

# THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH.

BY ISAIAH, THE SON OF AMOZ.

(See Second Chronicles, Ch. 32, v. 32.)

## BOOK II.

### THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES.

#### INTRODUCTORY NOTE UPON THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

From the opening of this Book it seems to me that a period of anarchy intervened after the death of Joshua, during which the whole, or at least a great part, of his conquests in South Palestine were lost, and fell back into the possession of the former inhabitants; for it is certain from the words of the Historian that they had to be reconquered, and, as we learn by the subsequent history of the Period of Samuel, this was only very partially accomplished until the days of David. nearly 400 years afterwards. Of that period of anarchy immediately after the death of Joshua the historian Isaiah takes no notice, for it was out of his line of intention, as being merely political. Chronologists have been blind to these facts, and so have allowed no time for them, by which the dates of the following history have been confused, and lead to puzzles that seem inexplicable to commentators and readers. It would repay the labour for some competent scholar to clear up this confusion, I think.—F. F.

#### (B.C. 1425 to 1406.) **A Period of Anarchy and Revolt of the Natives.**

1 **A**FTER the death of Joshua the children of Israel enquired of the EVER-LIVING, "Who shall lead us against the Cananites, to make war with them?" The LORD replied, "Judah shall go up, and I will give the country into his power."

(B.C. 1406.)

3 Judah, however, said to Simeon his brother, "Go up with me to my district, and we will fight with the Cananites, and then I will go with you to your district." So Simeon  
4 went with them. Judah accordingly went up, and the EVER-LIVING gave the Cananites and the Perizites into their power, and they defeated them in Bezek with a loss of ten thousand  
5 men. Then they met the Prince of Bezek at Bezek and fought with him, and defeated the Cananites and  
6 Perizites; and the Prince of Bezek fled, but they pursued after and

captured him, and cut off the thumbs of his hands and feet. Then the 7 Prince of Bezek said, "Seven kings, with the thumbs of their hands and feet cut off, were waiters beside my table! As I did God has repaid to me!" (They afterwards brought him to Jerusalem where he died.)

(B.C. 1406.)

The children of Judah next besieged 8 Jerusalem and captured and conquered it by the edge of the sword, and delivered the city to fire. After 9 that the sons of Judah proceeded to make war with the Cananites who occupied the hills, the south, and the pastures. Then Judah marched 10 against the Cananites who held Hebron,<sup>1</sup> and defeated Sheshi, and Akhiman, and Thalmi. And marched 11 from there to the possessors of Debir,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> V. 10. ("But the name of Hebron was formerly Krith - arba") is an old editorial note of explanation.—F. F.

<sup>2</sup> V. 11. ("The name of Debir was formerly Krith-sefer") is an old editorial note of explanation.—F. F.

12 where Kaleb said, "Whoever conquers Krith-sefer, and captures it, I will give him my daughter Aksa for a wife." So Athnial the son of Kenez, the younger brother of Kaleb, captured it from them; and he gave Aksa his daughter to him as a wife. Now as she was coming he suggested to her to ask an estate from her father,—so she dismounted from her ass, when Kaleb asked her, "What do you want?"

15 And she replied, "Give me a blessing;—with the southern land you have given me; give me springs of water." So Kaleb gave her the Upper Springs and the Lower Springs.

(B.C. 1405.)

16 The sons of Keni, the father-in-law of Moses, had come up from the city of The Palmtrees with the sons of Judah into the desert of Judah, which is to the south of Arad, and marched and lived with that people.

17 Then Judah went with Simeon his brother and conquered the Cananites inhabiting Tzifath, and destroyed it,—and called the name of the town

18 Kharmah.<sup>1</sup> Judah also captured Gaza, and its district, and Ashkelon and its district, and Akron and its

19 district, for the EVER-LIVING was with Judah and he took possession of the highlands, but they could not drive out the population of the plains because they had iron chariots.

20 Hebron was given to Kaleb as Moses had promised, and he drove the three sons of Anak from it.

(B.C. 1424 to 1406.) **A General  
Revolt of the Nations conquered  
by Joshua.**

21 But the Jebusites continued in Jerusalem, for the sons of Benjamin could not drive them out,—so the Jebusites continue to reside with the sons of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

22 The House of Joseph also went up to Bethel, and the EVER-LIVING was with them, so the House of Joseph was successful against Bethel,—the name of the town was formerly Luz.

24 And the scouts saw a man who came out from the city, and said to him, "Show us, we pray, the entrance into the town and we will reward you."

So he showed them an entrance to the city, and they took the city with the sword, but they sent the man away with all his family, who went to the country of the Hitites, and built a town and called it by the name of Luz, and it bears that name to this day.

(B.C. 1425 to 1406.)

Manasseh also did not disperse the people of Bethshan with its villages, and Thanak with its villages, or the inhabitants of Iblam with its villages, or the population of Megiddo with its villages, but permitted the Cananites to reside in that country. But when Israel prevailed it laid the Cananites under tribute, and did not expel them.

Ephraim also did not expel the Cananite population of Ghezer, or the Cananite population from around Ghezer. Zebulun, also, did not expel the population from Kitan, the inhabitants from the riverside, or the Cananite population from amongst itself, but put them under tribute.

Ashur did not expel the population from Aka, or the inhabitants of Zidon, or Akhbal, or Akzib, or Khabdah, or Afik, or Rekhob, but the Ashurites resided amongst the Cananite population of the country, for they did not expel them.

Naphthali did not dispossess the inhabitants of Beth-shemsh, or the population of Beth-anath, but resided amongst the Cananite population of the country; and the inhabitants of Beth-shemsh and Beth-anath were tributary to them.

The Amorites also resisted the sons of Gad in the Highlands, although they were not able to descend to the plains; therefore they allowed the Amorites to occupy the Eastern Hills at Ailon, and Shaibim, and Thikbad alongside the house of Joseph, and they paid tribute. And the boundary of the Amorites was from the ascent of Akrabim, from Sela and upwards.

(About B.C. 1406.) **A Preacher  
exhorts the Israelites to re-conquer  
the Native Tribes.**

But a Messenger of the EVER-LIVING came from Ghilgal to Bokim, who said, "I brought you up from Mitzeraim,<sup>1</sup> and conducted you to

<sup>1</sup> V. 17. "Kharmah" = The Ruins.—F. F.

<sup>1</sup> Egypt.—F. F.

the country which I promised to your ancestors, declaring, 'I will not break My covenant with you for ever; but you shall not make a treaty with the inhabitants of this country but strike down their altars.' However you have not listened to My voice. Why have you done so when I said, 'If you do not drive them out from you, they will be thorns,—and their gods will be snares to you?'"

4 When the Messenger of the EVER-LIVING addressed this speech to the Parliament of the children of Israel, 5 the People lifted up their voices and wept, and called the name of that valley The Weepings,<sup>1</sup> and sacrificed there to the EVER-LIVING.

(B.C. 1425 to 1424.) **Recapitulation of the Events of the Last Days of Joshua.**

6 When Joshua dismissed the People, the children went each to his share, to take possession of the country, 7 and the People served the EVER-LIVING all the days of Joshua and all the time of the old men who survived Joshua, who had seen all the great acts of the EVER-LIVING which He did for Israel.

(B.C. 1424.)

8 Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of the EVER-LIVING, died at a hundred and ten years of age, and they buried him within the bounds of his estate, at Thimnath, in Mount Ephraim, on 10 the north of the hill of Gash. But when all that generation were added to their fathers, there arose another generation after them, who knew not the EVER-LIVING, or the acts which He did for Israel.

(B.C. 1424 to 1406.) **Religious Corruption of Israel.**<sup>2</sup>

11 Then the Children of Israel did wrong in the sight of the EVER-LIVING and passed over to Baal, 12 and forsook the EVER-LIVING GOD of

their fathers, who brought them out of the land of the Mitzeraim,<sup>1</sup> and went after the gods of the nations who surrounded them, and worshipped them, and provoked the EVER-LIVING. Thus they forsook 13 the EVER-LIVING and worshipped Ashtaroth.<sup>2</sup>

**Wild Anarchy.**

Then the anger of the EVER-LIVING 14 burnt against Israel, and He gave them to the hand of robbers who robbed them, and delivered them to the power of their enemies all round, and they were not able to stand before their enemies. Wherever they went 15 the hand of the EVER-LIVING was against them for evil, as the EVER-LIVING had said, and as the EVER-LIVING had threatened them, and He greatly afflicted them.

(About B.C. 1406.) **Readers arise and advise Reform, but are rejected.**<sup>3</sup>

The EVER-LIVING afterwards 16 raised up judges who protected them from the powers of the Robbers. Yet, however, they would not 17 listen to their judges, for they went whoring after other gods, and worshipped them,—turning soon from the path which their fathers followed,—that of listening to the commands of the EVER-LIVING. They did it not. But when the EVER-LIVING 18 caused some of the judges to arise, and the EVER-LIVING was with that Judge, He saved them from the hand of their enemies, for the EVER-LIVING pitied their groans under their adversaries and oppressors. But when that 19 Judge died, they turned and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, by following seducing gods, and serving and worshipping them. They ceased not from their offences, and from making their way hard.

Then the anger of the EVER-LIVING 20 burnt against Israel, and He said; "Because this Nation has broken My Covenant which I communicated to their ancestors, and does not listen to My Word, I also will not continue 21 to drive out before them any of the nations whom Joshua left at his death,

<sup>1</sup> V. 5. "The Weepings," in Hebrew Bokhim.—F. F.

<sup>2</sup> NOTE.—These dates are far from accurate, but I adopt them from the ordinary chronologers. I estimate that 100 to 200 years of anarchy is intimated, and that consequently the date of the Exodus and all the subsequent events should be put backwards for that time, but this question is one for chronologers, and does not affect the accuracy of the Biblical Narrative, but corroborates it.—F. F.

<sup>1</sup> Egypt.—F. F.

<sup>2</sup> V. 13. "Ashtaroth" means "Lust," the Venus of pagans.—F. F.

<sup>3</sup> See note (2), col. 1.

22 so that I may try Israel by them, whether they will keep the path of the EVER-LIVING, and walk in it, as  
23 their fathers kept it, or not." So the EVER-LIVING gave them not those nations, and did not dispossess them of the mountains, and gave them not to the hand of Joshua.

(B.C. 1420.) **Why the Rebolt of the Natives was allowed.**

3 And these are the nations whom the EVER-LIVING permitted to try Israel, all who were not acquainted  
2 with the wars of Canan; so that the generations of the Children of Israel might learn war, which they otherwise would not have known.

3 The five Lordships of the Philistines, and all the Cananites, and Zidonians, and the Hivites, inhabiting the hills of the Lebanon, from the Hill of Bal-Hermon, to the pass of  
4 Khamath.<sup>1</sup> They were also to try Israel to teach them to listen to the commands of the EVER-LIVING, which He dictated to their fathers by the hand of Moses.

5 So the Children of Israel resided amongst the Cananites, the Hitites, the Amorites, the Perizites, the  
6 Hivites, and the Jebusites, and took their daughters to themselves for wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.

7 The Children of Israel also did wrong in the sight of the EVER-LIVING, and forsook their EVER-LIVING GOD and served Balim and Ashteroth.

(B.C. 1402.) **The Aramites of Mesopotamia ravage all Western Asia and Palestine.**

8 The anger of the EVER-LIVING consequently burnt against Israel, and He delivered them to the power of Koshan-Ramathim, King of Arambetween-the-Rivers,<sup>2</sup> and the Children of Israel were subject to Koshan-Ramathim for nine years.

(B.C. 1394.)

9 Then the sons of Israel cried to the EVER-LIVING, and the EVER-LIVING sent a saviour for Israel, in Athnial the descendant of Kenez, the youngest  
10 brother of Kaleb, who saved them, for the Spirit of the EVER-LIVING was

upon him, and he judged Israel, and went out to war, and the EVER-LIVING gave Koshan-Ramathim to his hand. Thus the country had peace for forty  
11 years, until Athnial-ben-Kenez died.

(B.C. 1354.) **King Aglon of Moab and his Chiefs defeat the Israelites.**

The Children of Israel, however,  
12 continued to do wrong in the sight of the EVER-LIVING, so the EVER-LIVING emboldened Aglon, King of Moab, against Israel, because they did wrong in the eyes of the EVER-LIVING; and he added to himself the  
13 Children of Amon, and Amalek, and Zabin, and defeated Israel, and seized the town of Palmtrees.<sup>1</sup> The sons of  
14 Israel consequently served Aglon, King of Moab, eighteen years. Then  
15 the Children of Israel cried to the EVER-LIVING, and the EVER-LIVING raised a saviour for them, Ahud-ben-Ghera, a Benjaminite, a left-handed man, by whose means the sons of Israel sent the tribute to Aglon, King  
16 of Moab. But Ahud made himself a sword of a foot long with a double edge, and bound it under his cloak on his right thigh, when he approached  
17 with the tribute to Aglon, King of Moab,—(Aglon, however, was a very fat man)—and when he had finished  
18 presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who carried the tribute, but he returned back from the quar-  
19 ries that are in Ghilgal, and said, "I desire a word in private between myself and you, King," and he replied "All right!" and sent away all who stood about him.

(B.C. 1336.) **Ahud stabs King Aglon of Moab, and Israel revolts.**

Then Ahud came to him, and he  
20 sat upon the raised seat which was reserved for himself alone, and Ahud said, "There is a message from GOD with me for you." So he rose from his throne. Then Ahud stretched  
21 out his left hand, and drew the sword from his thigh, and drove it into his belly, and the excrement came out after the blade, but the fat closed up  
22 over the blade, for he did not draw the sword from his belly, but it went into the intestines. Then Ahud went  
23 out by the private porch and shut the

<sup>1</sup> Hamath.—F. F.

<sup>2</sup> Mesopotamia.—F. F.

<sup>1</sup> Palm-town—Thamarim, in Heb.—F. F.

24 door after him, and locked it. But when he was gone the servants came and looked and saw the door of the chamber locked, and said, "Perhaps he is lying down in the chamber of his summer house." So they waited until they were alarmed, and seeing no one open the door of the retreat, at length they took a key and opened the door, and saw their Prince fallen on the earth dead!

26 But Ahud escaped while they delayed, and passed the quarries, and ran away like a tempest, and then went on and blew a trumpet in Mount Ephraim, and the Children of Israel flocked to him from the hills, and he became their leader, and said to them, "Follow after me, for the EVER-LIVING will give your enemies, the Moabites, into your hand!" So they followed after him, and captured the fords of the Jordan leading to Moab and permitted no man to pass over. They also cut off from Moab at the same period about ten thousand men,—all stout men of valour, and not a man escaped. Moab was consequently from that time subjected to the hand of Israel, and the land was at rest eight years.

(About B.C. 1328.)

31 And after that came Shamgar the son of Anath, who slew six hundred of the Philistines with an ox-goad and delivered Israel.

(B.C. 1316.) **Jabin, King of Canan, subjects Israel.**

4 But the Children of Israel continued to do wrong in the sight of the EVER-LIVING, therefore the EVER-LIVING delivered them to the power of Jabin, King of Canan, who reigned in Khatzor, the commander of whose army was named Sisera, and he resided in Kharshith of the heathen.

3 But the Children of Israel cried to the EVER-LIVING, for he had nine hundred chariots of iron, and oppressed the Israelites cruelly for ten years.

(B.C. 1300.) **Deborah, a Woman, gains Power.**

4 At that time a woman, Deborah, a distinguished teacher, was a judge in Israel, and Deborah sat under the palm-tree of Deborah, between Rama and Bethel, in Mount Ephraim, and

the Israelites went to her for decisions.

(B.C. 1296.) **Deborah asks Barak-ben-Abinoam to head a Revolt against the Tyranny of Jabin.**

But she sent and summoned Barak 6 the son of Abinoam, from Kadish of Naphthali, and said to him, "Has not the EVER-LIVING GOD of Israel ordered you, 'Go and encamp on Mount Thabor, and collect ten thousand men to you from the sons of Naphthali and the sons of Zebulon, and I will draw Sisera, the Com- 7 mander of the Army of Jabin, with his chariots and his great numbers to you, at the River Kishon, and I will deliver him into your hand'?"

But Barak replied to her, "If you 8 will go with me, I will go. And if you will not go with me, I will not go!"

And she answered, "I will go with 9 you. However, the road you go shall not lead to your honour, for the EVER-LIVING will give Sisera to the hand of a woman."

Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kadish, where Barak invited 10 Zebulon and Naphthali to Kadish, and ten thousand men came to his feet, and Deborah went up with him, and Heber the Kenite, who was 11 descended from Kien, one of the sons of Hobab, a father-in-law of Moses, who had also pitched his tent at Alon-Betzanim near Kadish; and it 12 was reported to Sisera that Barak-ben-Abinoam had occupied Mount Thabor.

(B.C. 1296.)

Sisera consequently summoned all 13 his charioteers with their nine hundred chariots of iron, and all his forces from Khar-sheth of the heathen, to the river Kishon. Then Deborah 14 said to Barak, "Arise! for this is the day when I will deliver Sisera to your hand! Does not the EVER-LIVING go before you?"

So Barak descended from Mount Thabor with the ten thousand men following him, and the EVER-LIVING 15 routed Sisera, with all his chariots, and all his troops, with the sword before Barak, so that Sisera descended from his chariot, and fled on foot! But Barak pursued the charioteers 16 and the infantry to Kher-sheth of the

heathen, and stormed all the camps of Sisera by the sword, not sparing one.

17 Sisera, however, fled on his feet to the Tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin, King of Khatzor, and the House of Heber the Kenite, and Jael came out to meet Sisera, and said to him, "Turn in, Prince, turn in to me; fear nothing." So he entered with her into the tent, and she covered him with a cloak.

19 Then he said to her, "Let me have a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." And she opened him a bottle of milk, and gave him a drink and covered him up again. Then he said to her, "Stand before the door of the hall, and if any man comes to inquire of you, and says is there anyone here? answer, there is no one!"

21 Jael, the wife of Heber, however, took a peg of the tent, and grasped a hammer in her hand and went to him secretly, and fixed it on his temples and drove it through to the earth, for he was fast asleep. So he expired and died.

22 Then she saw Barak pursuing Sisera; so Jael went out to meet him, and said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man whom you seek!" And he went with her, and saw Sisera lying dead, with the nail through his temples.

(B. C. 1296.)

23 Thus GOD defeated on that day Jabin, King of Canan, before the Israelites, and the power of the Children of Israel increased, advanced, and strengthened over Jabin, King of Canan, until Jabin, King of Canan, was subdued.

5 Then Deborah and Barak-ben-Abinoam sang, saying;—

### SONG OF DEBORAH AND BARAK.

2 DEBORAH. "For free freedom in Israel,  
You heroes and people bless the LORD."

3 BARAK. "Let kings hear, let princes listen,  
I, to the LORD, myself will sing;  
I chant to the EVER-LIVING GOD of Israel."

THE TROOPS. "LORD, in Your advance from Sair,—

In Your march thro' the field of Edom,—

The earth shook, the heavens poured down,

The storm clouds poured out water!

The mountains melted before the LORD;

Sinai itself before the LIVING GOD of Israel!"

DEBORAH. "In the days of 6 Shamgar son of Anath,

In the days of Yal the caravans ceased,

And travellers went in the by-paths,—

Judges ceased—in Israel ceased,—

Till I, Deborah, arose,—

Till I arose, a mother to Israel!"

BARAK. "They chose for themselves new gods!—

When there was war at the gates,  
Was a shield or a spear to be seen,

In forty thousand of Israel?"

DEBORAH. "My heart can picture 9 Israel!—

Heroes among the People bless the LORD!"

THE TROOPS. "You riders upon 10 white asses,—

And you who dwell in the plain,—  
And the trav'lers by roadways

publish,  
With the sound as of rushing 11

waters,  
The kindness the LORD has done;

The kindness to Israel's hamlets,  
When the LORD's force rushed

down to the dales!"

BARAK. "Arise! arise you! 12 Deborah!

Awake, awake! and utter a song!"

DEBORAH. "Arise, Barak, and conquer,—

Conqueror, son of Abinoam!  
Let the Nobles and People de 13

scend;  
The Lord sent me to summon

heroes;  
Come to me, Ephraim, rooted in 14

Amalek;  
Follow me, Benjamin, from your

caves;  
Come to me, Makir, with your

chieftains;

- With Zebulon wielding the writer's  
pen,  
15 And Issakar's eloquent Princes;—  
And along with Issakar, Barak,  
Who directs the march with skill.
- "My heart aches for Reuben's  
absence;—  
16 Why stayed he among the sheep-  
folds,  
To hear the cries of his flocks?  
My heart aches for Reuben's  
absence!
- 17 "Ghilad remained beyond the  
Jordan;—  
But why stayed Dan in his ships?  
And Ashur rest on the shore of  
the sea,  
And continue to lie in his ports?
- 18 "Zebulon's men risked their lives  
to death,  
With Naphthali from the high-  
lands."
- 19 BARAK. "Kings came out to the  
war,  
Like Canan's Kings at Thanak,  
Who fought by the Brook of  
Megiddo;—  
They took no silver as plunder;—  
The stars, they fought from the  
skies,—  
20 The stars from their high course  
fought against Sisera!—  
21 The river Kishon swept them  
away,  
That ancient river — the river  
Kishon!"
- DEBORAH. "Rush strongly along,  
my life!  
22 How the hoofs of the horses  
sound,  
With their mighty leapings and  
prancings!
- 23 "'Curse Meroz,' said the man of  
the LORD,  
'When cursing, curse its people,—  
For they came not with help to  
the LORD,  
To help the LORD and His  
heroes!'
- 24 "But bless the children of Jael,—  
The wife of Heber the Kenite,  
Bless all the sons of her tent.
- 25 "He asked her water,—she gave  
him milk!  
She offered him butter on a beauti-  
ful dish!

Then she stretched her hand to 26  
the nail,  
Her right hand to the workman's  
hammer,—  
And Sisera pierced through his  
head,  
And broke, and drove through his  
temples!  
At her feet he bowed,— fell 27  
down,—  
At her feet he bowed,— fell  
down,—  
When he bowed, he fell down  
dead!"

THE TROOPS. "Sisera's mother, 28  
at the evening hour,  
Bent and watched from her  
window;—  
'What prevents his chariot's  
return?  
What delays the tramp of his  
chargers?'  
Her wise women answered to 29  
her,—  
Nay, continued her words to  
herself,—  
'Have they not found plenty of 30  
plunder?  
A lovely girl for the generals,  
And a plunder of robes for  
Sisera?  
A plunder of robes embroidered,—  
Embroidered robes for the necks  
of the victors?'"

DEBORAH, BARAK, AND TROOPS. 31  
"LORD! thus destroy Your foes:—  
But let Your friends march on,  
Like the sun in his glory!"

After this the country rested for  
forty years.

(B.C. 1256.) **Midian conquers the  
Israelites.—Oppression and Anarchy  
rampant.**

Then the Israelites did wrong in 6  
the eyes of the EVER-LIVING, so the  
EVER-LIVING gave them to the hand  
of Midian twelve years. And the 2  
power of Midian was so strong over  
Israel, that the Israelites made for  
themselves entrenchments in the  
mountains, and caves, and towers;  
and if the Israelites sowed, then 3  
Midian, and Amalek, and the Beni-  
Kedem came upon and assailed 4  
them and wasted the whole breadth  
of the country to the pass of Gaza

and left no means of subsistence for  
5 Israel, or sheep, or ox, or ass. For  
they, and their cattle with them,  
advanced with their tents, coming  
in such immense numbers, both of  
themselves and their camels, that  
they could not be counted, and went  
6 over the country destroying it. Thus  
Israel was thoroughly exhausted  
before Midian.

(B.C. 1249.) **A Preacher exhorts to  
Reformation and to abandon Sin.**

Then the Children of Israel cried  
7 to the EVER-LIVING. And when the  
Israelites cried to the EVER-LIVING on  
8 account of Midian, the EVER-LIVING  
sent a man, a preacher, to the sons  
of Israel and he said to them;—

“The EVER-LIVING GOD of Israel  
says thus,—‘I brought you from the  
Mitzeraim, and brought you from the  
9 House of Bondage, and delivered  
you from the power of your opponents,  
and swept them before you, and gave  
10 you this country. Then I said to  
you, I am your EVER-LIVING GOD.  
You shall not reverence the gods of  
the Amorites, in whose country you  
reside,—but you would not listen to  
My voice.’”

(B.C. 1249.) **He calls upon Gideon  
to lead his Nation.**

11 Afterwards the Messenger of the  
EVER-LIVING went and sat under the  
oak which is at Afrah, belonging to  
Yoash, and Gideon his son was  
threshing wheat in a wine cellar, to  
12 hide it from the Midianites, and the  
Messenger of the EVER-LIVING looked  
in at him, and said to him, “The  
EVER-LIVING is with you, brave  
man!”

13 But Gideon answered him, “What,  
Sir! If the EVER-LIVING is with  
us, then why has all this come? And  
where are all His wonders that our  
fathers related to us, telling about  
the bringing us up from Mitzeraim?  
For now the EVER-LIVING has for-  
saken us, and put us under the foot  
of Midian!”

14 But the Noble Man<sup>1</sup> turned to him

<sup>1</sup> I translate the Hebrew word Jehovah,  
יהוה (Yhowah), as “Noble Man,” as a high  
title, like our Lord, for a Peer, as it is evident  
this preacher was not the Creator, but a man  
as we are.—F. F.

and replied; “Go with your courage  
and rescue Israel from the hand of  
Midian! Have I not sent you?”

He, however, returned, “Me, sir? 15  
How can I rescue Israel? The  
regiments of Manasseh have failed!  
and I am the youngest of my father’s  
family!”

But the Noble Man answered to 16  
him; “Because I will be with you!  
And you shall defeat the Midianites  
like a single man.”

Then he asked him, “If now, I 17  
have found favour in your eyes, and  
you have done me the kindness of  
speaking with me, do not remove 18  
from here until I come back to you,  
when I will bring my present, and  
present it to you.”

So he replied, “I will sit down until  
you return.”

Then Gideon went and killed a 19  
goat’s kid, and baked an unfermented  
cake, and placed the meat on a tray,  
and put the broth in a basin, and  
brought to him under the oak, and  
presented it.

Then the divine Messenger said to 20  
him; “Take the meat and the biscuit,  
and ascend to the peak of Luz, and  
pour out the broth.” And he did so,  
when the Messenger of the EVER- 21  
LIVING extended the end of the staff  
which he had in his hand, and touched  
the meat and the biscuit, and fire  
came from the rock and consumed  
the meat and the biscuit! Then the  
Messenger of the EVER-LIVING went 22  
from his sight; and Gideon perceived  
that he was a Messenger from the  
EVER-LIVING; so Gideon exclaimed,  
“Ah! Great LORD! I have certainly  
seen a Messenger of the EVER-LIVING  
face to face!” And the NOBLE 23  
replied to him, “Peace to you! Fear  
not! You will not die!”

Consequently Gideon built there 24  
an altar to the EVER-LIVING, and it  
is called “The EVER-LIVING’S Peace,”  
to this day. It is near Afrath of  
Aliazer.

In the night again the EVER-LIVING 25  
said to him, “Take the bull of your  
father’s herd, and a second seven  
year bull, and overthrow your father’s  
altar to Bal, and break the Shrine  
that is beside it, and build an altar 26  
to your EVER-LIVING GOD, on the top  
of this refuge on the mound, and  
take the two bulls, and offer as a  
burnt-offering with the wood of the  
shrine which you have broken up.”



**(B.C. 1249.) Gideon destroys the Altar of Bal.**

- 27 So Gideon took ten men of his servants, and did as the EVER-LIVING told him. But because he feared his father's family, and the men of the village, he could not do it by day, so did
- 28 it by night. When they arose in the morning and observed the altar of Bal thrown down and the shrine that was near it broken, and the two bulls burning upon the altar he had built,
- 29 then each said to his neighbour, "Who has done these things?" So they examined and enquired, and were told, "Gideon, the son of Yoash, has done them!"
- 30 The people of the village consequently said to Yoash, "Bring out your son and let him die! for he has overthrown the altar of Bal and has broken the shrine that was by it."
- 31 But Yoash replied to all who stood about him, "Would you defend Bal? If he can help you, then he can defend himself! If he is a god he can kill for himself this morning.—Let him defend himself for the overthrowing of his altar!"
- 32 So they named him at once Jerubal, saying, "Let Bal destroy him,—for he overturned his altar."

**(B.C. 1248.) Midian and Allies advance to fight Gideon and his Men.**

- 33 In consequence the forces of Midian and Amalek, and the Beni-Kedem assembled together, and encamped
- 34 in the plain of Jezraal. But the Spirit of the EVER-LIVING descended upon Gideon, and he blew the trumpet and summoned the Abiazerites after him,
- 35 and send messengers to all Manasseh, and also summoned them after him; and he also sent messengers to Ashur, and Zebulon, and to Naphthali, and they went up to meet him.

**(B.C. 1248.) Gideon asks a Proof of God's Call and Help to Himself.**

- 36 Then Gideon said to GOD, "If You will save Israel by my hand, as You
- 37 promised, I will lay this fleece of wool on the level floor;—if the dew is on the fleece only, and dryness upon all the ground, then I shall understand that You will save Israel
- 38 as You have promised." And he

arose in the morning and wrung the fleece, when as much dew ran from the fleece as filled a bucket with water. Gideon, however, said to GOD, 39 "Let not Your anger burn against me, and I will speak once again; I will try another time with the fleece. Let it now be dry on the fleece only, while there is dew on the ground." So the EVER-LIVING made it thus 40 that night. There was dryness in the fleece only, and upon the ground there came dew!

**(B.C. 1248.)**

Then Jerubal (who was Gideon) 7 arose, and all the people who were with him, and encamped at the Well of Kharod overlooking from the north the camp of Morah upon the plain. But the EVER-LIVING said to Gideon, 2 "There are too many people with you for Me to give the Midianites into your power, for fear Israel should glorify against Me, and say, 'My hand has saved myself!' Therefore, 3 now, proclaim in the hearing of the people, and say 'Who is afraid and timid? Let him return and depart to Mount Gilad.' Consequently twenty-two thousand of the people departed, but there were left ten thousand.

But the EVER-LIVING again said to 4 Gideon, "The people are too many. Order them down to the brook, and there select for yourself; and whoever replies to you thus, 'I will go with you!' let him go with you. But all who say, 'I will not go with you!' let him not go with you." So he 5 took those men with him down to the brook, where the EVER-LIVING said to Gideon, "All who lap with the tongue from the brook, like a dog laps, place them by themselves. And all who bend on the knees to drink." And the number of the 6 lappers from the hand to their mouths was three hundred men, but all the rest of the people knelt on the knee to drink from the brook.

Then the EVER-LIVING said to 7 Gideon, "With the three hundred men who lapped, I will rescue you, and give Midian into your hand." So the people took their staves in 8 their hands and their clothing, and all the force of Israel went off to their homes, except those three hundred brave men. And the camp of Midian was opposite those in the plain.

**(B.C. 1248.) Midian and her Allies  
defeated.**

9 And night came. Then the LORD  
said to him:—"Arise! Descend to  
the camp, for I will give it to your  
10 hand! But if you fear the descent,  
go down with Furah your squire, to  
11 the camp, when you will hear what  
they say, and after that embolden  
your hand."

**The Midianite's Dream of the  
Barley Cake.**

He therefore descended to the  
camp, and Furah his squire went  
down with him to the officers'  
quarters who were over the camp,  
12 where Midian and Amalek and the  
Beni-Kedem were spread over the  
plain like locusts for number, and  
their camels were innumerable like  
dust scattered on the shore of the  
13 sea for multitude. But Gideon pro-  
ceeded, and perceived a man relating  
a dream to his comrade, who said,  
"I have dreamed a dream; when I  
saw a round barley cake thrown into  
the camp of Midian, and it went to  
the General's pavilion and struck it,  
and it fell; but it bounded forward,  
and another pavilion fell!"

14 Then his comrade answered and  
said, "That is nothing else than the  
sword of Gideon-ben-Yoash, the man  
of Israel! GOD will give Midian and  
all this camp into his power!"

15 But when Gideon heard this dream  
related, and its interpretation, he  
bowed down, and returned to the  
camp of Israel, and said, "Arise, for  
the LORD will give the camp of  
Midian to your hands!"

16 Then he divided the three hundred  
men into three divisions, and all of  
them took trumpets in their hands,  
with dark lanterns, and lamps inside  
17 the dark lanterns; and he said to  
them, "Watch me; and what I do,  
you do the same. And when I come  
to the edge of the camp,—what I do  
18 then you also do it. When I blow  
my trumpet, then all of you blow  
your trumpets with me all around the  
camp, and shout, 'The Sword of the  
LORD and of Gideon.'"

19 Then Gideon and the hundred men  
with him went to the head-quarters'  
side of the camp, where the officers  
were stationed, and sounded the  
trumpet, and opened the dark

lanterns they carried. The three 20  
divisions also blew their trumpets,  
and waved their dark lanterns, and  
rushed on with the lanterns in their  
left hands and the trumpets in their  
right, blowing and shouting, "The  
Sword of the LORD and of Gideon,"  
and halted outside around the camp, 21  
and aroused all in the camp, who fled  
in terror. But the three hundred con- 22  
tinued to blow the trumpets, and the  
EVER-LIVING turned the sword of  
each against his comrade in all the  
camp, and the camp fled in confusion  
to the edge of the meadows of Nekho-  
lah, near Tabath.

**Gideon collects the Northern Tribes  
to join him in the War, but the  
Chiefs of Ephraim quarrel with  
him, and refuse to join.**

The Man of Israel afterwards sum- 23  
moned Naphthali and Ashur, and all  
Manasseh, and they followed after  
Midian. Gideon also sent messengers 24  
to the whole of Mount Ephraim, to  
say; "Descend to meet Midian, and  
capture from them the fords at Beth-  
barah and of the Jordan." So they  
called out every man of Ephraim, and  
captured the fords at Bethbarah and  
at the Jordan, and captured the two 25  
princes of Midian, Oreb and Zaeb,  
and killed Oreb at the rock of Oreb,  
and executed Zaeb at the wine-press  
of Zaeb, and continued the pursuit of  
Midian, but they brought the heads  
of Oreb and Zaeb to Gideon from  
beyond the Jordan.

The men of Ephraim, however, 8  
asked him, "Why have you done this  
business for us, and not consulted  
us? for you have gone to war with  
Midian, and continued with it rashly."

But he answered, "What have I 2  
done now more than you? Are not  
the gleanings of Ephraim better than  
the vintage of Abiezer? GOD has 3  
given to your hand the Princes of  
Midian, Oreb and Zaeb; so what  
have I been able to do more than  
you? Then turn your spirit away  
from me when speaking about this  
matter."

**Gideon passes over the Jordan  
without them.**

Then Gideon went beyond the Jor- 4  
dan, himself and the three hundred  
men with him, weary, yet pursuing,

5 and said to the people of Sukoth, "Give, I entreat you, a little bread to the men who are with me, for they are exhausted, and I am pursuing after Zebakh and Tzalmuna, the kings of Midian."

**The Chiefs of Sukoth refuse also to supply Men or Food.**

6 But the masters of Sukoth replied, "Are the hands of Zebakh and Tzalmuna in your power, that we should give you any bread?"

7 Gideon, however, retorted; "When the EVER-LIVING gives Zebakh and Tzalmuna into my power, then I will inform your governors with thorns from the desert and with briars."

**The People of Phanual also refuse Supplies.**

8 From there he went to Phanual, and asked them the same, but the men of Phanual answered like the 9 men of Sukoth, so Gideon also replied to the men of Phanual, "When I return with peace, I will throw down this towering Phanual."

**(B.C. 1248.) Gideon attacks the Camp of Zebakh and Tzalmuna.**

10 Now Zebakh and Tzalmuna were encamped at Karkar with about fifteen thousand men, all they had left them; but with the whole camp of the Beni-Kedem, a hundred and twenty thousand infantry, accomplished swordsmen. Gideon consequently advanced by the lower road to the General's pavilion from the east of Nobakh and Yagbah, and attacked the camp whilst the camp 12 was resting in security. Zebakh and Tzalmuna, however, fled, and he pursued them, and captured both the kings of Midian,—Zebakh and Tzalmuna,—and all the camp was thrown into confusion.

**(B.C. 1247.) Gideon returns from Northern Arabia Victorious, and punishes Sukoth.**

13 When Gideon-ben-Yoash returned from the war, coming up from the 14 desert, he captured a young man from the people of Sukoth and questioned him, and he described to him the chief men of Sukoth, and the seven aldermen and the seven council

men. Then he advanced against the 15 people of Sukoth and said;—"Here are Zebakh and Tzalmuna, about whom you insulted me, saying, 'Is the hand of Zebakh and Tzalmuna in your power yet that we should give bread to your weary men?'" Then he 16 seized the aldermen of the town, and informed the people of Sukoth with the thorns and briars of the desert. Next he threw down the tower of 17 Phanual, and killed the chiefs of the village.

**(B.C. 1248.) Zebakh and Tzalmuna brought to Trial for Murdering Gideon's Brothers.**

Then he asked Zebakh and Tzal- 18 muna, "What sort of men were they whom you murdered at Thabor?"

And they replied; "Like yourself! Each one in appearance like the distinguished son of a king!"

When he answered, "They were 19 my brothers! Sons of my mother! As GOD lives to me! if you had spared their lives I would not have killed you!"

Then he said to Jether his first 20 born, "Get up and kill them!" But the youth did not draw his sword, because he was afraid,—for he was only a lad. So Zebakh and Tzalmuna 21 said; "Get up yourself and assail us, like a man in his vigour." Gideon then arose and killed Zebakh and Tzalmuna, and took the crescents that were upon the necks of their camels.

**(B.C. 1247.) Israel wishes Gideon to be a King.**

The Men of Israel afterwards said 22 to Gideon, "Rule over us,—you and your son, and your descendants, for you have saved us from the hand of Midian."

**He refuses Kingship, but asks a Share of the Prize captured.**

But Gideon replied to them, "I will 23 not be Governor over you; nor shall my son govern you: The EVER-LIVING is your Governor." But 24 Gideon said, "I request each of you to give me a ring from your plunder." (For as they were Ishmaelites they wore gold rings.)

And they replied, "We will give 25 you that gift," so he spread his cloak, and each threw upon it a ring

26 from the plunder; and the gold rings which he asked were one thousand seven hundred shekels in weight, besides the crescents and ear-drops, and cloaks, and the woven shawls of the King of Midian, and the necklaces which were on the necks of the camels. Gideon afterwards made a suit of armour of them, and set it up in his village at Afrah, but all Israel whored after it there, and it became a snare to Gideon and all his house;

27  
28 Midian was thus subdued before the Israelites, and it did not again raise its head, so that the country had rest for forty years in the time of Gideon.

(B.C. 1209.) **Gideon dies.**

29 Jerub-bal-ben-Yoash, however, returned to his home; and Gideon had seventy sons produced from his loins, for he had many wives. But his secondary wife, who was in Shekem, bore him also a son,—and his name was Abimelek. Then Gideon-ben-Yoash died with good grey hair, and they buried him in the tomb of Yoash his father, in Afrah of Abiezer.

(About B.C. 1203.) **Anarchy and Religious Revolt.**

33 But when Gideon-ben-Yoash was dead, the Israelites went again and whored after Bal, and chose Bal-Bereth as their god! For the Israelites remembered not their EVER-LIVING GOD, Who redeemed them from the power of all their enemies around. Nor did they act kindly to the family of Jerub-bal-Gideon, for all the good he had done for them.

(B.C. 1203.) **Abimelek conspires to become a Chief.**

9 Abimelek went to Shekem, and spoke to them, and to all the clan of the house of his mother's father, to say;

2 "I wish you to whisper to the ears of the Balites of Shekem, 'What good is it to you, this government of seventy men?—all the sons of Jerubal—compared to the government of a single man? and remember that I am your bones and flesh!'"

(B.C. 1203.) **Abimelek murders his Seventy Brothers.**

3 So his mother's relatives whispered all these things about him to the

ears of all the Balites of Shekem, and turned their hearts after Abimelek,—for they said 'he is our countryman.' They therefore gave 4 him seventy shekels from the house of Bal-Bereth, with which Abimelek hired seventy vagabonds and reprobates, and they followed him. Then 5 he went to the house of his father in Afrah, and murdered his brothers, the sons of Jerub-bal, seventy men, upon a single stone, except Jotham-ben-Jerubal, the youngest, for he hid himself.

(B.C. 1201.) **Abimelek made King of Shekem.**

Then all the Balites of Shekem, and 6 the house of Miloa proceeded and went and made Abimelek king, to reign in Alon, the garrison of Shekem.

(B.C. 1201.) **Jotham's Parable of the Trees electing a King.**

When this was reported to Jotham, 7 he went and stood on Mount Gherizim, and raised his voice, and called to them and said;

"Listen to me, you Balites of Shekem—and let your gods listen!

**The Trees seeking a King.**

"The trees once went out to elect 8 a king over themselves, and they said to the Olive, 'Will you be king over us?'

"But the Olive replied to them, 9 'Shall I resign my fatness with which gods and men are delighted, to trouble myself about trees?'

Then the trees said to the Fig, 10 'Come and be king over us?'

"When the Fig replied to them, 11 'Shall I abandon my pleasantness, and beautiful fruit, to go and trouble myself about the trees?'

"Next the trees said to the Vine, 12 'Come and be king over us?'

"But it answered them, 'Shall I 13 abandon my wine which delights gods and men, and go and trouble myself about the trees?'

"Then all the trees said to the 14 Bramble, 'Come! You reign over us!'

"And the Bramble answered the 15 trees; 'If you really consecrate me as YOUR KING,—come here! shelter under me! And if you will not,—fire shall go out from the Bramble, and consume the Cedar of Lebanon!'

16 "So, now, if in truth and upright-  
ness you have made Abimelek your  
king; and if you have done hand-  
somerly to Jerubal and to his family,  
and if you have done to him accord-  
ing to the work of the hand of my  
17 father, who fought for you, and poured  
18 out his soul for you, who have risen  
upon my father's family to-day, and  
murdered seventy persons on a single  
stone, and have elected Abimelek, the  
son of his slave, over the Balites of  
Shekem, because he is your relative;  
19 —then according to the truth and  
justice with which you have acted  
towards Jerubal and towards his  
family to-day, be content with Abime-  
lek, and let him be content with you!  
20 But if not, let fire come out from  
Abimelek and consume the Balites of  
Shekem, and the house of Miloa, and  
let fire come out from the Balites of  
Shekem, and from the house of Miloa,  
and consume Abimelek!"  
21 Then Jotham fled, and hid himself  
in Barah, and stayed there from the  
presence of Abimelek his brother.

(B.C. 1200.) *The Balites and  
Abimelek quarrel.*

22 When Abimelek had been a chief  
23 in Israel for three years, the EVER-  
LIVING sent a bad feeling between  
Abimelek and the Balites of Shekem,  
consequently the Balites of Shekem  
24 plotted against Abimelek. The injury  
done to the seventy sons of Jerubal,  
and their blood, returned upon  
Abimelek their brother, who had  
murdered them, and upon the Balites  
of Shekem who encouraged his hand  
to the murder of his brothers.  
25 So the Balites of Shekem laid an  
ambush upon the tops of the moun-  
tains, and they robbed all who passed  
near them in the road, and it was  
reported to Abimelek.

(B.C. 1200.) *Gal-ben-Abd conspires  
against Abimelek.*

26 Then Gal-ben-Abd came to Shekem  
with his brothers and passed into it,  
and the Balites of Shekem confided  
27 in him, and went out and reaped  
their vineyards, and pressed them,  
and afterwards made a feast, and  
went to the House of their god, and  
ate and drank, and cursed Abimelek.  
28 Then Gal-ben-Abd exclaimed, "Who  
is Abimelek? and what was Shekem  
that we should be enslaved? Is he

not the son of Jerubal, and Zebul his  
Lieutenant? They were slaves,—  
those furious, low-bred bastards;—  
but why should we be enslaved?  
But if this people were under my 29  
hand, I would turn Abimelek off!"

Then he shouted against Abimelek,  
"Collect your army and meet me  
outside!"

(B.C. 1200.) *Zebul reports the Rebolt  
to Abimelek.*

When Zebul, the Commandant of 30  
the city, heard of the speech of Gal-  
ben-Abd, he was furious, and sent 31  
messengers to Abimelek at Tharmah  
to say;—

"I find Gal-ben-Abd and his  
brothers have come to Shekem, and  
that your rivals in the town are  
against you. So now get up by night, 32  
you and all the force with you, and  
hide in the fields, and at dawn, when 33  
the sun rises, advance and attack the  
city, and then you, and the force you  
bring with you, can do to him what-  
ever you find in your power."

Abimelek consequently arose that 34  
night and all his force with him,  
and they advanced secretly against  
Shekem in four divisions. But Gal- 35  
ben-Abd went out and stationed him-  
self outside the gate of the town.  
Then Abimelek and the force with him  
arose from their ambush, and Gal 36  
saw the force, and asked Zebul, "Is  
that an army descending from the  
tops of the hills?"

When Zebul replied to him, "You  
see the shadow of the mountains  
instead of men!"

But Gal continued to speak and 37  
said, "Look! it is a force that descends  
from the highlands, and one division  
comes from the road of Alan-  
Maonim!"

Then Zebul replied to him, "Where 38  
now is the mouth which said, 'Who  
is Abimelek? that we should be  
enslaved? Is not that the man whom  
you despised? Now go and fight  
with him!'"

*Abimelek defeats Gal and captures  
Shekem, but is killed in Victory.*

Gal consequently went out with the 39  
Balites of Shekem and fought with  
Abimelek. But Abimelek repulsed 40  
him and he fled before him, and many  
fell wounded before the gate of the  
town.

41 Abimelek then retired to the high-lands until Zebul advised Gal and his relatives against remaining in  
42 Shekem; so when morning came his army went out to the fields; and he  
43 reported it to Abimelek; so he took his force and divided it under three leaders, and lay in ambush in the fields and watched until the army had come clear of the town, when he arose and assailed it.

44 Then Abimelek and the Officers who were with him rushed and seized the open gate of the town;—and the two other Leaders charged upon all who were in the fields and repulsed  
45 them, whilst Abimelek assailed the town all that day and captured it and killed the people who were in it, and threw down the houses, and sowed it with salt.

(B.C. 1200.) **Abimelek assaults the Fort of Shekem.**

46 When all the Balites of Shekem Tower heard of it, they went to the tower of the House of their god,  
47 Brith, and it was reported to Abimelek that all the Balites had assembled at Shekem Tower. Abimelek consequently ascended Mount Zalmon with all his force, where he took an axe and cut boughs from the trees, and hoisted them upon his shoulder, and said to the people who were with him,

49 "What you have seen me do, be quick and do the same." So all the army each cut a branch and marched after Abimelek, and piled them against the tower, and set the tower on fire with them, and thus killed all the people in the Tower of Shekem,—about a thousand men and women.

**Abimelek besieges Thebetz, but is slain.**

50 Then Abimelek marched to Thebetz, and besieged Thebetz and  
51 captured it. But there was a strong tower in the middle of the town, and all the men and women fled there and shut themselves in, and went to the roof of the Tower.

52 Abimelek, however, advanced to the tower and assailed it, and approached close to the door of the  
53 tower to consume it with fire, but a woman threw an upper millstone upon the head of Abimelek and  
54 broke his skull. When he immediately

called to the youth who carried his arms and said, "Draw your sword and kill me! for fear they should say 'a woman killed him!'" So his Squire drew, and killed him. And  
55 when the men of Israel saw Abimelek was dead each returned to his home.

Thus GOD turned upon Abimelek  
56 the wrong which he did to his father, in murdering his seventy brothers; GOD caused all the wickedness of the  
57 men of Shekem to return upon their heads, and brought the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubal upon them.

(B.C. 1183.) **Thola-ben-Phuah becomes Leader.**

After Abimelek, a man of Issakar,  
10 Thola-ben-Phuah, arose to save Israel. He resided in Shamar on Mount Ephraim, and judged Israel for 2  
thirteen years, when he died and was buried in Shamar.

(B.C. 1170.) **Jair becomes Chief.**

Then Jair the Giladite arose after 3  
him, and judged Israel for twelve years, and he had thirty sons, who 4  
rode upon asses, and they possessed thirty villages, called the villages of Jair to this day. They are in the country of Gilad. When Jair died 5  
he was buried in Kamon.

(About B.C. 1161.) **Wars of Anarchy, and National Corruption.**

Then the Children of Israel repeated 6  
the doing of evil in the sight of the EVER-LIVING, and served the Balim and Ashtaroths, and the gods of Aram, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the sons of Aram, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the EVER-LIVING, and did not serve Him; so the anger of 7  
the EVER-LIVING burnt against Israel, and He gave them up to the hand of the Philistines, and to the power of the people of Amon, who crushed 8  
and oppressed the Children of Israel, who were in Bashan beyond the Jordan, in the country of the Amorites, and in Gilad, for eighteen years.

(B.C. 1159.) **The Amorites ravage all Israel for Eighteen Years.**

The Amorites also passed over the 9  
Jordan to make war with Judah and Benjamin, and the House of Ephraim, and ravaged Israel greatly. Then 10

the Children of Israel cried to the EVER-LIVING, saying, "We have sinned against You! for we have forsaken our GOD and served the Balim."

11 But the EVER-LIVING replied to the Children of Israel, "Have you not the Mitzerites,<sup>1</sup> and the Amorites, and the Beni-Amon, and the Philistines, and the Zidonians, as refuges from oppression for yourselves? that you call to Me to save you from their hand, when you have forsaken Me, and served other gods? Therefore 13 I will not continue to save you! Go, and call the gods whom you have chosen for yourselves:—Let them save you in the period of your distress."

(B.C. 1143.) *The Distressed and Repentant Nation revolt and seek a Leader.*

15 The Children of Israel, however, said to the EVER-LIVING, "We have sinned! Do to us all that is good in Your sight! Oh! save us now, today!" And they put away the foreign gods from amongst them, and served the EVER-LIVING, and He stayed His anger against Israel.

17 Then the Amonites assembled and encamped in Gilad, and the Children of Israel collected and encamped in Mizpah. But the army said to the Chiefs of Gilad, "We have not a man to lead us. Let the man who is able to fight with the Amonites be the head of all the inhabitants of Gilad!"

(B.C. 1143.) *Japhthah chosen as Leader of Gilad.*

11 Now Japhthah the Giladite was a heroic man;—but he was the son of a foreigner who bore Japhthah to Gilad. His Giladite wife also bore him sons, and that woman's sons grew up, and drove Japhthah out, and said, "You shall not inherit with the family of our father,—for you are the son of a foreigner!" Japhthah consequently fled from the presence of his brothers, and lived in the country of Tob, where Japhthah collected vagabond fellows who came to him.

*An Embassy sent to Japhthah.*

4 This was in the time when the Amonites were at war with the 5 Children of Israel. So the judges of

Gilad went to bring Japhthah from the district of Tob. And they said to 6 Japhthah, "Come and be our Leader, and fight for us with the Amonites."

But Japhthah replied to the judges 7 of Gilad, "Did you not hate me, and drive me from the house of my father? Then why should you come to me now that you are in distress?"

The judges of Gilad, however, 8 answered Japhthah, "In spite of that, return now with us, and fight the Amonites, and you shall be the chief of all the inhabitants of Gilad."

Then Japhthah said to the judges of 9 Gilad, "If I return with you to fight the Amonites, and the EVER-LIVING gives them to my advance, am I to be your chief?"

And the judges of Gilad answered 10 Japhthah; "Let the EVER-LIVING decide between us, if it is not done as you say!"

*Japhthah accepts the Chieftainship of Gilad.*

Japhthah thereupon went with the 11 judges of Gilad, and the people appointed him over themselves as a chief and leader, and Japhthah took the oaths before them in Mizpah.

*Japhthah sends a Message to the King of Amon.*

Then Japhthah sent Messengers to 12 the king of the Amonites, to say; "What is there between me and you, that you have come to fight me in my country?"

When the king of Amon answered 13 the Messengers of Japhthah, "Because Israel when coming up from the Mitzeraim<sup>1</sup> seized my country from Arnon to the Jabok, and the Jordan. But you can go back to them in peace."

*Second Embassy sent by Japhthah.*

But Japhthah sent Messengers again 14 to the king of the Beni-Amon and said 15 to him,

"Japhthah replied thus; 'Israel did not seize the country of Moab and the country of the Beni-Amon, for in 16 the coming up from the Mitzeraim,<sup>1</sup> Israel went in the desert by the Red Sea, and came to Kadesh, when Israel 17 sent Messengers to the king of Edom to say,—"I wish to pass over by your

<sup>1</sup> Egyptians.—F. F.

<sup>1</sup> Egypt.—F. F.

country;" but the king of Edom, and the king of Moab, replied that they were not willing; therefore Israel  
 18 halted at Kadesh, and marched into the desert, and went round the land of Moab, and encamped at the river Arnon, and did not invade the bounds of Moab—for the Arnon was  
 19 the boundary of Moab. From there Israel sent ambassadors to Sihon<sup>1</sup> the king of the Amorites,—king of Heshbon,—and said to him, "I, Israel, would pass through your country to  
 20 my place." But Sihon would not trust Israel to pass through his boundaries; so Sihon collected all his forces, and encamped at Jahtz,  
 21 and fought with Israel. The EVER-LIVING GOD of Israel, however, gave Sihon and all his army to the hand of Israel, and Israel conquered all the country of the Amorites residing in  
 22 that region, and acquired all the region of the Amorites from the Arnon to the Jabok, and from the  
 23 desert to the Jordan;—and since the EVER-LIVING GOD of Israel has driven the Amorites before His People,  
 24 —yet you would possess! Cannot you possess what Kemosh your god has caused you to possess?—and what-  
 ever our EVER-LIVING GOD has caused us to possess, we shall possess for ourselves.  
 25 "'And now, are you better than Balak-ben-Tzifor, the great king of Moab? Greater than Israel? If you can fight with them, fight with them!"  
 26 "'Israel, however, has dwelt in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aroar, and its villages, and all the towns along the Arnon three hundred years, so why have you not recovered  
 27 them during that period? And I myself have not offended you, but you have done wrong to me in making war upon me. Let the EVER-LIVING as Judge decide to-day between the Children of Israel and the Beni-Amon.'"

### The King of Amon refuses Peace.

28 But the king of the Amonites would not listen to the words that Japhthah sent to him.

### Japhthah declares War.

29 Then the Spirit of the EVER-LIVING came upon Japhthah and he passed through Gilad and Manasseh, and

<sup>1</sup> Sihon=Sikhon, in Hebrew.—F. F.

advanced to Mizpah of Gilad: for Mizpah of Gilad was in subjection to the Beni-Amon. Therefore Japhthah  
 30 vowed a vow to the EVER-LIVING, and said:—

### Japhthah's Vow.

"If you will deliver the Beni-Amon to my hand, then whatever first comes  
 31 out of the doors of my house to meet me, upon my returning with peace from the Beni-Amon, shall be the LORD'S, and shall be offered as an offering!"

### Japhthah conquers the Amonites.

Japhthah then advanced against the  
 32 Beni-Amon to fight with them, and the EVER-LIVING gave them into his power, and he conquered from them  
 33 Aroar, and as far as the Pass of Minith,—twenty villages,—and on-wards to the vine-fields,—a very great conquest. Thus the Amonites were subjected to the Children of Israel.

### Japhthah's Despair at his only Daughter falling under his Vow. Her Sublime Faith.

When, however, Japhthah returned  
 34 to Mizpah to his home, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and dances, and except her alone there was no child to his house. So  
 35 when she approached him he tore his robes, and said, "Alas! my daughter! You have overwhelmed me with sorrow, and you are my grief! for I have opened my mouth to the EVER-LIVING,—and I am not able to go back!"

But she answered him, "My father,  
 36 if you have opened your mouth to the EVER-LIVING, do to me according to what has come out from your mouth, since the EVER-LIVING has made a triumph for you over your enemies, the Beni-Amon!"

Then she asked her father, "Grant  
 37 this thing to me, give me two months that I may go and wander on the hills and lament for my maidenhood, I and my friends."

And he replied, "Go!" and sent  
 38 her away for two months. So she and her friends went, and lamented over her girlhood upon the mountains.

But at the end of the two months  
 39 she returned to her father, and he did to her as he had vowed, and she knew



no man. Thus it became an institution in Israel, that from year to year the girls of Israel should go to celebrate the daughter of Japhthah, the Giladite, for four days yearly.

(B.C. 1143.) **The Ephraimites assail Japhthah and begin a Civil War.**

12 But the men of Ephraim assembled, and advanced northward, and demanded of Japhthah, "Why did you proceed to war with the Amonites, and not invite us to go with you? We will burn your house over you with fire!"

2 But Japhthah replied to them; "There was a great contention between myself and the people with me, and the Beni-Amon and I applied to you, but you did not save me from their power. When I saw that you would not save, I took my life in my hand, and advanced against the Amonites, and the EVER-LIVING gave them into my power. Then why do you ascend to-day against me to fight with me?"

(B.C. 1142.) **Japhthah defeats Ephraim with great Slaughter.**

**The Shibolet.**

4 Consequently Japhthah assembled all the army of Gilad and fought the Ephraimites, and the men of Gilad defeated Ephraim.

5 Then the men of Gilad said to themselves; "Ephraim will escape between the Ephraimites and Manassites!" so they captured the fords of the Jordan from Ephraim, and when any one of the fugitives of Ephraim said, "I wish to pass over," the men of Gilad replied to him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" and if he answered, "No," they replied to him, "Say 'Shibolet,'" and he responded, "Sibolet," for he was not able to pronounce it. Then they seized and slew him at the fords of the Jordan, so there fell at that time forty-two thousand of the Ephraimites.

7 Japhthah afterwards judged in Israel for six years. Then Japhthah the Giladite died and was buried in the City of Gilad.

(B.C. 1137.) **Ibzan becomes a Leader.**

8 After him Ibzan, the Bethlehemite, judged in Israel, and he had thirty sons, and thirty daughters sent out,

and thirty daughters came in to his sons from without, and he judged Israel seven years. Then Ibzan died and they buried him in Bethlehem.

(B.C. 1130.) **Ailan becomes a Leader.**

Then Ailan the Zebulonite judged in Israel after him, and he judged in Israel ten years. Then Ailon the Zebulonite died, and they buried him in the country of Zebulon.

(B.C. 1120.) **Abdon ben-Hilel becomes a Leader.**

But after him Abdon-ben-Hilel the Phirathanite judged in Israel, and he had forty sons and thirty four grandsons who rode on seventy asses, and he judged in Israel eight years.

(B.C. 1112.)

Then Abdon-ben-Hilel the Phirathanite died, and they buried him in Phirathan in the country of Ephraim, in the mount of the Amalekites.

(B.C. 1161 to 1120.) **The Birth of Samson.—Anarchy, and the Conquest by the Philistines.**

1 Then the Children of Israel repeated the doing of wrong in the sight of the EVER-LIVING, so the EVER-LIVING delivered them into the hand of the Philistines for forty

1 From the death of Gideon in 1126 B.C. to the rise of Saul absolute anarchy seems, from the Historian's narrative, to have existed in all the Hebrew Commonwealth, from the Euphrates on the East to the Mediterranean Sea on the West, only diversified by the ravages of the Arabian and Mesopotamian Robber Chieftains, and the revolt of the aboriginal tribes whom Moses and Joshua had subdued. The JUDGES whose names were selected by Isaiah to serve as landmarks for the chronology of his history were only Hebrew Insurgent Leaders, who ruled by personal influence in small districts of the country around their homes so long as vigour and life lasted. They must not be looked upon as in any sense National Presidents of the Commonwealth of Israel. The Historian is careful to make this clear in his narrative. It is only comparatively modern Translators and Commentators who have obscured the fact by their ignorance. I have tried to clear their obscurities away, and restore the history of Isaiah to the original clarity of the Prophet. At Ch. xiii. we step back to 1161, to introduce the history of Samson, whose career began a revival of the Hebrew national spirit.—F. FENTON.

2 years. But there was a remarkable man of Tzarah of the family of Dan, and his name was Manoh, but his wife was barren,—she was childless.

3 A Messenger of the EVER-LIVING, however, appeared to his wife, and said to her, "Look, now, you barren and childless woman! you shall conceive and bear a son! But guard yourself, and drink neither wine nor beer, and eat no grapes; for you shall conceive and bear a son, upon whose head no razor shall go; for the youth shall be a Nazarite to GOD from his birth, and he shall be strong and save Israel from the hand of the Philistines."

6 The woman therefore went and said to her husband, "A man from GOD has come to me, and his appearance was like a Messenger of GOD, very bright, but I did not ask him if he was so,—and he did not tell me his name, but he said to me, 'See! you shall conceive and bear a son; and you shall not drink wine or beer, nor eat any grapes, for the youth shall be a Nazarite to GOD from his birth to the day of his death!'"

8 So Manoh entreated the EVER-LIVING, and said, "Let the man whom You have sent appear, GOD, to me. Let him come again to us, that we may learn what the youth who is to be born must do." The EVER-LIVING, therefore, listened to the voice of Manoh, and the Messenger of GOD came again to the woman, when she was sitting in the field and Manoh her husband was not with her. But the woman hastened and ran and informed, and said to him, "The man who came the other day to me has appeared to me." So Manoh arose and followed his wife and came to the man, and asked him, "Are you the man who spoke to this woman?" And he replied, "I am."

12 Then Manoh said, "May your word come true! What does the EVER-LIVING decide that the youth shall do?"

13 And the Messenger of the EVER-LIVING answered to Manoh, "Your wife must abstain from all that I said; from all that comes from the vine. She shall not eat of the vine. She shall not drink wine, and she shall not drink beer. She shall also eat no grapes,—she must abstain from all that I have commanded."

15 Then Manoh replied to the

Messenger of the EVER-LIVING,—  
"Stay here, and I will present to you a goat's kid."

But the Messenger of the EVER-LIVING replied to Manoh, "If I stay, I will not eat of your bread; but if you make an offering to the EVER-LIVING, offer it." (For Manoh did not know he was a Messenger of the EVER-LIVING.)

Then Manoh asked the Messenger of the EVER-LIVING, "What is your name? that I may come to you and bless you?"

But the Messenger of the EVER-LIVING asked him, "Why do you ask my name,—when it is Wonderful?"

Then Manoh took a goat's kid, and a bread offering, and went up on to the rock to the EVER-LIVING and set the offering apart. And Manoh and his wife watched them. But when the flame went up from the altar to the skies, the Messenger of the EVER-LIVING also went up in the flame of the altar, and Manoh and his wife saw him and they fell upon their faces to the earth. The Messenger of the EVER-LIVING, however, did not again appear to Manoh or his wife after he had recognised that he was a Messenger of the EVER-LIVING.

Manoh consequently said to his wife, "We shall die,—for we have seen a god!"

But she replied to him, "If the EVER-LIVING intended to kill us He would not have received a burnt-offering from our hands, and we should not have seen all this, and He would not have listened to us as He has."

The woman afterwards bore a son, and called his name Samson,<sup>1</sup> and the lad grew great, and the EVER-LIVING blessed him, and the Mighty Spirit of the EVER-LIVING impelled him to the camp of Dan between Tzarah and Ashthal.

(B.C. 1141.) **Samson falls in Love with a Philistine Girl and marries her.**

But Samson descended to Thimnath, and saw a woman in Thimnath, a Philistine girl; so he returned and told his father and mother, and said, "I have seen a woman in Thimnath,

<sup>1</sup> "The Brilliant," in Hebrew.—F. F.

a Philistine girl, so I wish you to obtain her as a wife for me."

3 But his father and mother replied, "Is there not a girl related to you? or a woman in all your nation? that you should go and take a wife from the foul Philistines."

Samson, however, exclaimed to his father and mother, "Get her for me! for she is perfect in my eyes!"

4 For his father and mother did not know that it was given to him from the EVER-LIVING to seek a wife from the Philistines, although at that period the Philistines governed in Israel.

5 Consequently Samson and his father and mother descended to Thimnath. (Once formerly, when he had gone to the vineyards of Thimnath, a young lion had roared at his approach, and the Spirit of the EVER-LIVING had fallen upon him, and he had torn it in two like tearing a kid,—but had not told his father or his mother what he had done.)—

7 So they went down and spoke to the woman, who was perfect in the eyes

8 of Samson, and stayed some time for the marriage.—But he went aside

one day to look at the carcase of the lion, and observed a swarm of bees

9 in the skeleton, and honey, so he took some into his hand, and walked

along, and ate as he walked with his father and mother. Then he gave

them some, and they ate, but he did not tell them that he had taken the

honey from the skeleton of a lion.

### Samson's Feast and Riddle.

10 Afterwards when his father came down to see his wife, Samson made a feast, as young men are accustomed.

11 He had visitors also with him, and he chose thirty friends who were to

12 stay with him, and Samson said to them, "Let us agree together to ask

riddles. If you can guess mine in the seven days of the feast, and relate

13 it, I will give you thirty shirts and thirty suits of clothes! But if you

are not able to guess it for me, then you shall give me thirty shirts and

thirty suits of clothing!"

When they replied to him, "Tell your riddle, and we will listen!"

14 So he said to them;— "There came meat from the Eater; and from the Strong came sweetness."

And they were not able to guess

the riddle by the third day. But, 15 when the seventh day came, they said to Samson's wife, "Open your husband, and explain the riddle for us, or we will burn you, and destroy your father's house with fire! unless you tell it to us!"

Samson's wife consequently wept 16 to him, and said, "You hate me now, and do not love me,—you have not explained that riddle to me and my relatives!"

But he answered her, "I have not explained it to my father and mother,—so why should I explain it to you?"

She consequently wept over him 17 the seven days that the feast lasted, and when the seventh day came he explained it to her,—for she wore him out,—and she explained it to her relatives. So the men of the village 18 said to him at the end of the seventh day at sunset:—

"What is sweeter than honey? And what stronger than a lion?"

But he replied to them, "If you had not ploughed with my heifer, you would not have found out my riddle."

Then the spirit of enthusiasm came 19 upon him, and he went down to Ashkalon, and killed there thirty men,

and took their clothing, and gave the suits to the guessers of his riddle,—

but he was furious, and went off to the house of his father.

The wife of Samson, however, was 20 left with the companions who had accompanied him.

### Samson comes to fetch his Wife.

#### Her Father refuses him.

Afterwards when the time of wheat 15 harvest came Samson visited his wife with a goat's kid, and said, "I wish

to go to my wife's chamber." But her father would not allow him to

enter. Her father also remarked, 2 "I said to myself, he hates her. So

I have given her to your friend. Is not her younger sister handsomer

than she? I will give her to you instead of her!"

### (B.C. 1140.) Samson's Revenge. He fires the Philistines' Cornfields.

Samson, however, replied to him, 3 "I will be revenged this time on the Philistines for doing me wrong!"

and went and caught three hun- 4 dred foxes, and took torches and

5 tied their tails together, and fixed  
 a torch between the two tails, then  
 fired the torches and sent them  
 amongst the cornfields of the Philis-  
 6 tines, and burnt the shocks and stand-  
 ing corn, and the olive-yards. When  
 the Philistines enquired, "Who has  
 done this?" they were told, "Samson,  
 the son-in-law of the Thimnite, be-  
 cause he took his wife and gave her  
 to his companion." The Philistines  
 therefore went up and burnt her and  
 7 her father with fire. But Samson  
 said to them, "Because you have  
 done this, I will be revenged upon  
 8 you, and then I will cease!" So he  
 smote them hip and thigh with a  
 great slaughter. Then he went and  
 occupied a cavern in the precipice of  
 Aitan.

(B.C. 1140.) **The Philistines in Re-  
 venge plunder Judah, and demand  
 Samson, but he slaughters a  
 Thousand of them with the Jaw  
 of an Ass.**

9 The Philistines afterwards went up  
 and encamped in Judah, and ad-  
 10 vanced to Balkhi. When the men  
 of Judah asked "Why have you  
 advanced against us?" they replied  
 "You must hand over to us Samson  
 for us to do what we intend to him."  
 11 Three thousand men therefore went  
 from Judah to the cavern in the  
 precipice of Aitan, and said to Sam-  
 son, "Do you not know that the  
 Philistines govern us? Then why  
 have you done this to us?" When  
 he replied, "As they did to me, I  
 have done to them!"

12 But they answered him, "We have  
 come to bind you, and give you to  
 the hands of the Philistines."

Samson only said to them,  
 "Swear to me that you will not assail  
 me yourselves!"

13 So they replied to him saying, "We  
 will only bind you and deliver you to  
 their hands; and we will not kill  
 you." Then they bound him with  
 two new ropes and hoisted him down  
 14 from the cliff. But when they came  
 to Lekhi, and the Philistines shouted  
 at his approach, an enthusiasm fell  
 upon him and he smashed the  
 manacles that were upon his arms  
 like burnt flax, and snapped the cords  
 15 off his hands, and finding the fresh  
 jaw-bone of an ass, he put out his

hand and seized it, and killed a thou-  
 sand men with it! Then Samson 16  
 exclaimed;—

"With the jaw-bone of an ass,  
 I have made them asses!—  
 With the jaw-bone of an ass,  
 I've slain a thousand men!"

And as he ceased speaking he threw 17  
 the jaw-bone from his hand, and  
 named the place "Jaw-hill."<sup>1</sup>

**Samson's Exhaustion after the Fight.  
 His Prayer.**

Then he was terribly exhausted, 18  
 and cried to the EVER-LIVING, and  
 said, "You have given this great  
 victory to the hand of Your servant,  
 and now I shall die for thirst, or fall  
 by the hand of the uncircumcised."

Then GOD opened the well at 19  
 Balkhi, and water came from it, and  
 he drank and his spirit returned to  
 him, and he survived; therefore he  
 called its name "Prayer-well," which  
 is in Balkhi<sup>2</sup> to this day. He after- 20  
 wards judged in Israel during the  
 Philistine period, twenty years.

(B.C. 1139.) **Samson caught by a  
 Harlot at Gaza, but escapes.**

Samson once went to Gaza, and 16  
 saw a woman, a harlot, and went to  
 her. The Gazites said, "Samson 2  
 has come." So they surrounded and  
 laid an ambush for him all night at  
 the gate of the city, and waited all the  
 night, saying, "At dawn of day we  
 will kill him!"

But Samson lay down till midnight. 3  
 Then he arose at midnight and pulled  
 up the doors of the city gate with the  
 two posts, and the cross bar, and  
 placed them on his shoulders and  
 carried them to the top of the hill  
 that is opposite Hebron.

(B.C. 1138.) **Samson entangled by  
 the Harlot, Delilah of Shorek.**

And after this he loved a woman in 4  
 the vale of Shorek, and her name  
 was Delilah; so the lords of the Philis- 5  
 tines went to her, and said, "Pump  
 him, and find out in what his great  
 strength consists, and in what way  
 we can master and chain him to  
 destroy him, and we will each give  
 you one thousand one hundred  
 shekels."

<sup>1</sup> Ramath-lekhi, in Hebrew.—F. F.

<sup>2</sup> V. 19. Balkhi, "At the Jaw."—F. F.

**Delilah tries to betray Samson, but fails.**

6 Delilah consequently said to Samson, "Tell me, now, in what your strength consists? And in what way they could bind and destroy you?"

7 And Samson answered her, "If they bind me with seven wet ropes that have never been dried, I shall become feeble like an ordinary man."

8 So the lords of the Philistines brought to her seven wet ropes that had never been dried, and she bound him with them, while an ambush hid in her chamber. Then she exclaimed to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" but he snapped the ropes as he would snap a thread of tow burnt in the fire. Consequently his power was not discovered.

10 Therefore Delilah said to Samson, "I see you are laughing at me, and telling me lies! Tell me now how could I bind you?"

(B.C. 1127.) **Samson, however, deludes.**

11 So he replied to her, "If I am bound with fresh willows that have not been used in any work, I shall become feeble and be like a common man!"

12 Delilah accordingly took fresh willows, and bound him with them, and then exclaimed to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" (and an ambush was laid in the chamber), but he snapped them off his arms like a thread.

(B.C. 1121.) **Delilah continues to try and find the Secret of his Strength, to betray him, and succeeds,**

13 Delilah afterwards said to Samson, "So far you have laughed at me, and told me lies! Tell me, how can I bind you?" And he answered her, "If the seven plaits of my hair are woven in a loom!"

14 So she fastened them to the loom, and exclaimed to him, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" when he awoke from his sleep, and pulled up the pins of the loom with the web.

15 Then she exclaimed, "What! Do you say you love me, when your heart is not mine? These three times you have laughed at me, and not told me

in what your great strength consists!"

So when she had worn him out by talking every day, and worried and exhausted his life to death, he told her the whole of his heart, and said "A razor has never gone upon my head, for I was devoted to GOD from birth. If I were shaved, then my strength would leave me and I should become feeble like another man."

Then Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, and she sent and called the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up now, for he has told me all his heart!" The lords of the Philistines consequently went up to her, and they brought the money with them. And she laid him asleep on her lap, and called to a man who cut off the seven plaits of his head, and broke and degraded him,—and his strength went from him.

Then she exclaimed, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" and he awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go out, for once, for a time, and refresh myself," but he did not know that the EVER-LIVING had left him! The Philistines then seized him, and put out his eyes, and took him down to Gaza, and bound him in chains, and he ground at the mill in the prison with slaves.

But he awaited the growing up of the hair of his head that had been shaved.

(B.C. 1120.) **The Philistines make a Thanksgiving Feast to Dagon for Samson's being captured.**

Meantime the lords of the Philistines prepared to sacrifice a great sacrifice to Dagon, their god, and to triumph, for they said, "Our god has given Samson our enemy into our power!" They therefore showed him to the people and praised their god, for they said, "Our god has given our enemy into our power, who wasted our country, and who caused us much trouble." And when their hearts were delighted they exclaimed, "Bring Samson and let him make sport for us!"

**Samson's Prayer and Tragic Death.**

So they brought Samson from the Slaves' Prison, and he made sport before them, and they placed him

26 between the pillars. Then Samson said to the warder who had him by the hand, "Come near to me, and place me by the pillars upon which the building is supported, that I may rest myself on them."  
 27 Now the building was full of men and women, and all the lords of the Philistines were there, and about three thousand men and women looking at the sport of Samson.  
 28 Then Samson prayed to the EVER-LIVING, and said,  
 "EVER-LIVING GOD, remember me now, and strengthen me this time also, my GOD, and I shall be at once revenged for my two eyes, upon the  
 29 Philistines." Then Samson grasped the two central pillars upon which the building was supported,—one with his right and the other with his  
 30 left hand,—and Samson exclaimed, "Perish my life with the Philistines," and bent with might, and the building fell upon the lords, and upon all the people who were in it,—so the dead whom he killed with his death were more than he had killed in his life.  
 31 His relatives and all the house of his father descended, however, and carried him away, and buried him between Tzarah and Ashtaol in the tomb of Manoh his father. But he judged in Israel twenty years.

### ILLUSTRATIONS OF ISRAEL'S ANARCHY.

(From 1406 to 1120 B.C.)

#### Mikah and the Danites, and his Teraph. An Historical Poem.

17 There was a man in Mount  
 2 Ephraim, named Mikah, who said to his mother, "Those eleven hundred of silver which were taken from you, and about which you cursed and swore in my hearing,—I have your money; I stole it." And his mother replied, "The EVER-LIVING bless you, my son!"  
 3 So he returned the eleven hundred of money to his mother, when she said to him, "I had consecrated that money to the EVER-LIVING on account of my son, to make an image, and a shrine; but now I will give it to you!"  
 4 He, however, returned it to his mother. But he took two hundred

of the money, and gave it to a silversmith, who made an image and a shrine, and it was in the house of Mikah, and Mikah made it a House  
 5 of gods, and made an ephod and a teraph, and also set aside one of his sons, and he was the priest to it.

#### REFRAIN.

There was no king in Israel in 6  
 those days;—  
 Each did what was right in his  
 own eyes.

There was also a youth of Bethle- 7  
 hem-Judah, in the clan of Judah, but he was a Levite, who resided there. And the man went from the village of 8  
 Bethlehem-Judah to settle where he might find a home, and he came to Mount Ephraim, to the house of Mikah, in making his journey, when 9  
 Mikah asked him, "From where do you come?" And he answered "I am a Levite from Bethlehem-Judah, and I am going to settle in Ashur."  
 But Mikah said to him, "Stay 10  
 with me, as a father and a priest, and I will pay you ten silvers a year, and a suit of robes, and your board."  
 So the Levite consented, and the 11  
 Levite was content to settle with the man Mikah, and the youth became to him as one of his sons. Mikah 12  
 also appointed the Levite, and the young man became his priest, and lived in the house of Mikah. Con- 13  
 sequently Mikah said, "Now I know that the EVER-LIVING will prosper me, because I have got a Levite for a priest."

#### REFRAIN.

There was no king in Israel in 18  
 those days;—  
 Each did what was right in his  
 own eyes.

At that time the tribe of Dan was seeking itself a district for settlement, for it had not obtained until that period a district amongst the tribes of Israel. The Danites con- 2  
 sequently sent five men from their clan, all of them bold fellows, from Tzarah and Ashtaol, to examine the country and search it, and said to them, "Go, search the country." So they came to Mount Ephraim, to the house of Mikah, and lodged

3 there. While they were in the house of Mikah they recognised the voice of the young Levite, and were attracted by it, and said to him, "When did you come here? And what do you do here? and for how much?"

4 And he answered them, "Mikah does this and that for me, and hires me, and I am his priest."

5 When they replied to him, "Enquire, now, of GOD, and learn the result of the journey that we are going upon."

6 And the priest answered them, "Go in peace! The EVER-LIVING accompanies the way you are going!"

7 So the five men went and arrived at Lashah, and saw that the people inhabited it in security under the government of Zidon, quietly and securely, and there were no soldiers in the country. It was controlled and administered from Zidon, and they had no troubles for themselves.

8 When they returned to their relatives at Tzarah and Ashthaol, they

9 asked, "What about them?" When they replied, "Come on and let us assail them, for we have seen the country, and it is very beautiful. Go, you idlers, do not delay to march, and go to

10 seize the country;—for you will come to a quiet people, and a land of extensive forests, which GOD will give to your hands,—a place where there is no want of anything that is upon earth!"

11 Consequently from the clan of the Danites there marched from Tzarah and Ashthaol six hundred men, all of

12 them skilled warriors, and they advanced and encamped at Krith-Jarim in Judah,—therefore they called that place Dan's camp to this day. It is

13 behind Krith-Jarim. From there they crossed Mount Ephraim, and proceeded to the house of Mikah.

14 There the five men who had gone to spy the country of Lashah remarked to their companions, "Do you know that there is amongst these houses an ephod, and a teraphim, and an image, and a shrine,—so now you know what to do!"

15 They consequently turned aside, and came to the house of the young Levite, near the house of Mikah, and

16 wished him peace, while the six hundred men of the Danites armed with warlike weapons stood before the

17 door, and the five men who had been

to spy out the country entered and took the image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the shrine. But the priest asked "What are you doing?" When they answered him,

18 "Be quiet! Put your hand on your mouth, and go with us, and be our father and priest. Is it better for you to be priest to the family of one man, or to be priest to a tribe and clan in Israel?"

So the heart of the priest was satisfied, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the image, and went along with the army: who faced

20 about and marched, and placed the children and baggage, and precious things in front of them.

When they had proceeded to a distance from the house of Mikah, the people who were employed in Mikah's family, shouted and followed the Danites, and called to the Danites,

21 who turned on them and said to Mikah, "What is the matter with you, that you are shouting?"

And he answered, "You have stolen the god I made for myself, and the priest, and marched off!—so what have I left? And yet you ask me, 'What is the matter with you?'"

But the Danites replied to him;

22 "Don't let us hear your noise! For fear some rough fellows should rush out on you,—and take your life, and the lives of your family." Then the

23 Danites went along their way, and Mikah, seeing they were stronger than himself, faced about and returned to his own house.

Thus they stole what Mikah had made, and the priest who had come to him, and went to Lashah, to a people peaceable and quiet, and assailed them, and burnt their city with fire, and there was no deliverance, for

24 they were far from Zidon, and had no intercourse with any person. They afterwards settled in the vale of Beth-rekhob, where they built a town, and

25 called it Dan-town, after the name of their ancestor Dan, who was born to Israel, but the name of the place was formerly Lashah. The Danites also

26 set up for themselves the image, and Jonathan-ben-Ghersham-ben-Masheh, he and his sons, were priests to the tribe of Dan until the time of removing from the country, and they

27 worshipped the image that Mikah made all the period that the House of GOD was at Shiloh.

## THE CRIME OF GIBEAH: AN HISTORICAL POEM.

(The date is uncertain when the crime was committed.—F. F.)

- 19 It was also in the period when there was no king in Israel, that a certain Levite resided at the back of Mount Ephraim, and he married a woman of Bethlehem-Judah, as a second wife, 2 but this second wife deserted him and went from him to the house of her father at Bethlehem-Judah, and was there for a period of four months. 3 Then her husband arose and went after her to speak to her heart, to cause her to return and attend him. So he mounted his ass and went to the house of her father, and saw the girl's father, who was glad to meet 4 him. And his father-in-law, the father of the girl, comforted him, and he stayed with him three days, and they ate and drank, and rested there. 5 When the fourth day came, they got up in the morning, and he arose to depart, but the father of the girl, his father-in-law, said, "Refresh your heart with a little bread, and go after 6 that." So he stayed and both of them ate together and drank. Then the father of the girl said to the man, "Be content now, and stay and let 7 your heart enjoy itself." But the man arose to go. However his father-in-law pressed him, so he sat down 8 and stayed there. However he got up on the morning of the fifth day to go, when the father of the girl said, "Comfort your heart, and delay till the turn of the day." So they ate and 9 drank. Then the man arose to go, he and his wife, and servant, but his father-in-law, the father of the girl, said, "See now the day is stretching towards dusk. Lodge now here pleasantly to-day. Rest, then, and enliven your heart, and get up to-morrow morning for your journey and go to your own home."
- 10 The man, however, was unwilling to stay, but arose and went, and arrived opposite to Jebus—that is Jerusalem,—where his saddled asses broke down with him and his wife, 11 when they were near Jebus, and the day was nearly ended, so the attendant said to his master, "Let us go, now, and turn into this city of the Jebusi, and lodge there."
- 12 But his master said to him, "I will not turn to a town of foreigners where there are none of the Children of Israel. Let us pass over to Gibeah. Therefore," he added to the lad, 13 "come, let us enter one of these places, for we will lodge in Gibeah, or in Rama."
- So they passed on and marched 14 and came to the south side of Gibeah of Benjamin, and they turned towards 15 it to go and lodge in Gibeah, and went and sat in the square of the town, but no person invited them to his house to lodge.
- At last an old man came from his 16 work in the fields, at dusk—a man from Mount Ephraim, who was a resident in Gibeah—but his wife was a native of Benjamin. Raising his 17 eyes he saw the man at a distance in the square of the town, and the old man said, "Where do you go? and whence do you come?"
- And they replied to him, "We are 18 crossing from Bethlehem-Judah to the back of Mount Ephraim, from where I am, but I came to Bethlehem-Judah, and I am returning to the House of the EVER-LIVING. But no man has 19 invited me to his house, although we have straw and provender for our asses, and food and wine for myself and my waiting woman and lad. We want nothing at all except shelter."
- Then the old man said; "Peace be 20 with you! Bring your asses with you to me! Only do not lodge in the street." So he took them to his house, 21 and foddered the asses, and washed their feet, and they ate and drank.
- They were cheering their hearts 22 when the men of the town, sons of Belial, surrounded the house, knocked at the doors, and said to the master of the house, the old man, "Bring out the man who has come to your house, that we may outrage him!"
- But the master of the house went 23 out to them, and said, "No, my friends! Do not inflict wrong upon me, I pray,—since this man has come to my house, do not commit this wickedness! I have two maiden 24 daughters, and his servant-wife, I will bring them out to you, and you



can outrage them,—and do to them what pleases you! But to this man do not such a loathsome thing.”

25 But the men would not listen to him; so the man seized his servant-wife, and sent her out to them outside, and they outraged her, and maltreated her all the night, until daybreak, but went away from her at  
26 the departure of darkness. Then at the arrival of dawn the woman came,—and fell before the doorway of the man’s house, where she had been outraged until daylight.

27 Her master also arose at daybreak and opened the doors of the house, and came out to proceed on his journey and saw the woman, his servant-wife, fallen before the house with her hands upon the doorstep,  
28 and he said to her, “Get up and come along!” But she spoke not. Then he brought the ass and lifted the woman up, and went to his place,  
29 and entered his house, where he took a knife, and seized his servant-wife and divided her corpse into twelve pieces and sent to all the  
30 countries of Israel, and all who saw it said, “There has not been, nor has there been seen anything like this from the time the Children of Israel came up from the Mitzeraim until this day! Apply yourselves to it,—consult, and speak!”

20 All the Children of Israel then went out and assembled the Parliament unanimously from Dan to Beersheba, and the country of Gilad, to the  
2 EVER-LIVING at Mizpah, where the Chiefs of the people of all the tribes of Israel presented themselves as an assembly of the people before GOD, with four hundred thousand men, disciplined soldiers.

3 The Benjaminites, however, heard that the Children of Israel had gone up to Mizpah where the Children of Israel asked, “Who has committed this crime?” And the Levite, the  
4 husband of the woman who had been murdered, answered, and said, “I and my servant-wife came to Gibeah  
5 of Benjamin to lodge, when the blackguards of Gibeah rose upon me, and surrounded the house at night, purposing to murder me, and they  
6 outraged my wife until she died. So I took my wife and cut her to pieces, and sent her to all the land possessed by Israel, because they had com-  
7 mitted such a crime in Israel. Now,

Sons of Israel, apply to the matter—and consult about it!”

Then all the Parliament arose as 8 one man and exclaimed, “Let no man go to his home, nor any man return to his house, for this is what 9 shall be done to Gibeah,—we will assail it by lot, and we will select ten 10 men in a hundred, from every tribe of Israel, and a hundred from a thousand, and a thousand from ten thousand, as a provisional draft of the army for action, and send them against Gibeah of Benjamin, because of the great crime they have committed in Israel, and all the people 11 of Israel shall approach the town as if united in one man.”

However, the tribes of Israel sent 12 officers to all the tribe of Benjamin to enquire;—“What crime is this which has occurred amongst you? Therefore, now, give up those men, 13 sons of Belial, who are in Gibeah, and we will execute them, and burn out the crime from Israel.”

The Benjaminites, however, would not listen to the voice of their countrymen the Children of Israel, but 14 assembled from their villages to Gibeah, to prepare for war with the Children of Israel, and the Benjamin- 15 ites at that period could collect from their towns twenty-six thousand disciplined men, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah,—and they amounted to seven hundred chosen men. These 16 seven hundred skilful men were more than a numerous force. All of them were both-handed at slinging stones to a hair’s breadth, and never missed.

But Israel stood up, without 17 Benjamin, four hundred thousand men, all of them disciplined soldiers, men of war, and they arose and 18 advanced to Bethel, and enquired of GOD—where the Children of Israel asked, “Who of us shall go up to open the war with the Benjaminites?” When the LORD replied, “Judah shall open it.”

The Children of Israel accordingly 19 arose at dawn and camped before Gibeah, and the leader of Israel 20 advanced to fight with Benjamin, and the Israelites proceeded from the camp towards Gibeah. But the 21 Benjaminites came out from Gibeah, and left Israel that day twenty-two thousand men on the ground. The 22 army of the men of Israel, however, were bold, and continued to prosecute

the war from the spot they had  
 23 advanced to on the first day. The  
 Children of Israel also went up and  
 wept before the EVER-LIVING until  
 the evening, and enquired of the  
 EVER-LIVING asking, "Shall we con-  
 tinue to pursue the war with the  
 Benjaminites, our countrymen?"  
 And the EVER-LIVING replied, "Go  
 up against them."

24 The Israelites consequently ap-  
 proached the Benjaminites on the  
 25 second day, and Benjamin came out  
 to meet them, from Gibeah, and they  
 destroyed of the Children of Israel on  
 the field eighteen thousand men, all  
 26 of whom were trained soldiers.

So all the Israelites therefore went  
 up, and all the army came to Bethel,  
 and they wept and sat there before  
 27 the EVER-LIVING. The Children of  
 Israel also enquired of the EVER-  
 LIVING, and placed the Ark of the  
 28 Covenant of GOD at their right hand,  
 and Phinehas, a descendant of Aliazer-  
 ben-Aaron stood, before it on the right  
 hand of them, and said, "Continue  
 still to go to war with the Benjaminites  
 your countrymen, until defeated. The  
 EVER-LIVING also says, 'Go up! for  
 29 to-morrow I will give them into  
 your power.' But Israel must place  
 ambushes around Gibeah."

30 So the Children of Israel advanced  
 against the Benjaminites for the third  
 time, and they approached to Gibeah  
 31 step by step, and the Benjaminites  
 came out to meet the force, which  
 drew off from the town, and waited  
 for the attack from the victorious  
 army step by step to the highway  
 which leads to the ascent of Bethel,  
 and adjoins to the field of Gibeah,—  
 losing about thirty men of Israel.

32 Then the Benjaminites said, "We are  
 driving them before us as formerly."  
 But the Children of Israel said, "We  
 will retreat and draw them from the  
 33 town to the highway, then let all the  
 army of Israel arise from their place,  
 and advance from Bal-Thamar, and  
 the ambush of Israel, placed at the  
 34 locality of the hill-moorland, must  
 advance from the south to Gibeah  
 with twelve thousand men, the  
 bravest of all Israel, and fight boldly  
 and they will not know that the  
 stroke of their crime is upon them."

35 So the EVER-LIVING discomfited the  
 Benjaminites before Israel, and the  
 Israelites disabled on that day twenty-  
 five thousand one hundred men of

Benjamin, all disciplined soldiers, for 36  
 the Benjaminites fancied that they  
 retreated, and that the Israelites gave  
 way to the Benjaminites; but those  
 relied upon the ambush which they  
 had placed on the hill, for the ambus- 37  
 cade kept quiet and lay down upon  
 the hill until they rushed and attacked  
 the whole town with the sword; and 38  
 it had been arranged with the men of  
 Israel by the Commander of Israel, if  
 the ambush succeeded, to send up a  
 cloud of smoke from the town. Con- 39  
 sequently the Israelites retreated to  
 the camp, and the Benjaminites,  
 who were encouraged to the attack,  
 wounded about thirty of the Israelites,  
 "for," they said, "they certainly fly  
 before us, as in the former battles,"  
 so they continued their retreat until 40  
 the ascent from the town of the pillar  
 of smoke. Then Benjamin faced  
 round, and saw it ascending to the  
 sky from all the town. The Com- 41  
 mander of Israel also turned front,  
 and the Benjaminites were terrified,  
 for they saw the punishment of their  
 crime was upon them, and turned 42  
 from the face of the Israelites to the  
 way of the desert, and were defeated  
 in the battle, and those who were in  
 the town were destroyed in the midst  
 of it. But the Benjaminites turned their 43  
 flight from the level way to the refuge  
 of the hills on the west, and there fell  
 of Benjamin eighteen thousand men,  
 all of them brave fellows. Thence 44  
 they turned and fled towards the  
 desert, to the cliffs of Rimon, and  
 five thousand men went up to the  
 cliffs. But they were followed to  
 Gidim, and two thousand of them  
 slain. Thus all of Benjamin who 45  
 fell on that day were twenty-five  
 thousand men, disciplined soldiers,  
 all of them strong men. But there 46  
 turned and fled to the desert, to the  
 cliff of Rimon, six hundred men, and  
 they held the cliff of Rimon four  
 months.

Then the Israelites turned upon 48  
 the Benjaminites and they struck with  
 the sword thoroughly from man to  
 beast, and every town they captured  
 they set on fire.

Then all Israel swore in Mitzpah 21  
 saying, "No man among us shall give  
 his daughter as a wife to Benjamin."

Afterwards all the people came to 2  
 Bethel, and sat there before the EVER-  
 LIVING until the evening, and lifted up  
 their voice and wept a great weeping,

3 and asked "Why, EVER-LIVING GOD  
of Israel, has this come to Israel, to  
destroy to-day one of the tribes of  
4 Israel?" But when next day came  
the people got up and built an altar,  
and offered a burnt offering and peace  
offerings.  
5 Then the children of Israel asked,  
"Who has not come up to the  
Assembly of all the tribes of Israel  
before the EVER-LIVING, for a great  
oath has been sworn that whoever  
came not up to the EVER-LIVING at  
Mitzpah shall be put to death."  
6 The Children of Israel also grieved  
for Benjamin their brother, and said,  
"To-day a tribe has been blotted  
7 from Israel. What shall we do for  
them to provide them wives, since we  
have sworn not to give them a supply  
8 of wives?" So they asked, "Is there  
a single tribe of Israel which has not  
come up to the EVER-LIVING at  
Mitzpah?" and found that no man  
had come to the camp from Jabesh-  
9 Gilad, to the Assembly. They there-  
fore reviewed the army, and did not  
find there a Jabeshite from Jabesh-  
10 Gilad. The Parliament consequently  
sent there twelve thousand chosen  
men, and commanded them saying,  
"Go and assail the Jabeshites of  
Jabesh-Gilad with the sword, both  
11 men and boys. But act in this way;—  
You shall destroy every male and  
every female who has had connection  
12 with a man." But they found of the  
population of Jabesh four hundred  
girls, maidens, who had not known  
man by connection with a male, and  
they brought them to the camp at  
Shiloh, which is in the land of Canan.  
13 Then all the Parliament sent and  
addressed the Benjaminites who were  
on the cliff of Rimon, and proclaimed  
14 peace with them. So the Benjaminites  
returned, and they gave them the  
women who came from Jabesh-Gilad,  
but they were not found sufficient.  
15 The people therefore grieved for  
Benjamin, because the EVER-LIVING  
had made a breach in the tribes of  
Israel.  
16 The Lords of the Parliament also  
said, "What shall we do to supply  
wives, for we have destroyed the  
17 women of Benjamin?" So they said

"Let Benjamin seize upon the un-  
willing rather than a tribe should be  
blotted from Israel, for we are not 18  
able to give them wives from our  
daughters, because the Children of  
Israel have sworn, imposing a curse  
on whoever gives a wife to Benjamin."

They then made a feast of several 19  
days to the EVER-LIVING in Shiloh,  
which is at the north of Bethel  
towards the sun-rise, on the highway  
leading up from Bethel to Shekem,  
and near to Libnah, and they also 20  
instructed the Benjaminites, saying;—  
"Go and hide yourselves in the vine- 21  
yards and watch, and when you see  
the girls come out from Shiloh to dance  
in the dances, then come out from the  
vineyards, and each of you catch a  
wife for himself from the girls of  
Shiloh, and take them to the country  
of Benjamin. And if their fathers 22  
should come, or their brothers, to com-  
plain to us, we will command them to  
be lenient with you for taking each  
one his wife by force, because we  
cannot give to you as at ordinary  
times."

The Benjaminites accordingly did 23  
so, and carried off wives to the number  
of those deficient, who stole, and went  
off, and returned to their estates,  
where they rebuilt their villages and  
settled in them. The Israelites also 24  
marched from there at the same time  
to their tribes and clans, so everyone  
came from there to his home.

REFRAIN.

In those days there was no king in 25  
Israel;  
Every man did what was right in  
his own eyes.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> These two beautiful epics, regarded as  
narrative poems, were probably the produc-  
tion of Isaiah himself, founded upon traditions  
of the events, or from historical records long  
since lost; and were intended to show his  
corrupted and party-riven countrymen the  
horrors and crimes produced by disregard to  
religion and political unity. I especially con-  
clude so from the insistence upon the doctrine  
of a Monarchy being the best security for  
social laws and safeguard of individual life.  
The poet has made no attempt to fix any  
definite dates to them, and I consequently do  
not attempt it.—FERRAR FENTON.