

## Jephthah's Bargain

### Scripture Reading — Judges 11:29-36

*Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. — Galatians 5:25*

Before going into battle, Jephthah made a vow: if God would give him victory, he would sacrifice whatever met him when he returned home. Jephthah won the battle and kept his foolish vow, at the cost of his daughter's life.

Proverbs 20:25 teaches: "It is a trap to dedicate something rashly and only later to consider one's vows." Think before you speak; make your vows in line with the right and good will of the Lord.

In the days of the judges, however, people did what was right in their own eyes. On that note Proverbs says: "The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice" (12:15).

Jephthah made his foolish vow even after the Spirit of the Lord had moved him. But then, if you live in a culture defined by what is right in your own eyes, it's not uncommon to speak before you think and to avoid reflecting on the motivations of the Holy Spirit.

As believers in Christ today, we can live by the Spirit, asking God for wisdom every step of the way (James 1:5). As Paul urges us in Galatians 5, "walk by the Spirit" and "keep in step with the Spirit," turning away from the desires and foolishness of the sinful nature (see 5:13-26).

### Prayer

*Keep me, Lord, from making rash promises; by your Spirit, help me live and walk closely with you. For Jesus' sake, Amen.*

**Devotion topics:** [Wisdom](#), [Self-Control](#), [Life](#), [Christian Life](#), [Promises](#)

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Written by Arie Leder — <https://today.reframemedia.com/authors/arie-c-leder>

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*Printed on June 24, 2019*

