

# HISTORY OF THE JEWS

By Josephus

Book Five

CONTAINING THE INTERVAL OF FOUR HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SIX YEARS.

FROM THE DEATH OF MOSES TO THE DEATH OF ELI.

## CHAPTER ONE

HOW JOSHUA, THE COMMANDER OF THE HEBREWS, MADE WAR WITH THE CANAANITES, AND OVERCAME THEM, AND DESTROYED THEM, AND DIVIDED THEIR LAND BY LOT TO THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL.

When Moses was taken away from among men, in the manner already described, and when all the solemnities belonging to the mourning for him were finished, and the sorrow for him was over, Joshua commanded the multitude to get themselves ready for an expedition. He also sent spies to Jericho to discover what forces they had, and what were their intentions; but he put his camp in order, as intending soon to pass over Jordan at a proper season. And calling to him the rulers of the tribe of Reuben, and the governors of the tribe of Gad,

and [the half tribe of] Manasseh, for half of this tribe had been permitted to have their habitation in the country of the Amorites, which was the seventh part of the land of Canaan, he put them in mind what they had promised Moses; and he exhorted them that, for the sake of the care that Moses had taken of them who had never been weary of taking pains for them no, not when he was dying, and for the sake of the public welfare, they would prepare themselves, and readily perform what they had promised; so he took fifty thousand of them who followed him, and he marched from Abila to Jordan, sixty furlongs.

Now when he had pitched his camp, the spies came to him immediately, well acquainted with the whole state of the Canaanites; for at first, before they were at all discovered, they took a full view of the city of Jericho without disturbance, and saw which parts of the walls were strong, and which parts were otherwise, and indeed insecure, and which of the gates were so weak as might afford an entrance to their army. Now those that met them took no notice of them when they saw them, and supposed they were only strangers, who used to be very curious in observing everything in the city, and did not take them for enemies; but at even they retired to a certain inn that was near to the wall, whither they went to eat their supper; which supper when they had done, and were considering how to get away, information was given to the king as he was at supper, that there were some persons come from the Hebrews' camp to view the city as spies, and that they were in the inn kept by Rahab, and were very solicitous that they might not be discovered. So he sent immediately some to

them, and commanded to catch them, and bring them to him, that he might examine them by torture, and learn what their business was there. As soon as Rahab understood that these messengers were coming, she hid the spies under stalks of flax, which were laid to dry on the top of her house; and said to the messengers that were sent by the king, that certain unknown strangers had supped with her a little before sun-setting, and were gone away, who might easily be taken, if they were any terror to the city, or likely to bring any danger to the king. So these messengers being thus deluded by the woman, and suspecting no imposition, went their ways, without so much as searching the inn; but they immediately pursued them along those roads which they most probably supposed them to have gone, and those particularly which led to the river, but could hear no tidings of them; so they left off the pains of any further pursuit. But when the tumult was over, Rahab brought the men down, and desired them as soon as they should have obtained possession of the land of Canaan, when it would be in their power to make her amends for her preservation of them, to remember what danger she had undergone for their sakes; for that if she had been caught concealing them, she could not have escaped a terrible destruction, she and all her family with her, and so bid them go home; and desired them to swear to her to preserve her and her family when they should take the city, and destroy all its inhabitants, as they had decreed to do; for so far she said she had been assured by those Divine miracles of which she had been informed. So these spies acknowledged that they owed her thanks for what she had done already, and withal swore to

requite her kindness, not only in words, but in deeds. But they gave her this advice, That when she should perceive that the city was about to be taken, she should put her goods, and all her family, by way of security, in her inn, and to hang out scarlet threads before her doors, [or windows,] that the commander of the Hebrews might know her house, and take care to do her no harm; for, said they, we will inform him of this matter, because of the concern thou hast had to preserve us: but if any one of thy family fall in the battle, do not thou blame us; and we beseech that God, by whom we have sworn, not then to be displeased with us, as though we had broken our oaths. So these men, when they had made this agreement, went away, letting themselves down by a rope from the wall, and escaped, and came and told their own people whatsoever they had done in their journey to this city. Joshua also told Eleazar the high priest, and the senate, what the spies had sworn to Rahab, who continued what had been sworn.

Now while Joshua, the commander, was in fear about their passing over Jordan, for the river ran with a strong current, and could not be passed over with bridges, for there never had been bridges laid over it hitherto; and while he suspected, that if he should attempt to make a bridge, that their enemies would not afford him thee to perfect it, and for ferry-boats they had none, - God promised so to dispose of the river, that they might pass over it, and that by taking away the main part of its waters. So Joshua, after two days, caused the army and the whole multitude to pass over in the manner following: - The priests went first of all, having the ark with

them; then went the Levites bearing the tabernacle and the vessels which belonged to the sacrifices; after which the entire multitude followed, according to their tribes, having their children and their wives in the midst of them, as being afraid for them, lest they should be borne away by the stream. But as soon as the priests had entered the river first, it appeared fordable, the depth of the water being restrained and the sand appearing at the bottom, because the current was neither so strong nor so swift as to carry it away by its force; so they all passed over the river without fear, finding it to be in the very same state as God had foretold he would put it in; but the priests stood still in the midst of the river till the multitude should be passed over, and should get to the shore in safety; and when all were gone over, the priests came out also, and permitted the current to run freely as it used to do before. Accordingly the river, as soon as the Hebrews were come out of it, arose again presently, and came to its own proper magnitude as before.

So the Hebrews went on farther fifty furlongs, and pitched their camp at the distance of ten furlongs from Jericho; but Joshua built an altar of those stones which all the heads of the tribes, at the command of the prophets, had taken out of the deep, to be afterwards a memorial of the division of the stream of this river, and upon it offered sacrifice to God; and in that place celebrated the passover, and had great plenty of all the things which they wanted hitherto; for they reaped the corn of the Canaanites, which was now ripe, and took other things as prey; for then

it was that their former food, which was manna, and of which they had eaten forty years, failed them.

Now while the Israelites did this, and the Canaanites did not attack them, but kept themselves quiet within their own walls, Joshua resolved to besiege them; so on the first day of the feast [of the passover], the priests carried the ark round about, with some part of the armed men to be a guard to it. These priests went forward, blowing with their seven trumpets; and exhorted the army to be of good courage, and went round about the city, with the senate following them; and when the priests had only blown with the trumpets, for they did nothing more at all, they returned to the camp. And when they had done this for six days, on the seventh Joshua gathered the armed men and all the people together, and told them these good tidings, That the city should now be taken, since God would on that day give it them, by the falling down of the walls, and this of their own accord, and without their labor. However, he charged them to kill every one they should take, and not to abstain from the slaughter of their enemies, either for weariness or for pity, and not to fall on the spoil, and be thereby diverted from pursuing their enemies as they ran away; but to destroy all the animals, and to take nothing for their own peculiar advantage. He commanded them also to bring together all the silver and gold, that it might be set apart as first-fruits unto God out of this glorious exploit, as having gotten them from the city they first took; only that they should save Rahab and her kindred alive, because of the oath which the

spies had sworn to her.

When he had said this, and had set his army in order, he brought it against the city: so they went round the city again, the ark going before them, and the priests encouraging the people to be zealous in the work; and when they had gone round it seven times, and had stood still a little, the wall fell down, while no instruments of war, nor any other force, was applied to it by the Hebrews.

So they entered into Jericho, and slew all the men that were therein, while they were affrighted at the surprising overthrow of the walls, and their courage was become useless, and they were not able to defend themselves; so they were slain, and their throats cut, some in the ways, and others as caught in their houses; nothing afforded them assistance, but they all perished, even to the women and the children; and the city was filled with dead bodies, and not one person escaped. They also burnt the whole city, and the country about it; but they saved alive Rahab, with her family, who had fled to her inn. And when she was brought to him, Joshua owned to her that they owed her thanks for her preservation of the spies: so he said he would not appear to be behind her in his benefaction to her; whereupon he gave her certain lands immediately, and had her in great esteem ever afterwards.

And if any part of the city escaped the fire, he overthrew it from the foundation; and he denounced a curse against its inhabitants, if any should desire to rebuild it; how, upon his laying the foundation of the walls, he should be deprived of

his eldest son; and upon finishing it, he should lose his youngest son. But what happened hereupon we shall speak of hereafter.

Now there was an immense quantity of silver and gold, and besides those of brass also, that was heaped together out of the city when it was taken, no one transgressing the decree, nor purloining for their own peculiar advantage; which spoils Joshua delivered to the priests, to be laid up among their treasures. And thus did Jericho perish.

But there was one Achar, the son [of Charmi, the son] of Zebedias, of the tribe of Judah, who finding a royal garment woven entirely of gold, and a piece of gold that weighed two hundred shekels; and thinking it a very hard case, that what spoils he, by running some hazard, had found, he must give away, and offer it to God, who stood in no need of it, while he that wanted it must go without it, - made a deep ditch in his own tent, and laid them up therein, as supposing he should not only be concealed from his fellow soldiers, but from God himself also.

Now the place where Joshua pitched his camp was called Gilgal, which denotes liberty; for since now they had passed over Jordan, they looked on themselves as freed from the miseries which they had undergone from the Egyptians, and in the wilderness.

Now, a few days after the calamity that befell Jericho, Joshua sent three thousand armed men to take Ai, a city situate above Jericho; but, upon



the sight of the people of Ai, with them they were driven back, and lost thirty-six of their men. When this was told the Israelites, it made them very sad, and exceeding disconsolate, not so much because of the relation the men that were destroyed bare to them, though those that were destroyed were all good men, and deserved their esteem, as by the despair it occasioned; for while they believed that they were already, in effect, in possession of the land, and should bring back the army out of the battles without loss, as God had promised beforehand, they now saw unexpectedly their enemies bold with success; so they put sackcloth over their garments, and continued in tears and lamentation all the day, without the least inquiry after food, but laid what had happened greatly to heart.

When Joshua saw the army so much afflicted, and possessed with forebodings of evil as to their whole expedition, he used freedom with God, and said, "We are not come thus far out of any rashness of our own, as though we thought ourselves able to subdue this land with our own weapons, but at the instigation of Moses thy servant for this purpose, because thou hast promised us, by many signs, that thou wouldst give us this land for a possession, and that thou wouldst make our army always superior in war to our enemies, and accordingly some success has already attended upon us agreeably to thy promises; but because we have now unexpectedly been foiled, and have lost some men out of our army, we are grieved at it, as fearing what thou hast promised us, and what Moses foretold us, cannot be depended on by us; and our future

expectation troubles us the more, because we have met with such a disaster in this our first attempt. But do thou, O Lord, free us from these suspicions, for thou art able to find a cure for these disorders, by giving us victory, which will both take away the grief we are in at present, and prevent our distrust as to what is to come."

These intercessions Joshua put up to God, as he lay prostrate on his face: whereupon God answered him, That he should rise up, and purify his host from the pollution that had got into it; that "things consecrated to me have been impudently stolen from me," and that "this has been the occasion why this defeat had happened to them;" and that when they should search out and punish the offender, he would ever take care they should have the victory over their enemies. This Joshua told the people; and calling for Eleazar the high priest, and the men in authority, he cast lots, tribe by tribe; and when the lot showed that this wicked action was done by one of the tribe of Judah, he then again proposed the lot to the several families thereto belonging; so the truth of this wicked action was found to belong to the family of Zachar; and when the inquiry was made man by man, they took Achar, who, upon God's reducing him to a terrible extremity, could not deny the fact: so he confessed the theft, and produced what he had taken in the midst of them, whereupon he was immediately put to death; and attained no more than to be buried in the night in a disgraceful manner, and such as was suitable to a condemned malefactor.

When Joshua had thus purified the host, he led

them against Ai: and having by night laid an ambush round about the city, he attacked the enemies as soon as it was day; but as they advanced boldly against the Israelites, because of their former victory, he made them believe he retired, and by that means drew them a great way from the city, they still supposing that they were pursuing their enemies, and despised them, as though the case had been the same with that in the former battle; after which Joshua ordered his forces to turn about, and placed them against their front. He then made the signals agreed upon to those that lay in ambush, and so excited them to fight; so they ran suddenly into the city, the inhabitants being upon the walls, nay, others of them being in perplexity, and coming to see those that were without the gates. Accordingly, these men took the city, and slew all that they met with; but Joshua forced those that came against him to come to a close fight, and discomfited them, and made them run away; and when they were driven towards the city, and thought it had not been touched, as soon as they saw it was taken, and perceived it was burnt, with their wives and children, they wandered about in the fields in a scattered condition, and were no way able to defend themselves, because they had none to support them. Now when this calamity was come upon the men of Ai, there were a great number of children, and women, and servants, and an immense quantity of other furniture. The Hebrews also took herds of cattle, and a great deal of money, for this was a rich country. So when Joshua came to Gilgal, he divided all these spoils among the soldiers.

But the Gibeonites, who inhabited very near to Jerusalem, when they saw what miseries had happened to the inhabitants of Jericho; and to those of Ai, and suspected that the like sore calamity would come as far as themselves, they did not think fit to ask for mercy of Joshua; for they supposed they should find little mercy from him, who made war that he might entirely destroy the nation of the Canaanites; but they invited the people of Cephirah and Kiriathjearim, who were their neighbors, to join in league with them; and told them that neither could they themselves avoid the danger they were all in, if the Israelites should prevent them, and seize upon them: so when they had persuaded them, they resolved to endeavor to escape the forces of the Israelites.

Accordingly, upon their agreement to what they proposed, they sent ambassadors to Joshua to make a league of friendship with him, and those such of the citizens as were best approved of, and most capable of doing what was most advantageous to the multitude. Now these ambassadors thought it dangerous to confess themselves to be Canaanites, but thought they might by this contrivance avoid the danger, namely, by saying that they bare no relation to the Canaanites at all, but dwelt at a very great distance from them: and they said further, that they came a long way, on account of the reputation he had gained for his virtue; and as a mark of the truth of what they said, they showed him the habit they were in, for that their clothes were new when they came out, but were greatly worn by the length of the journey they had been on their journey; for indeed they took torn garments, on purpose that they might make him believe so. So they stood in the midst of the

people, and said that they were sent by the people of Gibeon, and of the circumjacent cities, which were very remote from the land where they now were, to make such a league of friendship with them, and this on such conditions as were customary among their forefathers; for when they understood that, by the favor of God, and his gift to them, they were to have the possession of the land of Canaan bestowed upon them, they said that they were very glad to hear it, and desired to be admitted into the number of their citizens. Thus did these ambassadors speak; and showing them the marks of their long journey, they entreated the Hebrews to make a league of friendship with them. Accordingly Joshua, believing what they said, that they were not of the nation of the Canaanites, entered into friendship with them; and Eleazar the high priest, with the senate, swore to them that they would esteem them their friends and associates, and would attempt nothing that should be unfair against them, the multitude also assenting to the oaths that were made to them. So these men, having obtained what they desired, by deceiving the Israelites, went home: but when Joshua led his army to the country at the bottom of the mountains of this part of Canaan, he understood that the Gibeonites dwelt not far from Jerusalem, and that they were of the stock of the Canaanites; so he sent for their governors, and reproached them with the cheat they had put upon him; but they alleged, on their own behalf, that they had no other way to save themselves but that, and were therefore forced to have recourse to it. So he called for Eleazar the high priest, and for the senate, who thought it right to make them public servants, that they might not break the

oath they had made to them; and they ordained them to be so. And this was the method by which these men found safety and security under the calamity that was ready to overtake them.

But the king of Jerusalem took it to heart that the Gibeonites had gone over to Joshua; so he called upon the kings of the neighboring nations to join together, and make war against them. Now when the Gibeonites saw these kings, which were four, besides the king of Jerusalem, and perceived that they had pitched their camp at a certain fountain not far from their city, and were getting ready for the siege of it, they called upon Joshua to assist them; for such was their case, as to expect to be destroyed by these Canaanites, but to suppose they should be saved by those that came for the destruction of the Canaanites, because of the league of friendship that was between them. Accordingly, Joshua made haste with his whole army to assist them, and marching day and night, in the morning he fell upon the enemies as they were going up to the siege; and when he had discomfited them, he followed them, and pursued them down the descent of the hills. The place is called Bethhoron; where he also understood that God assisted him, which he declared by thunder and thunderbolts, as also by the falling of hail larger than usual. Moreover, it happened that the day was lengthened that the night might not come on too soon, and be an obstruction to the zeal of the Hebrews in pursuing their enemies; insomuch that Joshua took the kings, who were hidden in a certain cave at Makkedah, and put them to death. Now, that the day was lengthened at this time, and was longer than ordinary, is expressed in the

books laid up in the temple.

These kings which made war with, and were ready to fight the Gibeonites, being thus overthrown, Joshua returned again to the mountainous parts of Canaan; and when he had made a great slaughter of the people there, and took their prey, he came to the camp at Gilgal. And now there went a great fame abroad among the neighboring people of the courage of the Hebrews; and those that heard what a number of men were destroyed, were greatly affrighted at it: so the kings that lived about Mount Libanus, who were Canaanites, and those Canaanites that dwelt in the plain country, with auxiliaries out of the land of the Philistines, pitched their camp at Beroth, a city of the Upper Galilee, not far from Cadesh, which is itself also a place in Galilee. Now the number of the whole army was three hundred thousand armed footmen, and ten thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand chariots; so that the multitude of the enemies affrighted both Joshua himself and the Israelites; and they, instead of being full of hopes of good success, were superstitiously timorous, with the great terror with which they were stricken. Whereupon God upbraided them with the fear they were in, and asked them whether they desired a greater help than he could afford them; and promised them that they should overcome their enemies; and withal charged them to make their enemies' horses useless, and to burn their chariots. So Joshua became full of courage upon these promises of God, and went out suddenly against the enemies; and after five days' march he came upon them, and joined battle with them, and there was a terrible fight, and such a number were

slain as could not be believed by those that heard it. He also went on in the pursuit a great way, and destroyed the entire army of the enemies, few only excepted, and all the kings fell in the battle; insomuch, that when there wanted men to be killed, Joshua slew their horses, and burnt their chariots and passed all over their country without opposition, no one daring to meet him in battle; but he still went on, taking their cities by siege, and again killing whatever he took.

The fifth year was now past, and there was not one of the Canaanites remained any longer, excepting some that had retired to places of great strength. So Joshua removed his camp to the mountainous country, and placed the tabernacle in the city of Shiloh, for that seemed a fit place for it, because of the beauty of its situation, until such time as their affairs would permit them to build a temple; and from thence he went to Shechem, together with all the people, and raised an altar where Moses had beforehand directed; then did he divide the army, and placed one half of them on Mount Gerizzim, and the other half on Mount Ebal, on which mountain the altar was; he also placed there the tribe of Levi, and the priests. And when they had sacrificed, and denounced the [blessings and the] curses, and had left them engraven upon the altar, they returned to Shiloh.

And now Joshua was old, and saw that the cities of the Canaanites were not easily to be taken, not only because they were situate in such strong places, but because of the strength of the walls themselves, which being built round about, the



natural strength of the places on which the cities stood, seemed capable of repelling their enemies from besieging them, and of making those enemies despair of taking them; for when the Canaanites had learned that the Israelites came out of Egypt in order to destroy them, they were busy all that time in making their cities strong. So he gathered the people together to a congregation at Shiloh; and when they, with great zeal and haste, were come thither, he observed to them what prosperous successes they had already had, and what glorious things had been done, and those such as were worthy of that God who enabled them to do those things, and worthy of the virtue of those laws which they followed. He took notice also, that thirty-one of those kings that ventured to give them battle were overcome, and every army, how great soever it were, that confided in their own power, and fought with them, was utterly destroyed; so that not so much as any of their posterity remained. And as for the cities, since some of them were taken, but the others must be taken in length of time, by long sieges, both on account of the strength of their walls, and of the confidence the inhabitants had in them thereby, he thought it reasonable that those tribes that came along with them from beyond Jordan, and had partaken of the dangers they had undergone, being their own kindred, should now be dismissed and sent home, and should have thanks for the pains they had taken together with them. As also, he thought it reasonable that they should send one man out of every tribe, and he such as had the testimony of extraordinary virtue, who should measure the land faithfully, and without any fallacy or deceit should inform them of its real

magnitude.

Now Joshua, when he had thus spoken to them, found that the multitude approved of his proposal. So he sent men to measure their country, and sent with them some geometricians, who could not easily fail of knowing the truth, on account of their skill in that art. He also gave them a charge to estimate the measure of that part of the land that was most fruitful, and what was not so good: for such is the nature of the land of Canaan, that one may see large plains, and such as are exceeding fit to produce fruit, which yet, if they were compared to other parts of the country, might be reckoned exceedingly fruitful; yet, if it be compared with the fields about Jericho, and to those that belong to Jerusalem, will appear to be of no account at all; and although it so falls out that these people have but a very little of this sort of land, and that it is, for the main, mountainous also, yet does it not come behind other parts, on account of its exceeding goodness and beauty; for which reason Joshua thought the land for the tribes should be divided by estimation of its goodness, rather than the largeness of its measure, it often happening that one acre of some sort of land was equivalent to a thousand other acres. Now the men that were sent, which were in number ten, traveled all about, and made an estimation of the land, and in the seventh month came to him to the city of Shiloh, where they had set up the tabernacle.

So Joshua took both Eleazar and the senate, and with them the heads of the tribes, and distributed the land to the nine tribes, and to the half-tribe

of Manasseh, appointing the dimensions to be according to the largeness of each tribe. So when he had cast lots, Judah had assigned him by lot the upper part of Judea, reaching as far as Jerusalem, and its breadth extended to the Lake of Sodom. Now in the lot of this tribe there were the cities of Askelon and Gaza. The lot of Simeon, which was the second, included that part of Idumea which bordered upon Egypt and Arabia. As to the Benjamites, their lot fell so, that its length reached from the river Jordan to the sea, but in breadth it was bounded by Jerusalem and Bethel; and this lot was the narrowest of all, by reason of the goodness of the land, for it included Jericho and the city of Jerusalem. The tribe of Ephraim had by lot the land that extended in length from the river Jordan to Gezer; but in breadth as far as from Bethel, till it ended at the Great Plain. The half-tribe of Manasseh had the land from Jordan to the city of Dora; but its breadth was at Bethsham, which is now called Scythopolis. And after these was Issachar, which had its limits in length, Mount Carmel and the river, but its limit in breadth was Mount Tabor. The tribe of Zebulon's lot included the land which lay as far as the Lake of Genesareth, and that which belonged to Carmel and the sea. The tribe of Aser had that part which was called the Valley, for such it was, and all that part which lay over-against Sidon. The city Arce belonged to their share, which is also named Actipus. The Naphthalites received the eastern parts, as far as the city of Damascus and the Upper Galilee, unto Mount Libanus, and the Fountains of Jordan, which rise out of that mountain; that is, out of that part of it whose limits belong to the neighboring

city of Arce. The Danites' lot included all that part of the valley which respects the sun-setting, and were bounded by Azotus and Dora; as also they had all Jamnia and Gath, from Ekron to that mountain where the tribe of Judah begins.

After this manner did Joshua divide the six nations that bear the name of the sons of Canaan, with their land, to be possessed by the nine tribes and a half; for Moses had prevented him, and had already distributed the land of the Amorites, which itself was so called also from one of the sons of Canaan, to the two tribes and a half, as we have shown already. But the parts about Sidon, as also those that belonged to the Arkites, and the Amathites, and the Aradians, were not yet regularly disposed of.

But now was Joshua hindered by his age from executing what he intended to do (as did those that succeeded him in the government, take little care of what was for the advantage of the public); so he gave it in charge to every tribe to leave no remainder of the race of the Canaanites in the land that had been divided to them by lot; that Moses had assured them beforehand, and they might rest fully satisfied about it, that their own security and their observation of their own laws depended wholly upon it. Moreover, he enjoined them to give thirty-eight cities to the Levites, for they had already received ten in the country of the Amorites; and three of these he assigned to those that fled from the man-slayers, who were to inhabit there; for he was very solicitous that nothing should be neglected which Moses had ordained. These cities were, of the tribe of

Judah, Hebron; of that of Ephraim, Shechem; and of that of Naphthali, Cadesh, which is a place of the Upper Galilee. He also distributed among them the rest of the prey not yet distributed, which was very great; whereby they had an affluence of great riches, both all in general, and every one in particular; and this of gold and of vestments, and of other furniture, besides a multitude of cattle, whose number could not be told.

After this was over, he gathered the army together to a congregation, and spake thus to those tribes that had their settlement in the land of the Amorites beyond Jordan, - for fifty thousand of them had armed themselves, and had gone to the war along with them: - "Since that God, who is the Father and Lord of the Hebrew nation, has now given us this land for a possession, and promised to preserve us in the enjoyment of it as our own for ever; and since you have with alacrity offered yourselves to assist us when we wanted that assistance on all occasions, according to his command; it is but just, now all our difficulties are over, that you should be permitted to enjoy rest, and that we should trespass on your alacrity to help us no longer; that so, if we should again stand in need of it, we may readily have it on any future emergency, and not tire you out so much now as may make you slower in assisting us another time. We, therefore, return you our thanks for the dangers you have undergone with us, and we do it not at this time only, but we shall always be thus disposed; and be so good as to remember our friends, and to preserve in mind what advantages we have had from them; and how you have put off

the enjoyments of your own happiness for our sakes, and have labored for what we have now, by the goodwill of God, obtained, and resolved not to enjoy your own prosperity till you had afforded us that assistance. However, you have, by joining your labor with ours, gotten great plenty of riches, and will carry home with you much prey, with gold and silver, and, what is more than all these, our good-will towards you, and a mind willingly disposed to make a requital of your kindness to us, in what case soever you shall desire it, for you have not omitted any thing which Moses beforehand required of you, nor have you despised him because he was dead and gone from you, so that there is nothing to diminish that gratitude which we owe to you. We therefore dismiss you joyful to your own inheritances; and we entreat you to suppose, that there is no limit to be set to the intimate relation that is between us; and that you will not imagine, because this river is interposed between us, that you are of a different race from us, and not Hebrews; for we are all the posterity of Abraham, both we that inhabit here, and you that inhabit there; and it is the same God that brought our forefathers and yours into the world, whose worship and form of government we are to take care of, which he has ordained, and are most carefully to observe; because while you continue in those laws, God will also show himself merciful and assisting to you; but if you imitate the other nations, and forsake those laws, he will reject your nation." When Joshua had spoken thus, and saluted them all, both those in authority one by one, and the whole multitude in common, he himself staid where he was; but the people conducted those tribes on

their journey, and that not without tears in their eyes; and indeed they hardly knew how to part one from the other.

Now when the tribe of Reuben, and that of Gad, and as many of the Manassites as followed them, were passed over the river, they built an altar on the banks of Jordan, as a monument to posterity, and a sign of their relation to those that should inhabit on the other side. But when those on the other side heard that those who had been dismissed had built an altar, but did not hear with what intention they built it, but supposed it to be by way of innovation, and for the introduction of strange gods, they did not incline to disbelieve it; but thinking this defamatory report, as if it were built for divine worship, was credible, they appeared in arms, as though they would avenge themselves on those that built the altar; and they were about to pass over the river, and to punish them for their subversion of the laws of their country; for they did not think it fit to regard them on account of their kindred or the dignity of those that had given the occasion, but to regard the will of God, and the manner wherein he desired to be worshipped; so these men put themselves in array for war. But Joshua, and Eleazar the high priest, and the senate, restrained them; and persuaded them first to make trial by words of their intention, and afterwards, if they found that their intention was evil, then only to proceed to make war upon them. Accordingly, they sent as ambassadors to them Phineas the son of Eleazar, and ten more persons that were in esteem among the Hebrews, to learn of them what was in their mind, when, upon passing over the river,

they had built an altar upon its banks. And as soon as these ambassadors were passed over, and were come to them, and a congregation was assembled, Phineas stood up and said, That the offense they had been guilty of was of too heinous a nature to be punished by words alone, or by them only to be amended for the future; yet that they did not so look at the heinousness of their transgression as to have recourse to arms, and to a battle for their punishment immediately, but that, on account of their kindred, and the probability there was that they might be reclaimed, they took this method of sending an ambassage to them: "That when we have learned the true reasons by which you have been moved to build this altar, we may neither seem to have been too rash in assaulting you by our weapons of war, if it prove that you made the altar for justifiable reasons, and may then justly punish you if the accusation prove true; for we can hardly

hardly suppose that you, have been acquainted with the will of God and have been hearers of those laws which he himself hath given us, now you are separated from us, and gone to that patrimony of yours, which you, through the grace of God, and that providence which he exercises over you, have obtained by lot, can forget him, and can leave that ark and that altar which is peculiar to us, and can introduce strange gods, and imitate the wicked practices of the Canaanites. Now this will appear to have been a small crime if you repent now, and proceed no further in your madness, but pay a due reverence to, and keep in mind the laws of your country; but if you persist in your sins, we will not grudge our pains to preserve our laws;



but we will pass over Jordan and defend them, and defend God also, and shall esteem of you as of men no way differing from the Canaanites, but shall destroy you in the like manner as we destroyed them; for do not you imagine that, because you are got over the river, you are got out of the reach of God's power; you are every where in places that belong to him, and impossible it is to overrun his power, and the punishment he will bring on men thereby: but if you think that your settlement here will be any obstruction to your conversion to what is good, nothing need hinder us from dividing the land anew, and leaving this old land to be for the feeding of sheep; but you will do well to return to your duty, and to leave off these new crimes; and we beseech you, by your children and wives, not to force us to punish you. Take therefore such measures in this assembly, as supposing that your own safety, and the safety of those that are dearest to you, is therein concerned, and believe that it is better for you to be conquered by words, than to continue in your purpose, and to experience deeds and war therefore."

When Phineas had discoursed thus, the governors of the assembly, and the whole multitude, began to make an apology for themselves, concerning what they were accused of; and they said, That they neither would depart from the relation they bare to them, nor had they built the altar by way of innovation; that they owned one and the same common God with all the Hebrews, and that brazen altar which was before the tabernacle, on which they would offer their sacrifices; that as to the altar they had raised, on account of which they

were thus suspected, it was not built for worship, "but that it might be a sign and a monument of our relation to you for ever, and a necessary caution to us to act wisely, and to continue in the laws of our country, but not a handle for transgressing them, as you suspect: and let God be our authentic witness, that this was the occasion of our building this altar: whence we beg you will have a better opinion of us, and do not impute such a thing to us as would render any of the posterity of Abraham well worthy of perdition, in case they attempt to bring in new rites, and such as are different from our usual practices."

When they had made this answer, and Phineas had commended them for it, he came to Joshua, and explained before the people what answer they had received. Now Joshua was glad that he was under no necessity of setting them in array, or of leading them to shed blood, and make war against men of their own kindred; and accordingly he offered sacrifices of thanksgiving to God for the same. So Joshua after that dissolved this great assembly of the people, and sent them to their own inheritances, while he himself lived in Shechem. But in the twentieth year after this, when he was very old, he sent for those of the greatest dignity in the several cities, with those in authority, and the senate, and as many of the common people as could be present; and when they were come, he put them in mind of all the benefits God had bestowed on them, which could not but be a great many, since from a low estate they were advanced to so great a degree of glory and plenty; and exhorted them to take notice of the intentions of God, which had been so gracious towards them;

and told them that the Deity would continue their friend by nothing else but their piety; and that it was proper for him, now that he was about to depart out of this life, to leave such an admonition to them; and he desired that they would keep in memory this his exhortation to them.

So Joshua, when he had thus discoursed to them, died, having lived a hundred and ten years; forty of which he lived with Moses, in order to learn what might be for his advantage afterwards. He also became their commander after his death for twenty-five years. He was a man that wanted not wisdom nor eloquence to declare his intentions to the people, but very eminent on both accounts. He was of great courage and magnanimity in action and in dangers, and very sagacious in procuring the peace of the people, and of great virtue at all proper seasons. He was buried in the city of Timnab, of the tribe of Ephraim About the same time died Eleazar the high priest, leaving the high priesthood to his son Phineas. His monument also, and sepulcher, are in the city of Gabatha.

## CHAPTER TWO

HOW, AFTER THE DEATH OF JOSHUA THEIR COMMANDER, THE ISRAELITES TRANSGRESSED THE LAWS OF THEIR COUNTRY, AND EXPERIENCED GREAT AFFLICTIONS; AND WHEN THERE WAS A SEDITION ARISEN, THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN WAS DESTROYED EXCEPTING ONLY SIX HUNDRED MEN.

AFTER the death of Joshua and Eleazar, Phineas prophesied, that according to God's will they should commit the government to the tribe of

Judah, and that this tribe should destroy the race of the Canaanites; for then the people were concerned to learn what was the will of God. They also took to their assistance the tribe of Simeon; but upon this condition, that when those that had been tributary to the tribe of Judah should be slain, they should do the like for the tribe of Simeon.

But the affairs of the Canaanites were at this time in a flourishing condition, and they expected the Israelites with a great army at the city Bezek, having put the government into the hands of Adonibezek, which name denotes the Lord of Bezek, for Adoni in the Hebrew tongue signifies Lord. Now they hoped to have been too hard for the Israelites, because Joshua was dead; but when the Israelites had joined battle with them, I mean the two tribes before mentioned, they fought gloriously, and slew above ten thousand of them, and put the rest to flight; and in the pursuit they took Adonibezek, who, when his fingers and toes were cut off by them, said, "Nay, indeed, I was not always to lie concealed from God, as I find by what I now endure, while I have not been ashamed to do the same to seventy-two kings." So they carried him alive as far as Jerusalem; and when he was dead, they buried him in the earth, and went on still in taking the cities: and when they had taken the greatest part of them, they besieged Jerusalem; and when they had taken the lower city, which was not under a considerable time, they slew all the inhabitants; but the upper city was not to be taken without great difficulty, through the strength of its walls, and the nature of the place.

For which reason they removed their camp to Hebron; and when they had taken it, they slew all the inhabitants. There were till then left the race of giants, who had bodies so large, and countenances so entirely different from other men, that they were surprising to the sight, and terrible to the hearing. The bones of these men are still shown to this very day, unlike to any credible relations of other men. Now they gave this city to the Levites as an extraordinary reward, with the suburbs of two thousand cities; but the land thereto belonging they gave as a free gift to Caleb, according to the injunctions of Moses. This Caleb was one of the spies which Moses sent into the land of Canaan. They also gave land for habitation to the posterity of Jethro, the Midianite, who was the father-in-law to Moses; for they had left their own country, and followed them, and accompanied them in the wilderness.

Now the tribes of Judah and Simeon took the cities which were in the mountainous part of Canaan, as also Askelon and Ashdod, of those that lay near the sea; but Gaza and Ekron escaped them, for they, lying in a flat country, and having a great number of chariots, sorely galled those that attacked them. So these tribes, when they were grown very rich by this war, retired to their own cities, and laid aside their weapons of war.

But the Benjamites, to whom belonged Jerusalem, permitted its inhabitants to pay tribute. So they all left off, the one to kill, and the other to expose themselves to danger, and had time to cultivate the ground. The rest of the tribes

imitated that of Benjamin, and did the same; and, contenting themselves with the tributes that were paid them, permitted the Canaanites to live in peace.

However, the tribe of Ephraim, when they besieged Bethel, made no advance, nor performed any thing worthy of the time they spent, and of the pains they took about that siege; yet did they persist in it, still sitting down before the city, though they endured great trouble thereby: but, after some time, they caught one of the citizens that came to them to get necessaries, and they gave him some assurances that, if he would deliver up the city to them, they would preserve him and his kindred; so he aware that, upon those terms, he would put the city into their hands. Accordingly, he that, thus betrayed the city was preserved with his family; and the Israelites slew all the inhabitants, and retained the city for themselves.

After this, the Israelites grew effeminate as to fighting any more against their enemies, but applied themselves to the cultivation of the land, which producing them great plenty and riches, they neglected the regular disposition of their settlement, and indulged themselves in luxury and pleasures; nor were they any longer careful to hear the laws that belonged to their political government: whereupon God was provoked to anger, and put them in mind, first, how, contrary to his directions, they had spared the Canaanites; and, after that, how those Canaanites, as opportunity served, used them very barbarously. But the Israelites, though they were in heaviness at these admonitions from God, yet were they still very

unwilling to go to war; and since they got large tributes from the Canaanites, and were indisposed for taking pains by their luxury, they suffered their aristocracy to be corrupted also, and did not ordain themselves a senate, nor any other such magistrates as their laws had formerly required, but they were very much given to cultivating their fields, in order to get wealth; which great indolence of theirs brought a terrible sedition upon them, and they proceeded so far as to fight one against another, from the following occasion:

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There was a Levite a man of a vulgar family, that belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, and dwelt therein: this man married a wife from Bethlehem, which is a place belonging to the tribe of Judah. Now he was very fond of his wife, and overcome with her beauty; but he was unhappy in this, that he did not meet with the like return of affection from her, for she was averse to him, which did more inflame his passion for her, so that they quarreled one with another perpetually; and at last the woman was so disgusted at these quarrels, that she left her husband, and went to her parents in the fourth month. The husband being very uneasy at this her departure, and that out of his fondness for her, came to his father and mother-in-law, and made up their quarrels, and was reconciled to her, and lived with them there four days, as being kindly treated by her parents. On the fifth day he resolved to go home, and went away in the evening; for his wife's parents were loath to part with their daughter, and delayed the time till the day was gone. Now they had one servant that followed them, and an ass on which

the woman rode; and when they were near Jerusalem, having gone already thirty furlongs, the servant advised them to take up their lodgings some where, lest some misfortune should befall them if they traveled in the night, especially since they were not far off enemies, that season often giving reason for suspicion of dangers from even such as are friends; but the husband was not pleased with this advice, nor was he willing to take up his lodging among strangers, for the city belonged to the Canaanites, but desired rather to go twenty furlongs farther, and so to take their lodgings in some Israelite city. Accordingly, he obtained his purpose, and came to Gibeah, a city of the tribe of Benjamin, when it was just dark; and while no one that lived in the market-place invited him to lodge with him, there came an old man out of the field, one that was indeed of the tribe of Ephraim, but resided in Gibeah, and met him, and asked him who he was, and for what reason he came thither so late, and why he was looking out for provisions for supper when it was dark? To which he replied, that he was a Levite, and was bringing his wife from her parents, and was going home; but he told him his habitation was in the tribe of Ephraim: so the old man, as well because of their kindred as because they lived in the same tribe, and also because they had thus accidentally met together, took him in to lodge with him. Now certain young men of the inhabitants of Gibeah, having seen the woman in the market-place, and admiring her beauty, when they understood that she lodged with the old man, came to the doors, as contemning the weakness and fewness of the old man's family; and when the old man desired them to go away, and not to offer any violence or abuse



there, they desired him to yield them up the strange woman, and then he should have no harm done to him: and when the old man alleged that the Levite was of his kindred, and that they would be guilty of horrid wickedness if they suffered themselves to be overcome by their pleasures, and so offend against their laws, they despised his righteous admonition, and laughed him to scorn. They also threatened to kill him if he became an obstacle to their inclinations; whereupon, when he found himself in great distress, and yet was not willing to overlook his guests, and see them abused, he produced his own daughter to them; and told them that it was a smaller breach of the law to satisfy their lust upon her, than to abuse his guests, supposing that he himself should by this means prevent any injury to be done to those guests. When they no way abated of their earnestness for the strange woman, but insisted absolutely on their desires to have her, he entreated them not to perpetrate any such act of injustice; but they proceeded to take her away by force, and indulging still more the violence of their inclinations, they took the woman away to their house, and when they had satisfied their lust upon her the whole night, they let her go about daybreak. So she came to the place where she had been entertained, under great affliction at what had happened; and was very sorrowful upon occasion of what she had suffered, and durst not look her husband in the face for shame, for she concluded that he would never forgive her for what she had done; so she fell down, and gave up the ghost: but her husband supposed that his wife was only fast asleep, and, thinking nothing of a more melancholy nature had happened, endeavored to

raise her up, resolving to speak comfortably to her, since she did not voluntarily expose herself to these men's lust, but was forced away to their house; but as soon as he perceived she was dead, he acted as prudently as the greatness of his misfortunes would admit, and laid his dead wife upon the beast, and carried her home; and cutting her, limb by limb, into twelve pieces, he sent them to every tribe, and gave it in charge to those that carried them, to inform the tribes of those that were the causes of his wife's death, and of the violence they had offered to her.

Upon this the people were greatly disturbed at what they saw, and at what they heard, as never having had the experience of such a thing before; so they gathered themselves to Shiloh, out of a prodigious and a just anger, and assembling in a great congregation before the tabernacle, they immediately resolved to take arms, and to treat the inhabitants of Gibeah as enemies; but the senate restrained them from doing so, and persuaded them, that they ought not so hastily to make war upon people of the same nation with them, before they discoursed them by words concerning the accusation laid against them; it being part of their law, that they should not bring an army against foreigners themselves, when they appear to have been injurious, without sending an ambassage first, and trying thereby whether they will repent or not: and accordingly they exhorted them to do what they ought to do in obedience to their laws, that is, to send to the inhabitants of Gibeah, to know whether they would deliver up the offenders to them, and if they deliver them up, to rest satisfied with the punishment of those offenders;

but if they despised the message that was sent them, to punish them by taking, up arms against them. Accordingly they sent to the inhabitants of Gibeah, and accused the young men of the crimes committed in the affair of the Levite's wife, and required of them those that had done what was contrary to the law, that they might be punished, as having justly deserved to die for what they had done; but the inhabitants of Gibeah would not deliver up the young men, and thought it too reproachful to them, out of fear of war, to submit to other men's demands upon them; vaunting themselves to be no way inferior to any in war, neither in their number nor in courage. The rest of their tribe were also making great preparation for war, for they were so insolently mad as also to resolve to repel force by force.

When it was related to the Israelites what the inhabitants of Gibeah had resolved upon, they took their oath that no one of them would give his daughter in marriage to a Benjamite, but make war with greater fury against them than we have learned our forefathers made war against the Canaanites; and sent out presently an army of four hundred thousand against them, while the Benjamites' army-was twenty-five thousand and six hundred; five hundred of whom were excellent at slinging stones with their left hands, insomuch that when the battle was joined at Gibeah the Benjamites beat the Israelites, and of them there fell two thousand men; and probably more had been destroyed had not the night came on and prevented it, and broken off the fight; so the Benjamites returned to the city with joy, and the Israelites returned to their camp in a great fright at what

had happened. On the next day, when they fought again, the Benjamites beat them; and eighteen thousand of the Israelites were slain, and the rest deserted their camp out of fear of a greater slaughter. So they came to Bethel, a city that was near their camp, and fasted on the next day; and besought God, by Phineas the high priest, that his wrath against them might cease, and that he would be satisfied with these two defeats, and give them the victory and power over their enemies. Accordingly God promised them so to do, by the prophesying of Phineas.

When therefore they had divided the army into two parts, they laid the one half of them in ambush about the city Gibeah by night, while the other half attacked the Benjamites, who retiring upon the assault, the Benjamites pursued them, while the Hebrews retired by slow degrees, as very desirous to draw them entirely from the city; and the other followed them as they retired, till both the old men and the young men that were left in the city, as too weak to fight, came running out together with them, as willing to bring their enemies under. However, when they were a great way from the city the Hebrews ran away no longer, but turned back to fight them, and lifted up the signal they had agreed on to those that lay in ambush, who rose up, and with a great noise fell upon the enemy. Now, as soon as ever they perceived themselves to be deceived, they knew not what to do; and when they were driven into a certain hollow place which was in a valley, they were shot at by those that encompassed them, till they were all destroyed, excepting six hundred, which formed themselves into a close body of men,

and forced their passage through the midst of their enemies, and fled to the neighboring mountains, and, seizing upon them, remained there; but the rest of them, being about twenty-five thousand, were slain. Then did the Israelites burn Gibeah, and slew the women, and the males that were under age; and did the same also to the other cities of the Benjamites; and, indeed, they were enraged to that degree, that they sent twelve thousand men out of the army, and gave them orders to destroy Jabesh Gilead, because it did not join with them in fighting against the Benjamites. Accordingly, those that were sent slew the men of war, with their children and wives, excepting four hundred virgins. To such a degree had they proceeded in their anger, because they not only had the suffering of the Levite's wife to avenge, but the slaughter of their own soldiers.

However, they afterward were sorry for the calamity they had brought upon the Benjamites, and appointed a fast on that account, although they supposed those men had suffered justly for their offense against the laws; so they recalled by their ambassadors those six hundred which had escaped. These had seated themselves on a certain rock called Rimmon, which was in the wilderness. So the ambassadors lamented not only the disaster that had befallen the Benjamites, but themselves also, by this destruction of their kindred; and persuaded them to take it patiently; and to come and unite with them, and not, so far as in them lay, to give their suffrage to the utter destruction of the tribe of Benjamin; and said to them, "We give you leave to take the whole land of Benjamin to yourselves, and as much prey as you

are able to carry away with you." So these men with sorrow confessed, that what had been done was according to the decree of God, and had happened for their own wickedness; and assented to those that invited them, and came down to their own tribe. The Israelites also gave them the four hundred virgins of Jabesh Gilead for wives; but as to the remaining two hundred, they deliberated about it how they might compass wives enough for them, and that they might have children by them; and whereas they had, before the war began, taken an oath, that no one would give his daughter to wife to a Benjamite, some advised them to have no regard to what they had sworn, because the oath had not been taken advisedly and judiciously, but in a passion, and thought that they should do nothing against God, if they were able to save a whole tribe which was in danger of perishing; and that perjury was then a sad and dangerous thing, not when it is done out of necessity, but when it is done with a wicked intention. But when the senate were affrighted at the very name of perjury, a certain person told them that he could show them a way whereby they might procure the Benjamites wives enough, and yet keep their oath. They asked him what his proposal was. He said, "That three times in a year, when we meet in Shiloh, our wives and our daughters accompany us: let then the Benjamites be allowed to steal away, and marry such women as they can catch, while we will neither incite them nor forbid them; and when their parents take it ill, and desire us to inflict punishment upon them, we will tell them, that they were themselves the cause of what had happened, by neglecting to guard their daughters, and that they ought not to be over angry at the

Benjamites, since that anger was permitted to rise too high already." So the Israelites were persuaded to follow this advice, and decreed, That the Benjamites should be allowed thus to steal themselves wives. So when the festival was coming on, these two hundred Benjamites lay in ambush before the city, by two and three together, and waited for the coming of the virgins, in the vineyards and other places where they could lie concealed. Accordingly the virgins came along playing, and suspected nothing of what was coming upon them, and walked after an unguarded manner, so those that laid scattered in the road, rose up, and caught hold of them: by this means these Benjamites got them wives, and fell to agriculture, and took good care to recover their former happy state. And thus was this tribe of the Benjamites, after they had been in danger of entirely perishing, saved in the manner forementioned, by the wisdom of the Israelites; and accordingly it presently flourished, and soon increased to be a multitude, and came to enjoy all other degrees of happiness. And such was the conclusion of this war.

### CHAPTER THREE

HOW THE ISRAELITES AFTER THIS MISFORTUNE GREW WICKED AND SERVED THE ASSYRIANS; AND HOW GOD DELIVERED THEM BY OTHNIEL, WHO RULED OVER THE FORTY YEARS.

NOW it happened that the tribe of Dan suffered in like manner with the tribe of Benjamin; and it came to do so on the occasion following: - When the Israelites had already left off the exercise

of their arms for war, and were intent upon their husbandry, the Canaanites despised them, and brought together an army, not because they expected to suffer by them, but because they had a mind to have a sure prospect of treating the Hebrews ill when they pleased, and might thereby for the time to come dwell in their own cities the more securely; they prepared therefore their chariots, and gathered their soldiery together, their cities also combined together, and drew over to them Askelon and Ekron, which were within the tribe of Judah, and many more of those that lay in the plain. They also forced the Danites to fly into the mountainous country, and left them not the least portion of the plain country to set their foot on. Since then these Danites were not able to fight them, and had not land enough to sustain them, they sent five of their men into the midland country, to seek for a land to which they might remove their habitation. So these men went as far as the neighborhood of Mount Libanus, and the fountains of the Lesser Jordan, at the great plain of Sidon, a day's journey from the city; and when they had taken a view of the land, and found it to be good and exceeding fruitful, they acquainted their tribe with it, whereupon they made an expedition with the army, and built there the city Dan, of the same name with the son of Jacob, and of the same name with their own tribe.

The Israelites grew so indolent, and unready of taking pains, that misfortunes came heavier upon them, which also proceeded in part from their contempt of the Divine worship; for when they had once fallen off from the regularity of their political government, they indulged themselves



further in living according to their own pleasure, and according to their own will, till they were full of the evil doings that were common among the Canaanites. God therefore was angry with them, and they lost that their happy state which they had obtained by innumerable labors, by their luxury; for when Chushan, king of the Assyrians, had made war against them, they lost many of their soldiers in the battle, and when they were besieged, they were taken by force; nay, there were some who, out of fear, voluntarily submitted to him, and though the tribute laid upon them was more than they could bear, yet did they pay it, and underwent all sort of oppression for eight years; after which thee they were freed from them in the following manner: -

There was one whose name was Othniel, the son of Kenaz, of the tribe of Judah, an active man and of great courage. He had an admonition from God not to overlook the Israelites in such a distress as they were now in, but to endeavor boldly to gain them their liberty; so when he had procured some to assist him in this dangerous undertaking, (and few they were, who, either out of shame at their present circumstances, or out of a desire of changing them, could be prevailed on to assist him,) he first of all destroyed that garrison which Chushan had set over them; but when it was perceived that he had not failed in his first attempt, more of the people came to his assistance; so they joined battle with the Assyrians, and drove them entirely before them, and compelled them to pass over Euphrates. Hereupon Othniel, who had given such proofs of his valor, received from the multitude authority

to judge the people; and when he had ruled over them forty years, he died.

#### CHAPTER FOUR

HOW OUR PEOPLE SERVED THE MOABITES EIGHTEEN YEARS, AND WERE THEN DELIVERED FROM SLAVERY BY ONE EHUD WHO RETAINED THE DOMINION EIGHTY YEARS.

WHEN Othniel was dead, the affairs of the Israelites fell again into disorder: and while they neither paid to God the honor due to him, nor were obedient to the laws, their afflictions increased, till Eglon, king of the Moabites, did so greatly despise them on account of the disorders of their political government, that he made war upon them, and overcame them in several battles, and made the most courageous to submit, and entirely subdued their army, and ordered them to pay him tribute. And when he had built him a royal palace at Jericho, he omitted no method whereby he might distress them; and indeed he reduced them to poverty for eighteen years. But when God had once taken pity of the Israelites, on account of their afflictions, and was moved to compassion by their supplications put up to him, he freed them from the hard usage they had met with under the Moabites. This liberty he procured for them in the following manner; -

There was a young man of the tribe of Benjamin, whose name was Ehud, the son of Gera, a man of very great courage in bold undertakings, and of a very strong body, fit for hard labor, but best skilled in using his left hand, in which was his whole strength; and he also dwelt at Jericho. Now

this man became familiar with Eglon, and that by means of presents, with which he obtained his favor, and insinuated himself into his good opinion; whereby he was also beloved of those that were about the king. Now, when on a time he was bringing presents to the king, and had two servants with him, he put a dagger on his right thigh secretly, and went in to him: it was then summer thee, and the middle of the day, when the guards were not strictly on their watch, both because of the heat, and because they were gone to dinner. So the young man, when he had offered his presents to the king, who then resided in a small parlor that stood conveniently to avoid the heat, fell into discourse with him, for they were now alone, the king having bid his servants that attended him to go their ways, because he had a mind to talk with Ehud. He was now sitting on his throne; and fear seized upon Ehud lest he should miss his stroke, and not give him a deadly wound; so he raised himself up, and said he had a dream to impart to him by the command of God; upon which the king leaped out of his throne for joy of the dream; so Ehud smote him to the heart, and leaving his dagger in his body, he went out and shut the door after him. Now the king's servants were very still, as supposing that the king had composed himself to sleep.

Hereupon Ehud informed the people of Jericho privately of what he had done, and exhorted them to recover their liberty; who heard him gladly, and went to their arms, and sent messengers over the country, that should sound trumpets of rams' horns; for it was our custom to call the people together by them. Now the attendants of Eglon were

ignorant of what misfortune had befallen him for a great while; but, towards the evening, fearing some uncommon accident had happened, they entered into his parlor, and when they found him dead, they were in great disorder, and knew not what to do; and before the guards could be got together, the multitude of the Israelites came upon them, so that some of them were slain immediately, and some were put to flight, and ran away toward the country of Moab, in order to save themselves. Their number was above ten thousand. The Israelites seized upon the ford of Jordan, and pursued them, and slew them, and many of them they killed at the ford, nor did one of them escape out of their hands; and by this means it was that the Hebrews freed themselves from slavery under the Moabites. Ehud also was on this account dignified with the government over all the multitude, and died after he had held the government eighty years. He was a man worthy of commendation, even besides what he deserved for the forementioned act of his. After him Shamgat, the son of Anath, was elected for their governor, but died in the first year of his government.

## CHAPTER FIVE

HOW THE CANAANITES BROUGHT THE ISRAELITES UNDER SLAVERY FOR TWENTY YEARS; AFTER WHICH THEY WERE DELIVERED BY BARAK AND DEBORAH, WHO RULED OVER THEM FOR FORTY YEARS.

AND now it was that the Israelites, taking no warning by their former misfortunes to amend their manners, and neither worshipping God nor submitting to the laws, were brought under slavery

by Jabin, the king of the Canaanites, and that before they had a short breathing time after the slavery under the Moabites; for this Jabin out of Hazor, a city that was situate over the Semechonitis, and had in pay three hundred footmen, and ten thousand horsemen, with fewer than three thousand chariots. Sisera was commander of all his army, and was the principal person in the king's favor. He so sorely beat the Israelites when they fought with him, that he ordered them to pay tribute.

So they continued to that hardship for twenty years, as not good enough of themselves to grow wise by their misfortunes. God was willing also hereby the more to subdue their obstinacy and ingratitude towards himself: so when at length they were become penitent, and were so wise as to learn that their calamities arose from their contempt of the laws, they besought Deborah, a certain prophetess among them, (which name in the Hebrew tongue signifies a Bee,) to pray to God to take pity on them, and not to overlook them, now they were ruined by the Canaanites. So God granted them deliverance, and chose them a general, Barak, one that was of the tribe of Naphtali. Now Barak, in the Hebrew tongue, signifies Lightning.

So Deborah sent for Barak, and bade him choose out ten thousand young men to go against the enemy, because God had said that that number was sufficient, and promised them victory. But when Barak said that he would not be the general unless she would also go as a general with him, she had indignation at what he said 'Thou, O Barak, deliverest up meanly that authority which God hath

given thee into the hand of a woman, and I do not reject it!" So they collected ten thousand men, and pitched their camp at Mount Tabor, where, at the king's command, Sisera met them, and pitched his camp not far from the enemy; whereupon the Israelites, and Barak himself, were so affrighted at the multitude of those enemies, that they were resolved to march off, had not Deborah retained them, and commanded them to fight the enemy that very day, for that they should conquer them, and God would be their assistance.

So the battle began; and when they were come to a close fight, there came down from heaven a great storm, with a vast quantity of rain and hail, and the wind blew the rain in the face of the Canaanites, and so darkened their eyes, that their arrows and slings were of no advantage to them, nor would the coldness of the air permit the soldiers to make use of their swords; while this storm did not so much incommode the Israelites, because it came in their backs. They also took such courage, upon the apprehension that God was assisting them, that they fell upon the very midst of their enemies, and slew a great number of them; so that some of them fell by the Israelites, some fell by their own horses, which were put into disorder, and not a few were killed by their own chariots. At last Sisera, as soon as he saw himself beaten, fled away, and came to a woman whose name was Jael, a Kenite, who received him, when he desired to be concealed; and when he asked for somewhat to drink, she gave him sour milk, of which he drank so unmeasurably that he fell asleep; but when he was asleep, Jael took an iron nail, and with a hammer drove it through his

temples into the floor; and when Barak came a little afterward, she showed Sisera nailed to the ground: and thus was this victory gained by a woman, as Deborah had foretold. Barak also fought with Jabin at Hazor; and when he met with him, he slew him: and when the general was fallen, Barak overthrew the city to the foundation, and was the commander of the Israelites for forty years.

