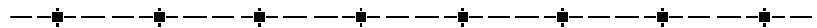


Old Testament

Mission Arlington • Mission Metroplex Curriculum • 2008

Families of the Old Testament



Created for use with young, unchurched learners
Adaptable for all ages including adults

Old Testament

A Father Makes a Foolish Vow

Jephthah

Judges 11-12

A Father Makes a Foolish Vow
Judges 11:1-8

Memory Verse:

After this, God
gave them judges.
(Acts 13:20 NIRV)

Lesson Goals:

1. Learn that Jephthah was disliked by his brothers.
2. Learn that Jephthah made a foolish promise.
3. Recognize that God's Spirit came upon Jephthah.
4. Understand that God used Jephthah to deliver Israel.

Last week we learned about Gideon. Gideon was unsure of himself and God. God spoke to Gideon and showed Gideon that He was with him. Gideon obeyed God and God used him to deliver Israel.

Read the Bible

READ: Judges 11:1-8 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

God chose Israel and blessed them in Egypt. Then He delivered them with mighty miracles. They wandered in the desert for 40 years and God destroyed nations and gave Israel the land. This happened in about 450 years. Then God gave them judges. (Acts 13:17-20)

Israel was disobedient to God and He allowed their enemies to oppress them. When they called on Him, God would send a deliverer. One deliverer was named Jephthah. He was a mighty warrior. Jephthah's father was Gilead. That was also the name of the land where he was from.

Jephthah's brothers hated him. [Teacher: You may want to share that Jephthah's mother was a prostitute. If you choose to do so, be sure to tell the children that this profession does not please God. Also tell them that having more than one partner is not part of God's plan.] (Judges 11:1-2) Do you remember someone else who was hated by his brothers? (In the beginning we studied about Cain and Abel. Then we also studied about Joseph and his brothers.)

Gilead's sons made Jephthah run away. They didn't want him to share in their father's inheritance because he had a different mother. (Judges 11:2-3) This is not what God wants from us. God wants us to love one another the way He does. (1 John 4:7-8)

Jephthah went to live in the land of Tob. Some bad men became his friends and followed him. Later the enemies of Israel, the Ammonites, went to fight in a war against Israel. The elders, or leaders, of Israel went to ask Jephthah for his help. (Judges 11:3-7) "Jephthah said to them, "Didn't you hate me? Didn't you drive me away from my father's house? Why are you coming to me only when you are in trouble?" (Judges 11:7) The elders said that Jephthah was right. They told him they did hate him. But now they needed his help. They also told him that if he would help them, they would make him leader in Gilead. (Judges 11:8) Jephthah did not believe them. So he asked them, "If I fight the Ammonites and God gives me the victory, are you going to make me your leader?" (Judges 11:9) The elders said, "The Lord is our

Gideon —Bible Facts

1. Jephthah was a mighty warrior.
2. The elders of Gilead asked Jephthah to fight.
3. The elders of Gilead admitted to hating Jephthah.
4. The elders of Gilead offer to make Jephthah their leader.
5. Jephthah agreed to fight with Israel.

witness. We'll certainly do as you say." (Judges 11:10) So Jephthah agreed to help Israel. He sent letters to the Ammonite king, but the king ignored Jephthah. (Judges 11:11-28) The Bible says that God's Spirit came on Jephthah and Jephthah fought against the Ammonites. But then, Jephthah did a very foolish thing. He promised God that if he was victorious in war, he would give God the first thing that came out of the door of his house as a sacrifice. (Judges 11:29-31) God had allowed His Spirit to come upon Jephthah. God sent Jesus to deliver us from sin. We don't have to make any promises to God. God wants us to love Him and to obey Him.

Jephthah fought the Ammonites and God gave him victory over 20 towns. Israel had Ammon under control.

When Jephthah returned home, guess who was the first to meet him? It was his only daughter, his only child. She was so excited about the victory that she was dancing. (Judges 11:32-35)

God had not asked Jephthah for anything. His promise was a very foolish promise. Jephthah was excited and terrified at the same time. He was excited about the victory but his heart was broken because of the foolish promise he made to God. He told his daughter about the promise. Jephthah told her that he could not break his promise to God. [Teacher: You may want to explain to the children that God does not want foolish promises from us. God certainly does not want us to sacrifice anyone to Him. Jephthah did not have to keep his foolish promise. You may also want to explain to older children that it was not an uncommon practice to sacrifice children to pagan gods.] (Judges 11:35) His daughter agreed to allow her father to keep his promise to God. She knew that it was God who had delivered Israel from the Ammonites. She agreed that her father should keep his promise to God. (Judges 11:36-39)

Review questions

1. **Who was Jephthah?** (Jephthah was a mighty warrior.)
2. **Who asked for Jephthah's help?** (The elders of Gilead asked Jephthah to fight with them.)
3. **What did the elders of Gilead admit to Jephthah?** (The elders of Gilead admitted to hating Jephthah.)
4. **What did the elders of Gilead offer Jephthah?** (The elders of Gilead offered to make Jephthah their leader.)
5. **What was Jephthah's response?** (Jephthah agreed to fight with Israel.)

Do you know Jesus?

God sent Jesus to deliver us from sin. He knew we would not be able to overcome sin on our own. Jesus died for sins. He rose from the dead so that we could live with God eternally. If you will invite Him to be a part of your life and ask for God's forgiveness, He will forgive you. God will come to be a part of your life.

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus to deliver us from sin.
3. Ask God to help you when you face your enemies.
4. Pray for friends and family members who need to be delivered from sin.

Application

Jephthah was disliked by his brothers so he ran away from his brothers. Later the elders of Gilead came to ask Jephthah to fight with them against Ammon. Jephthah was a mighty warrior. He agreed to help Israel. God's Spirit came upon Jephthah and God used Jephthah to deliver Israel. Jephthah made a foolish promise. God does not want foolish promises from us. He wants us to love Him and to obey Him.

Planning for the next week:
Hannah (A Woman Prays for a Child) — I Samuel 1-2

Preschool Lesson

Read the Bible

READ: Judges 11:1-8 (Hold your Bible open throughout the story.)

(Bring tambourines for the children to play. Tell the children that tambourines were used to worship God. Make instruments by taping two plates together. Before completely taping them, fill them with something that will make noise like rocks, paper clips, etc.)

Jephthah was a mighty warrior. His father's name was Gilead. (Judges 11:1-2) Gilead's sons made Jephthah run away. They didn't want him to share in their father's inheritance because he had a different mother. (Judges 11:2-3) This is not what God wants from us. God wants us to love one another the way He does. (1 John 4:7-8)

But when their enemy came to fight against them, they asked Jephthah for his help. "Jephthah said to them, "Didn't you hate me? Didn't you make me leave my father's house? Why are you coming to me only when you are in trouble?" (Judges 11:4-7) They told Jephthah that he was right. They told him they did hate him. But now they needed his help. They also told him that if he would help them, they would make him leader in Gilead. (Judges 11:8) Jephthah did not believe them. So he asked them, "If I fight the Ammonites and God gives me the victory, you are going to make me your leader?" (Judges 11:9) The elders said, "The Lord is our witness." (Judges 11:10)

So Jephthah agreed to help Israel. Jephthah fought the Ammonites and God gave him victory over 20 towns. Israel had Ammon under control. (Judges 11:11-31)

When Jephthah returned home, guess who was the first to meet him? It was his only daughter, his only child. She was so excited about the victory that she was dancing. She knew God had delivered Israel from their enemies. (Judges 11:32-35)

Prayer Time

1. Take a moment to listen to God.
2. Thank God for sending Jesus to deliver us from sin.
3. Ask God to help you when you face your enemies.

Did you know? Preschoolers learn about worship by watching others.

Consider this: Teach the children songs based on scripture. Sing with the children. Sing "1 John 4:7-8," "Jesus Loves Me," or other songs based on scripture. If you are not musically inclined, sing along with a CD.

Learning Activities

Memory verse activity — Bring toy soldiers and attach the verse to a toy soldier. Tell the children that Jephthah was a mighty warrior. Practice the verse.

Test your memory — Bring toys that represent Jephthah's father, Jephthah, his brothers, and the elders. Use the toys to tell the story. Ask the children to retell the story using the toys.

Taste activity — Bring lemons or bitter herbs. Allow the children to taste them. Tell them sometimes our actions and words can be like bitter herbs. Serve lemon drops or a lemon flavored snack.

Think about it — Israel disobeyed God. God allowed their enemies to oppress them. When they cried out to God, He answered. Talk about God's mercy and grace.

Jephthah made a very foolish promise. Explain to the children that God does not want foolish promises from us. God certainly does not want us to sacrifice anyone to Him. Jephthah did not have to keep his foolish promise. You may also want to explain to older children that it was not an uncommon practice to sacrifice children to pagan gods. Talk about the importance of knowing what the Bible says so that we can know God's will. (Ten Commandments, I Corinthians 13, Romans 12, etc.)

Touch activity — Bring tambourines for the children to play. Tell the children that tambourines were used to worship God.

Make instruments by taping two plates together. Before completely taping them, fill them with something that will make noise like rocks, paper clips, etc.

•**Run and play** — Jephthah had victory over 20 cities. Let the children represent the cities. Ask one child to represent Jephthah. Play tag. When Jephthah tags a city, the city must fall. When all the cities have fallen start over.

•**Listen** — As they take time to listen to God, remind the children that God wants us to love Him and to obey Him.

•**Sing** — Teach the children songs based on scripture. Sing "1 John 4:7-8," "Jesus Loves Me," or other songs based on scripture.

Memory Verse

After this,
God
gave them
judges.
Acts 13:20
NIRV

Word Art

Trace the letters.

The Spirit

of the Lord

came upon

Jephthah.

Word Puzzle

L S A E B D S E D J S W
T D E D N R A U O H T P
H H B S E S L E E E O A
M S G D N I E S L L N N
A M L I E K G T E I E D
D E F O F E R N E M G E
K E N V J E N L I A H R
S L T T D A B A D K C D
R N O A D I M N I U L N
E A E R H Y I M Y D E U
H L N P D N F H O H I H
W S R T E R D U N N Y M

GILEAD

HATED

RAN

MEN

FIGHT

LEADER

ELDERS

KING

AMMON

Word Puzzle

L	S	A	E	B	D	S	E	D	J	S	W
T	D	E	D	N	R	A	U	O	H	T	P
H	H	B	S	E	S	L	E	E	E	O	A
M	S	G	D	N	I	E	S	L	L	N	N
A	M	L	I	E	K	G	T	E	I	E	D
D	E	F	O	F	E	R	N	E	M	G	E
K	E	N	V	J	E	N	L	I	A	H	R
S	L	T	T	D	A	B	A	D	K	C	D
R	N	O	A	D	I	M	N	I	U	L	N
E	A	E	R	H	Y	I	M	Y	D	E	U
H	L	N	P	D	N	F	H	O	H	I	H
W	S	R	T	E	R	D	U	N	N	Y	M

GILEAD

HATED

RAN

MEN

FIGHT

LEADER

ELDERS

KING

AMMON

Word Puzzle For Younger Children

G F L K A D R P W L Q F
P D B Z A T O B L P T S
G F D B D A U G H T E R
S O N V R K H G L O R D
T V K I C E L D E R S W
B R O T H E R S D I A N
P E G N M E R S Z O K F
R F G I L E A D A F H I

GILEAD

SON

BROTHERS

DAUGHTER

TOB

ELDERS

Word Puzzle For Younger Children

G F L K A D R P W L Q F

P D B Z A T O B L P T S

G F D B D A U G H T E R

S O N V R K H G L O R D

T V K I C E L D E R S W

B R O T H E R S D I A N

P E G N M E R S Z O K F

R F G I L E A D A F H I

GILEAD

SON

BROTHERS

DAUGHTER

TOB

ELDERS

Anagram

1. EAHHHPJT–

2. EORRSBHT–

3. TBO–

4. EESLRD–

5. IAEDLG–

6. AOIESMTMN–

7. TPRSII–

8. GKNI–

Anagram

1. EAHHHPJT– JEPHTHAH
2. EORRSBHT– BROTHERS
3. TBO– TOB
4. EESLRD– ELDERS
5. IAEDLG– GILEAD
6. AOIESMTMN– AMMONITES
7. TPRSII– SPIRIT
8. GKNI– KING