

Parents, for Bible this week, we decided to try sending it home in story style to help both you and your children understand rather than putting it in numbered sentences. It's a difficult story to put into sentences, so see how this works.

## **Jephthah, Judges 10-11**

### **Test Wednesday, Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**THE LAND** of Israel east of Jordan there lived a man named Jephthah. His brothers despised him and drove him away from their father's home, so he went to live in the land called Tob. Here he became a strong man, and his brave deeds were told by many people. Finally even his brothers heard about them.

At this time the Israelites were in great trouble again. They had quit worshipping God. Everywhere in the land they were bowing down before the gods that other nations worshiped.

The Ammonites came from the east and the Philistines came from the west and ruled over the Israelites. They began to war against the Israelites and to take away their riches. The Ammonites even threatened to take away the homes of the Israelites and to drive them out of their country.

After suffering for eighteen years under the rule of their enemies, the Israelites remembered how God had long ago given them all the land and had made them stronger than all the nations who lived around them. So they cried to God for help, and they expected God to send a deliverer, just as he had done at other times when they were in trouble.

But God was much displeased with the people. He was not willing to help them, because they had turned away from him to worship gods of other nations. He said, "Let the gods that you have chosen instead of me help you out of your trouble. I will not be your God when trouble comes upon you if you will not worship me when you have rest from your enemies."

Now the Israelites became very sorry for having sinned against the true God. They saw that the gods they were serving could never help them at all. They knew that true God whom their fathers had worshiped could deliver them out of the power of their enemies. So they tore down their idols and began to serve the Lord. They confessed their sins to the Lord and asked him again to help him. Now the Israelites became very sorry for having sinned against the true God. They saw that the gods they were serving could never help them at all. They knew that true God whom their fathers had worshiped could deliver them out of the power of their enemies. So they tore down their idols and began to serve the Lord. They confessed their sins to the Lord and asked him again to help him.

Finally someone remembered Jephthah whose brave deeds had been told through all the land. They sent quickly for him to come to lead them to the battle against the Ammonites. But Jephthah was not willing to come. Not until his brothers had promised to treat him kindly would Jephthah return again with his family to his old home and help his people out of their trouble.

Jephthah knew that unless God would be with him he could not gain a victory over the Ammonites. So he asked God to help him, and he promised to give as a present to God the first thing that should meet him on his return home from the battle. This was not a wise promise; for Jephthah did not know what might come first to greet him on his return. Then the battle began; and the Israelites won the victory.

News of the victory reached Jephthah's home before he returned with the army of Mizpah. And everybody was glad because God had helped them again. Jephthah's daughter, his only child, came hurrying out to meet her father, singing for joy. But her song ended quickly when she saw her father's troubled face. He had remembered his promise to the Lord. Now he believed that he must give his only child as an offering to God. How sorry he felt because he had made such an unwise promise! He tore his clothes and cried out in distress. Then he told his daughter about the promise that he had made.

He believed that he would need to keep his promise, although it was not a wise one. And his daughter urged him to keep it. Because God had given him the victory over their enemies. But first she asked for two months' time to spend alone with her friends in the mountains, weeping because she must soon be taken away from them. Afterwards she returned again to her father that he might fulfill his promise to God.

### **February Memory Verse (Recite by Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup>)**

**“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son,  
that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have  
eternal life.”**

**John 3:16**