*, April 1949: chapter V of XXIV, "**The Period Of The Judges**", and before we continue with chapter V, I would like to repeat a paragraph cited in WTL #225 thusly:

"Victory Over Sisera

"It was under Deborah's direction that Barak attacked the armies of Sisera (Judges 4:4-10). Sisera escaped and took refuge with Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite. He instructed her to say that no man had passed that way and he retired in her tent. While he was asleep Jael slew him by driving a peg into his temple. She then went out to meet Barak and led him to the tent where he found the body of his enemy. Deborah's prophecy was fulfilled that Sisera would be delivered into the hand of a woman. This victory over Sisera was commemorated by a song sung by Deborah in which reference was made to the fact that deliverance came '**when the people willingly offered themselves**' (Judges 5:2)". [*"Kenite", (smith) most likely by occupation only. C.A.E.*]

At Psalm 83:1-18 (a song or Psalm of Asaph), gives us a list of the enemies that hate us:

"¹ Keep not thou silence, O Yahweh: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O Yahweh. ² For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. ³ They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. ⁴ They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from *being* a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. ⁵ For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee: ⁶ The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; ⁷ Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; ⁸ Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen [*i.e., helped*] the children of Lot. ⁹ Do unto them as *unto* the Midianites; as *to* Sisera, as *to* Jabin, at

the brook of Kison: ¹⁰ *Which* perished at Endor: they became as dung for the earth. ¹¹ Make their nobles like Oreb, and like Zeeb: yea, all their princes as Zebah, and as Zalmunna: ¹² Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of Yahweh in possession. ¹³ O my Almighty, make them like a wheel; as the stubble before the wind. ¹⁴ As the fire burneth a wood, and as the flame setteth the mountains on fire; ¹⁵ So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm. ¹⁶ Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek thy name, O Yahweh. ¹⁷ Let them be confounded and troubled for ever; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish: ¹⁸ That *men* may know that thou, whose name alone is Yahweh, *art* the most high over all the earth.”

“**SISERA:** Latin form of Hebrew Ciycera, meaning ‘field of battle.’ Biblically, it is the name of a Canaanite general and enemy of the Israelites.” [These we White Israelites were to entirely exterminate, as they utterly hate us, and we have been at war with them for approximately 7,500 years, C.A.E.] – Back to Rand for the rest of chapter V:

“Kings Taken Prisoners

“The two kings of the Midianites were in Karkor with fifteen thousand men, all who were left of those who had come against Israel. One hundred and twenty thousand had perished of the great army which had gathered to overrun the land of Israel. Gideon fell upon the camp by night while they were resting in a false security. In his surprise attack he completely discomfitted the enemy and took the two kings prisoners. Returning to Succoth, he caught two young men of the city who described the princes to him. Coming into the city, he showed the two kings of the Midianites to them and then took the elders of the city and punished them as he had promised by whipping them with thorns from the wilderness. After this he came to Penuel, beat down its strong tower and slew the men of the city. Having punished the two cities for their insolence, he inquired of the Midianite kings what type of men were those whom they slew at Tabor. They described his own brothers so Gideon said if they had spared their lives he would have spared them but, because they showed no mercy, the kings were slain.

“Gideon Refuses Kingship

“The men of Israel asked Gideon to be their king but Gideon replied that neither he nor his son would reign over any of them. As the reason for his refusal, he said, ‘Yahweh shall reign over you.’ As the result of subduing the Midianites, Israel had rest from war for forty years. Gideon had asked Israel for their gold ornaments and rings and from these he made an ephod of gold as an instrument of divination. This became a source of idolatry in Israel for the people came to worship it.

“Upon Gideon’s death Israel again turned to the worship of Baal, forgetting that Yahweh had delivered them out of the hand of their enemies and they had enjoyed the fruits of peace for forty years. Neither did the people continue to show kindness to Gideon’s house for all that had been done for them.

“Abimelech Made King

“Gideon had seventy sons, for he had many wives [Judges 8:30]. One of his wives had a son by the name of Abimelech who conspired to rule over Israel. Few people realize that a king was appointed to rule for a short period in Israel long before the days of Saul and David. The men of Shechem elected Abimelech king over them, after he had slain all his brothers, the sons of Gideon. Jotham, the youngest son of Gideon, escaped by hiding.

“When Jotham heard that the men of Shechem had made Abimelech king, he delivered an address before them. He recited a parable likening Abimelech to a bramble bush that sought to reign over the trees of the forest. He then reminded them of all that his father Gideon had done in delivering Israel from their enemies. He then said that if they had dealt with Gideon according to all the good Gideon had done for them, then it would be proper to let Abimelech reign over them. But, he continued, if they had not done right, then let fire come out from Abimelech and devour the men of Shechem, and let fire come out from the men of Shechem and devour Abimelech. After making that speech Jotham fled for his life.

“Fulfillment of Jotham’s Curse

“Abimelech reigned three years over Israel. A bad spirit developed between him and the men of Shechem and the men of Shechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech. Abimelech destroyed their city and afterward attacked Thebez. The people of the city fled to a strong tower and a woman cast a millstone down upon Abimelech as he besieged the tower. As he lay dying, he asked his armour bearer to slay him so that it might not be said that a woman had killed him:

“‘Thus the Almighty rendered the wickedness of Abimelech, which he did unto his father, in slaying his seventy brethren: And all the evil of the men of Shechem did the Almighty render upon their heads: and upon them came the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal [i.e., Gideon].’ (Judges 9:56-57.)

“Tola and Jair

“Following the death of Abimelech, Tola arose to defend Israel against their enemies and he judged the people for twenty-three years. After his death Jair judged Israel for twenty-two years. When Jair died the record states that Israel again did evil in the sight of Yahweh and, in addition to worshipping Baal, they added the worship of the gods of other nations around them. Yahweh was very angry with them and sold them into the hands of the Philistines and into the hands of the Amorites. These enemies of Israel vexed them for eighteen years and, not only did the children of Ammon harass Israel on the east side of the Jordan, but they passed over the Jordan and attacked Judah, Benjamin and Ephraim on the other side. The record states that Israel was sorely distressed on all sides. The people then cried out to Yahweh saying:

“‘... We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our Almighty, and also served Baalim.’ (Judges 10:10.)

“Yahweh reminded the people how He had delivered them from Egypt and from their enemies around them, yet they had forsaken him. He declared He would not be called upon to continually deliver them from their enemies and He counselled them in derision:

“Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.’ (Judges 10:14)

“Revival in Israel

“The whole history of Israel during the period of the Judges was one of unfaithfulness toward the Almighty. The time came when the Almighty left them completely to the troubles of their own making because they had forsaken Him. The oppression became so severe that the children of Israel awakened to the fact that they had sinned against the Almighty and could hope for no deliverance unless they repented and turned from their evil ways:

“And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served Yahweh: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel.’ (Judges 10:16.)

“Here we have recorded evidence of a great revival sweeping over the land. Nothing is said of the preaching and exhortation which must have preceded that spiritual awakening, but evidently men of Yahweh went about the land pointing out the reason for the misery which Israel was suffering. It was those men who brought the word of Yahweh to the people. Israel’s history abounds with evidence that every spiritual awakening is preceded by the preaching of repentance, for without spiritual leadership the people would not know what to do.

“In every period of great apostasy Yahweh has not been without witnesses to proclaim the truth – men and women who come forward and speak with the authority of the ‘thus saith Yahweh.’ In the midst of the present-day apostasy, with modernist preachers belittling the Written Word of Yahweh and denying the power of His Son, the need for repentance is being proclaimed by the few who know and understand the truth. They are proclaiming a message which is far from popular at the present time, but which must be heeded if we are to be delivered from our troubles. It will not be until modern Israel puts away the strange gods which they are serving today and willingly observes and obeys all His commandments, statutes and judgments that deliverance will come and prosperity be restored. The story of Israel during the period of the Judges has its parallel today. When Israel finally repents Yahweh will again intervene to turn evil away from them and pour out a blessing instead.

“Thus, on that former occasion, when Israel definitely turned from their evil practices, Yahweh was grieved for the misery of His people and moved to once more deliver them from their troubles.”

This is the end of chapter V of XXIV of **“The Period Of The Judges”** from the **“The Book Of The Kingdom”**, *Destiny*, April 1949.

“The Book Of The Kingdom”, Chapter VI of XXIV, *Destiny*, June 1949:

“Jephthah The Gileadite”:

“JEPHTHAH, A GILEADITE, was a mighty man of valor but his mother was a foreigner, or ‘strange woman,’ according to the Record. His father, Gilead, had sons by his Israelitish wife and when these sons grew up they expelled Jephthah from their household, telling him that he could not inherit anything in his father’s house because he was the son of another woman. These Gileadites were a branch of the tribe of Manasseh:

“The sons of Joseph after their families were Manasseh and Ephraim. Of the sons of Manasseh: of Machir, the family of the Machirites: and Machir begat Gilead: of Gilead come the family of the Gileadites”, (Num. 26:28-29.)

“Because of the opposition of the Gileadites, sons of his father, Jephthah fled from the presence of his brethren and went to live in the country of Tob, a land east of Syria. There he gathered around him a group of unemployed or bankrupt men whom he led on raiding parties.

[Note: According to the Hebrew and Greek, Jephthah was the son of *another* woman (KJV: *strange*) who was a harlot, but that does not mean that she was not an Israelite. She would only have been strange to Jephthah’s brothers who were by another mother. C.A.E.]

“Ammon Invades the Land

“A time came when the Ammonites were at war with Israel and the leaders of Gilead went to see Jephthah in the land of Tob, asking him to return and be their chief in the conflict with the Ammonites. While Israel was at peace Jephthah’s brethren dispossessed him, but when they became involved in a war and needed leadership by one who was courageous and willing to fight, they sought out Jephthah because of his valor. Jephthah said to them:

“... Did not ye hate me and expel me out of my father’s house? And why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?” (Judges 11:7.)

“But his brethren replied that because they were in distress they had come to him for help and they were willing to make him their chief and head of all the inhabitants of Gilead if he would only return and fight against the Ammonites. Jephthah, who was well aware of the fickleness of human nature, asked whether, if he did return and Yahweh used him to deliver Israel, they would still make him their chief. He recognized the need of having a very definite agreement, or covenant, with the men who before had driven him from his father’s house. He wanted to make sure they would not do it over again after they were delivered from their enemies. But the elders of Gilead confirmed their intention of making Jephthah their chief, taking an oath before Yahweh at Mizpeh. This satisfied Jephthah and he consented and returned with his brethren.

“Jephthah’s Message

“A message was sent to the King of Ammon by Jephthah, asking him why he had come into the land to fight against Israel. The King replied by saying that Israel had taken away the land belonging to Ammon when they came out of Egypt and now he demanded that the land be restored to his people again.

“Jephthah answered by reciting the history of Israel’s journey from Egypt. He reminded the King of Ammon that Israel had sent messengers to the various kings along the way, asking passage through their land. Yahweh, he said, had forbidden them to molest Edom or Moab and they had complied with Yahweh’s command. Messages were also sent to Sihon, King of the Amorites, asking passage through his land also but he refused to grant it and came out in aggressive warfare against Israel. Israel, compelled to fight, overcame Sihon and Yahweh delivered his people into

Israel's hands and thus Israel came into possession of the land. Jephthah therefore declared:

“So now Yahweh the Almighty of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel, and shouldst thou possess it? Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever Yahweh our Almighty shall drive out from before us, them will we possess.”
(Judges 11:23-24.)

“The King of Ammon was reminded about Balak, King of Moab, who never strove with Israel or fought against them and he retained his land. So Jephthah declared that Israel had committed no sin and the King of Ammon was wrongly making war against them. He then called upon Yahweh to judge between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon in this controversy. But the King of Ammon would not listen to Jephthah.

“Referring to this incident in an article in *The National Message* in April 1934, Rev. W. Pascoe Goard clearly showed that Ammon had no ancestral right to the territory being claimed. He stated: ‘The recitation by Jephthah of the events of that then far-off time is so circumstantial as to lead us to see that Jephthah had the Mosaic record before him. The question arises: How did such a harum-scarum as Jephthah possess such specific information as to the diplomatic communications which passed three hundred years before, between Moses and (a) the King of Edom, (b) the King of Moab and (c) the King of the Amorites? The answer is, of course, at hand. The priests, dwelling in the priestly cities of Gilead, and the Levites, who also dwelt and ministered there, would, and in all probability did, furnish to Jephthah the necessary references extracted from the Books of Numbers and Deuteronomy. [Quote from *The National Message*]:

“Jephthah, over a thousand years before Christ, quoted from the Bible to the King of Ammon to show that the latter's claim to the land was a false one. Firstly, there was the positive record of the fact that the land was possessed by the Ammorites when Moses came to the territory. Therefore, Ammon had no claim to it. Secondly, Bible history was quoted to show that Moses had conquered the land from the Ammorites, and therefore held it by right of conquest. Thirdly, when Moses was on his march to Canaan as directed by Yahweh, Ammon was not on his line of march. Ammon lay north-eastward of the boundary of Moab and eastward of the Israelites' route; therefore, with Ammon Moses needed neither correspondence nor contact in that day.

“The Bible from which Jephthah quoted was limited in that day to the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua; perhaps also the Book of Job. There were, in addition, a series of books dealing with the history of the Almighty's acts in Israel – such books as ‘The Book of the Wars of Yahweh,’ etc., whose names only have been preserved.

“This correspondence of Jephthah's brings us into contact with the period of Biblical and secular literature which was centuries old in 1100 B.C. The passages which contain the information to which Jephthah referred are part of the Mosaic record of Moses' invasion of the Amorites and of Bashan, three hundred years before Jephthah's day. The first of these passages will be found in Numbers 21. This is a clear statement

of the facts and sets forth the basis of Israel's title to possess these very lands. Note how clearly the boundaries are indicated: 'from Arnon to Jabbok,' each boundary rivers. Verses 21-25 are a straight piece of Israel history, newly enacted and newly written in Moses' day:

“And Israel sent messengers unto Sihon king of the Amorites, saying, Let me pass through thy land: we will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink of the waters of the well: *but* we will go along by the king's *high* way, until we be past thy borders. And Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his border: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and went out against Israel into the wilderness: and he came to Jahaz, and fought against Israel. And Israel smote him with the edge of the sword, and possessed his land from Arnon unto Jabbok, even unto the children of Ammon: for the border of the children of Ammon was strong. And Israel took all these cities: and Israel dwelt in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all the villages thereof.’ (Num. 21:21-25.)

“Verse 26 is of a different nature. It is a piece of still more ancient history, recorded in the Mosaic record to show from whom the Amorites originally took the land:

“For Heshbon was the city of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab, and taken all his land out of his hand, even unto Arnon.’

“Who ‘the former king of Moab’ might have been we do not know. This may have referred to a former king of the existing Moabite dynasty; or it may have referred to an earlier time of the patriarchs. In the latter case the name ‘Moab’ would be used as a known name instead of the pre-Moab name of that part of the land. At all events, it was not an Ammonite king but a ‘former king of Moab,’ from whom the Amorites took the land. So we know that neither the Amorites nor the Israelites took the land from the Ammonites.

“We have next a most interesting piece of ‘fossil’ literature:

“Wherefore they that speak in proverbs say, Come into Heshbon, let the city of Sihon be built and prepared: For there is a fire gone out of Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon: it hath consumed Ar of Moab, *and* the lords of the high places of Arnon. Woe to thee, Moab! thou art undone, O people of Chemosh: he hath given his sons that escaped, and his daughters, into captivity unto Sihon king of the Amorites. We have shot at them; Heshbon is perished even unto Dibon, and we have laid them waste even unto Nophah, which reacheth unto Medeba.’ (Num. 21:27-30.)

“These verses are a gem of Amorite literature originally produced in honor of the conquest of the territory in question by the king of the Amorites, so far back in history that three hundred years had passed since they lost it again to Moses. This Amorite ballad was many hundred years old in Jephthah's day. It was probably hundreds of years old when Moses included it in the Numbers record. So Jephthah called upon both the Bible and upon secular history to prove his case. The value of this piece of Amorite literature was, and is, to demonstrate that Israel kept the command of the Almighty

given to Moses not to interfere with either Edom, Moab, or Ammon, notwithstanding they took the land from the Amorites.

“From an expository standpoint we are given to see a period of 300 years stretching between the time of Jephthah and the Pentateuch record. Neither does this instance stand alone. By many marks we see contributions to the Bible records appearing here and there over centuries of time; the Amorite ‘proverb’ or historical ballad, a ‘classic’ in Moses’ day; the Mosaic record three hundred years old in Jephthah’s day; the Jephthah correspondence with the King of Ammon a century old in David’s writings, a thousand years old in [Yahshus’] day.

“We cannot refrain from adding the quotation in which Moses recites the facts of the case to Israel before his death. The history so recited had only just been enacted by the people who heard it recited by the lips of Moses in 1400 B.C.:

“And I sent messengers out of the wilderness of Kedemoth unto Sihon king of Heshbon with words of peace, saying, Let me pass through thy land: I will go along by the high way, I will neither turn unto the right hand nor to the left. Thou shalt sell me meat for money, that I may eat; and give me water for money, that I may drink: only I will pass through on my feet; (As the children of Esau which dwell in Seir, and the Moabites which dwell in Ar, did unto me;) until I shall pass over Jordan into the land which Yahweh our Almighty giveth us. But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for Yahweh thy Almighty hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as *appeareth* this day. And Yahweh said unto me, Behold, I have begun to give Sihon and his land before thee: begin to possess, that thou mayest inherit his land. Then Sihon came out against us, he and all his people, to fight at Jahaz. And Yahweh our Almighty delivered him before us; and we smote him, and his sons, and all his people. And we took all his cities at that time, and utterly destroyed the men, and the women, and the little ones, of every city, we left none to remain: Only the cattle we took for a prey unto ourselves, and the spoil of the cities which we took. From Aroer which is by the brink of the river of Arnon, and *from* the city that is by the river, even unto Gilead, there was not one city too strong for us: Yahweh our Almighty delivered all unto us: Only unto the land of the children of Ammon thou camest not, *nor* unto any place of the river Jabbok, nor unto the cities in the mountains, nor unto whatsoever Yahweh our Almighty forbad us.’ (Deut. 2:26-37.)”

Continuing with Rand: **“Jephthah’s Vow**

“The Spirit of Yahweh came upon Jephthah and he went out against Ammon. As he prepared for battle he vowed a vow to Yahweh saying: **“... If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be Yahweh’s, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering.’** (Judges 11:30-31.)

“The Daughter of Jephthah

“Jephthah fought against the Ammonites and Yahweh delivered them into his hands. He destroyed twenty of their cities and killed many of them. After his victory he returned home and as he went toward his house his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and dancing with joy. She was his only child and when Jephthah saw his daughter approaching he rent his clothes saying:

“‘... Alas, my daughter! Thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto Yahweh, and I cannot go back.’ (Judges 11:35.)

“Moffatt translates this: **‘Alas, my daughter, you have struck me down! Low, low have you laid me! For I have made my promise to the Eternal, and I cannot go back upon my word!’**

“She replied that if he had made a promise to Yahweh, he must do what he had vowed. Thereupon, he told her what his vow was and she made one request that he would grant her two months grace to wander upon the mountains with her companions and bewail her maidenhood among the hills. Jephthah told her to go. When the two months were ended she returned home and he carried out his vow, doing as he had promised Yahweh.

“Human Sacrifice Unacceptable

“An erroneous idea as to how this vow was carried out had led to the suggestion that Jephthah actually offered up his daughter as a burnt offering to Yahweh. This is contrary to the facts and is definitely against scriptural teaching. Actually, Jephthah vowed: *1st*) that whatever came forth from the door of his house to meet him should be Yahweh’s; *2nd*) that he would offer it up for a burnt offering. Obviously, since it was Jephthah’s daughter who came out first to greet her victorious father, to carry out the second clause of the vow would violate the first clause since no human sacrifice was acceptable to Yahweh. Yahweh did nevertheless accept the sacrifice of a life dedicated to His service. What actually happened was that Jephthah was compelled to dedicate his daughter to the service of Yahweh in accord with the first declaration of his vow. The statement ‘and she knew no man’ clearly indicates she did not suffer death as a sacrifice but rather that her life was dedicated to Yahweh. She herself consented to that service and was never married. [While we agree that this is so, the Hebrew word ‘olah (#5930) is only *interpreted* to mean a *burnt offering*. But literally it is a *going up* or an *ascent*, so it also describes something being *offered up*. – C.A.E.]

“A Life of Service

“The account declares that the daughters of Israel went to lament the daughter of Jephthah once a year for four days. The Hebrew word translated ‘to lament’ means also ‘to talk with.’ Having taken the vow of a virgin, once a year the daughters of Israel paid a four day’s visit to Jephthah’s daughter and communed with her. Such a vow as this is provided for in Leviticus 27. Paul refers to the faith of Jephthah (Heb, 11:32) who willingly kept his vow even though the dedication of his only child to the service of Yahweh meant the discontinuation of his family line. Vows are important for in the sight of Yahweh it is a serious matter to make a vow. They must be kept even though a man

has 'sworn to his own hurt.' No man can be considered righteous in the Almighty's sight who treats his promises lightly either to Yahweh or to his fellowmen.

"The Jealousy of Ephraim

"The men of Ephraim gathered together against Jephthah and asked him why he had passed over to fight against the Ammonites without calling them to assist him. They declared that, because he had done this and had failed to call upon them, they were now going to burn his house down. In reply Jephthah told the men of Ephraim that he and his people were in great trouble because of the Ammonites. When they called the men of Ephraim to help in the time of distress, they were unable to deliver them from the Ammonites. He then said that when he saw that Ephraim had not delivered his people, he took his life in his hands and went out against the children of Ammon. This should have been very clear and Jephthah wanted to know why Ephraim had come out to fight with him.

"The men of Ephraim had raised a similar objection when Gideon had failed to call them in the battle against the Midianites, and now that Jephthah had won a great victory, they were incensed against him. Prior to that victory they had failed to engage in war against the Ammonites but they were roused to jealousy over Jephthah's success:

"Then Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim: and the men of Gilead smote Ephraim, because they said, Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites, and among the Manassites." (Judges 12:4.)

"Shibboleth

"After defeating the Ephraimites, the Gileadites took the fords of the Jordan. As each man of Ephraim who had escaped from the battle sought to pass over the Jordan to the west side, he was asked if he was an Ephraimite. If he answered, 'No,' he was asked to say, 'Shibboleth.' If he said 'Sibboleth' (for the Ephraimites could not pronounce it rightly), he was taken prisoner and slain. Forty-two thousand men of Ephraim perished at that time.

"This was a needless slaughter, brought about by the fact that the tribe of Ephraim feared an encroachment upon its authority as head tribe among the Israel tribes. The incident also brings out an interesting fact that there were, then as now, variations in the dialects among sections of the Israelites. The characteristic of speech which has difficulty with the letter 'h' still exists today among some of the Ephraimites of Great Britain.

"Jephthah judged Israel for six years. After his death Ibzan judged Israel for seven years and after he died Elon judged Israel for ten years. Then came Abdon who judged Israel for eight years. Following the death of Abdon, the account states:

"And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of Yahweh; and Yahweh delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years." (Judges 13:1.)

"Thus, a whole generation was delivered up to their enemies because Israel departed from serving Yahweh. The price Israel paid in tribulation and trouble for their refusal to keep the commandments, statutes and judgments of Yahweh was high

indeed. Nevertheless, generation after generation would depart from the way of Yahweh in spite of the example furnished by the suffering of previous generations who had turned aside from the ways of righteousness.” End of chapter VI.