

Lesson 7: Jephthah and the Judges 9-12

Objectives: Students will...

- 1) Study Judges 11-12 – Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon and Abdon
- 2) See that we should not make quick promises when we pray to God
- 3) Learn the faithful Judges 9-12 who ruled Israel

Accommodations: How will I accommodate individual needs of students?

- See Lesson 1 for idea

Supplies:

Teacher Materials (provided in classroom)

- Bible(s)
- Markers/Pencil Crayons
- Pens/Pencils
- Attendance Chart (See Template)
- Stickers for Attendance
- Map of Oppressors and Later Judges – one for class to share from previous class
- Judges Charts and Answer Key– (from previous class)
- Name the Judges Activity Sheet – one for every student
- Judges Team Game Sheet – one for every 3-4 students

Optional:

- Large writing surface – like easel with paper or chalkboard (to play hangman) or piece of paper to show children as you play hangman.
- Marker or pen
- Storybook or visuals of this story to show kids (if available)

Snack:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| - Your choice | enough for each child |
| - Napkins for snack | one per child |
| - Juice or water and cup | one per child |

Lesson:

1) Introduction to Lesson

5 minutes

As students enter, welcome them and help find a chair to sit at. Thank them for coming. Take attendance (using attendance chart supplied).

Say to students:

Today we are going to continue to study the book of Judges.

What did we study last week? Let students raise their hands and answer. Students studied Tola and Jair the 7th and 8th Judges of Israel.

Does anyone have any questions from last week? Answer if you are able, if not tell the students you will get an answer and let them know next week and then make sure you do 😊

2) Jephthah the 9th Judge – with Judges Map

15-20 minutes

Optional: Storybook or visuals of this story to show kids (if available)

*Have map of Judges ready to show class as you read.

Let's all turn to Judges Chapter 11 and can I get volunteers to read 4 verses each from Judges 11:1-12?

Thank the volunteers for reading and then show them the map of Judges – point to Jephthah's area in which he judged Israel from.

Discussion Questions:

Who was the 9th Judge? Jephthah

Did God choose him or did the people? The people asked him to command their army against the Ammonites (see verse 6)

What was Jephthah's response? If you choose me to lead, you must allow me to rule Israel if I win with the help from the Lord.

Jephthah had asked the king of Ammon why he wanted to fight Israel. The Ammonite king said it was because he wanted his land back – but Israel had not taken their land but neighboring lands and within 300 years – the Ammonites had never tried to fight with the Israelites over the land till now. So, Jephthah responds to the Ammonite king. Let's read his response. Can I get volunteers to read Judges 11:23-40 and 12:7? Arrange volunteers to read a certain amount of verses each. When done ask:

Who won the battle? Jephthah and the Israelites

What promise did Jephthah make? That whatever walked out his door on the return home he would sacrifice to God.

Say, **“Back then it was common for livestock and animals to live in and around the people's home. Jephthah was most likely thinking a beloved animal would walk out the door first – not his daughter as we can see when he realized it was his daughter who came out.**

Now Jephthah did not sacrifice his daughter – he would have “devoted her”. Let's turn to Deuteronomy 18:9-13 and read what God had told the Israelites just before they entered into the Promised Land:

Deuteronomy 18:9-13

⁹When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the detestable ways of the nations there. ¹⁰Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, ¹¹or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. ¹²Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD; because of these same detestable practices the LORD your God will drive out those nations before you. ¹³You must be blameless before the LORD your God.

Did God say it was ever ok to sacrifice a child? No! In fact He says it is detestable.

Read also Leviticus 5:4-6.

or if anyone thoughtlessly takes an oath to do anything, whether good or evil (in any matter one might carelessly swear about) even though they are unaware of it, but then they learn of it and realize their guilt— when anyone becomes aware that they are guilty in any of these matters, they must confess in what way they have sinned. As a penalty for the sin they have committed, they must bring to the Lord a

female lamb or goat from the flock as a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for them for their sin.

Jephthah could make atonement for his sin of making a rash promise to God. He still devoted his daughter to the service of the Lord, but did not sacrifice her and could make an offering to compensate for his sin of making a rash vow.

So Jephthah would not have been able to sacrifice his daughter as a burnt offering or God would have been mad. But, Jephthah could devote his daughter to the service of the Lord – meaning she would work for the Lord and not ever marry or have children – that is why it says her and her friends mourned the fact she would never marry or have children. After the two months she would have moved to a place of worship and served God under the Levites.

Jephthah made a rash or unwise promise to God. Do we need to make promises to God? No, other than promising to serve Him with our lives and time when we become Christians. What should we do instead of making promises to people or God that we might regret? Let's turn to Matthew 5 and see what Jesus says about promises.

Matthew 5:36 and 37

And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. 37 All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

So we need to be honest and say yes or no. We don't need to swear by anyone or promise anything – just do what we should do! All Jephthah had to do was give God the glory and fight on God's behalf. He did not need to make a promise. And neither should we. We shouldn't promise God we will do things. Instead we just need to do the things God asks us – actions speak louder than promises!

Any questions? Answer if you can from the Bible, get back to students next week with the answer if you cannot answer it right away.

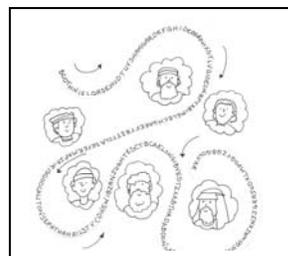
3) After Jephthah – Judges 10-12 with Judges Chart and Map 10 minutes

Say, "Let's turn to Judges 12:7-15. I will read as you follow along. Read the verses then hand out Judges chart with pencils/crayons and show each judge on map as well."

Go through each judge that you just read about and fill in their information on the chart. There were no oppressors or times of oppressions listed for Judges 10-12 so they can leave those blank.

4) Name the Judges Sheet 10 minutes

Hand out one sheet per student. Read the instructions aloud, hand out crayons and help students as needed to finish the page.



5) Team Judges Game

10-20 minutes

Hand out one sheet to every 3-4 students making sure younger students are put with older students to help with writing things down and support.

Say to the students, **"We have successfully studied the first 12 out of 13 judges. To help us review what we have learned – there is a sheet for each group. On it are the names of the first 12 judges. Your job as a group is to right down or draw as many things that you know about each judge. Once you have written or drawn everything you know. Come to me and I will count how many facts are correct. The team with the most correct facts wins!"**

Hand out sheet with crayons or pencils and let students start. Give one minute notice before finishing up if the activity is taking too long so they can all end at the same time. Count the team's facts and award the team with the most correct facts! Help students as needed.

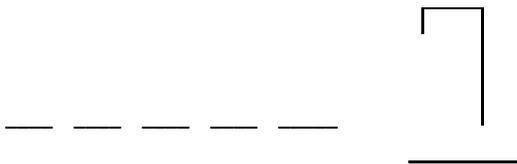
6) Optional: Hangman Game

5-10 minutes

Before class get a large easel or chalkboard with marker or chalk to show kids while playing the game of hangman. If neither are available sit around a table and hold up a page with the gallows and slots for the words underneath so all children can see – use a marker to fill in each letter as they say them. Play hangman with key words from the bible story – when kids discover the word – ask them to explain why that word was important if they can, or you can explain if they can't.

Game instructions: Ask students if they know the game, if not explain to them the following:

1. Start the game by choosing a word from the list below –don't let the children know what word you have chosen and don't let them see your list of words.
2. Place one dash on the bottom of a piece of paper for each letter of the word or words chosen. Leave a space between words. Example: Jacob – you would write ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ at the bottom of the page you are using to show the students.
3. Draw a "gallows" at the top of the paper - draw a horizontal line at the bottom, a vertical line coming up out of its center, and then a short line off to the right at the top (so that you now have an upside-down "L" on the horizontal line). Draw a short vertical line off the end of the top line - this is your "noose." Example:



4. Have the other player guess one letter at a time - or he or she can use a turn to guess the entire word or words. If they get the letter write – fill it in where it belongs – example: J would go at the first slot above for J ___ ___ ___.
5. If they get the letter wrong – write the letter on the top of the page – so other students know it was already chosen and then fill in a part of the body on the hangman's noose. Begin by drawing a head attached to the short vertical line (the "noose"). Add body, right leg, left leg, right arm, then left arm.
6. Know that if the drawing of the person is completed before the word or words are guessed, the guessing player loses. If the player figures out the word or words first, he or she wins.
7. When a student guesses the word ask them to explain something that they know about the word.

List of Words to Use

(Remember to ask students about possible suggestions for things they might know about that word once they figure the word out):

Judges

Judges names ex: Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Jephthah, etc.

Israel

False gods

Sorrow

7) Optional - Snack: Your choice

Hand out snack to each child along with a glass of water or juice. Explain that: **Today we studied judges 9-12 can anyone name the 4 judges we studied today?** Provide a napkin for children to clean their hands.

Discuss any questions while snacking. See if students can remember any of the names of the judges while snacking or see how many books of history they can name.

8) Optional - Songs

5 minutes

Have children sing songs with you. An example:

Judges – *to the tune of the Alphabet song or the ABC....song*

Name the Judges who went to war

Othniel, Ehud and Shamgar

Deborah, Gideon, and Abimelech

Tola, Jair and Jephthah

Ibzan, Elon and Abdon

The last Judge was Samson

9) Close in prayer

*If desired, ask the children if they have any prayer requests and write them down to help you remember. Then ask all children to bow their heads and fold their hands to pray.

Dear God, help us as we study Your perfect Word in the Old Testament to understand it, use it and see the examples of faithful people that followed You. Help us to remember that Your commands are important and need to be followed to live a life that is pleasing to You. Help us all too always love You with our whole heart, mind, strength and soul!

Help us this week as we go from our church family – we pray that you will be with us and our families, help us share the good news of Your love to every one we meet and help us to remember to pray and study the Bible every day.

Thank you for the book of Judges that shows us that we still need to be faithful, even if everyone else around us is not. Help us to see that we should pray for our leaders. Help us to not make rash promises like Jephthah did but instead – do the good You want us to do and thank You God for all the things You bless us with.

We pray for those who could not be here today. We pray you will bring them back safely next week.

Thank you God for Your love, thank you for Your Son Jesus, thank you for caring for us and providing such a beautiful world for us to live in, and thank you for giving us Your Word – the Bible so we can know how to live and learn what pleases You. In Jesus precious name, Amen.