

Jephthah Story

SUPPLIES NEEDED

You will need the following:

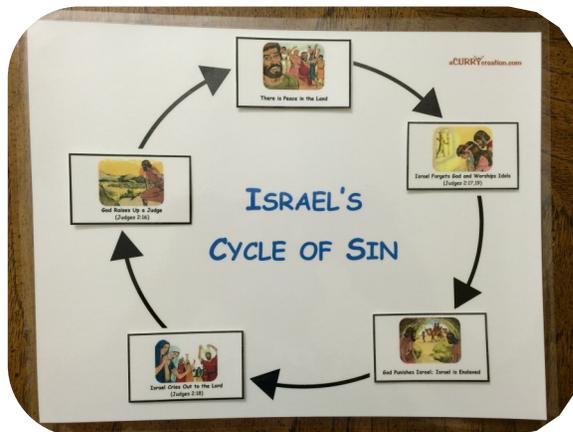
- 9 Sheets of Cardstock (8.5" x 11")
<http://amzn.com/B006P1EQIA>
- 11 Clear Velcro dots
<http://amzn.com/B001ASD850>
- 9 3 mil Laminating Film
<http://amazon.com/dp/B009SOVRYM>

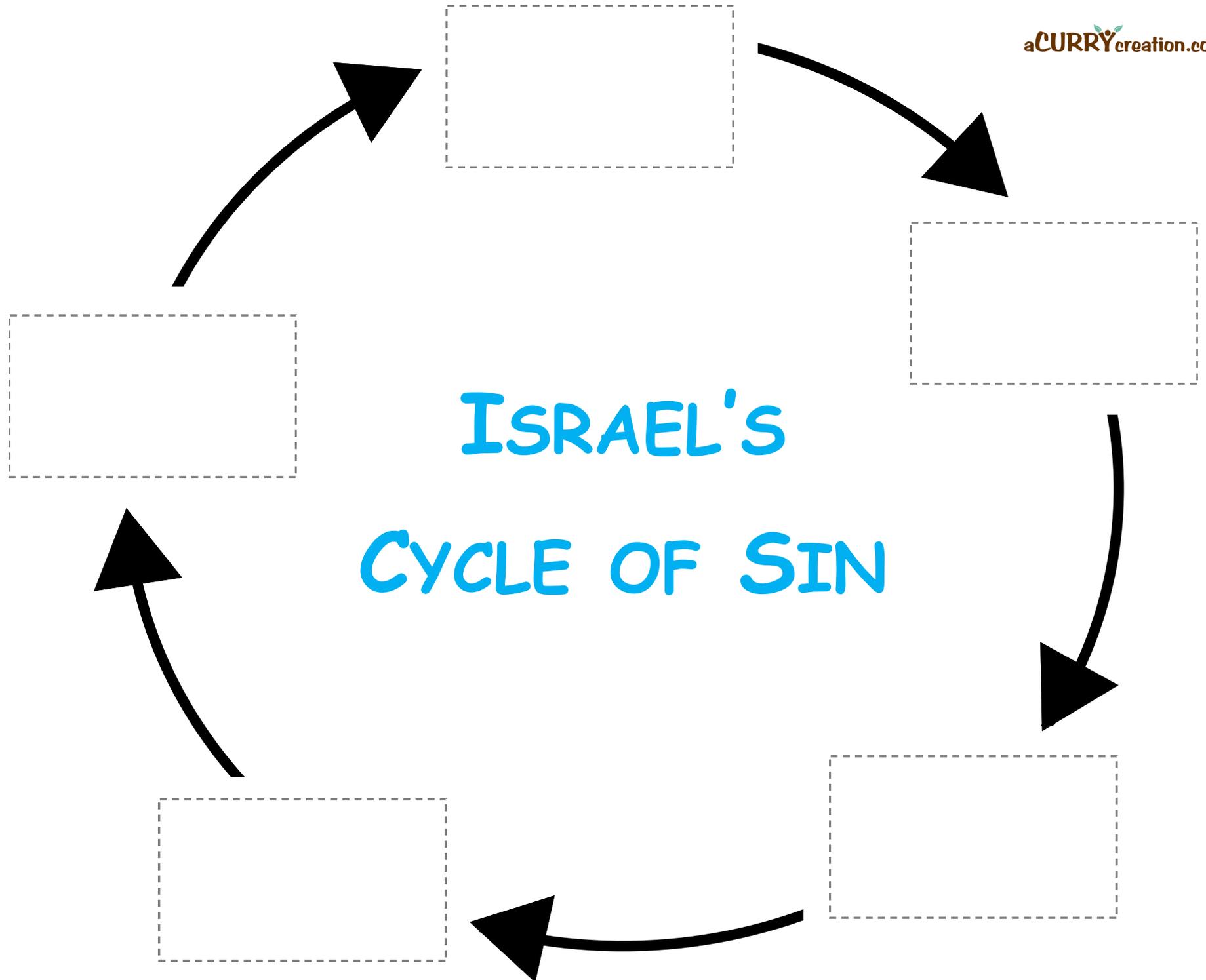
DIRECTIONS

- Print pages 2-17 two-sided on cardstock and laminate.
- Print page 18 one-sided on cardstock. Laminate and cut out the pictures.
- Use clear Velcro dots to attach pictures to the appropriate pages of the story.

TIPS

- For a take-home paper, print page 2 for each child.
- Print page 18 (you only need the top 5 pictures) for each child.
- Cut out the pictures and have children glue them on page 2 in the correct order.





ISRAEL'S CYCLE OF SIN

Since Joshua's death, the Israelites have been led by Judges. We've talked about Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Gideon. The Israelites have continued a Cycle of Sin. While a Judge is leading them, Israel is good and worships God and there is peace in the land (Velcro picture at the top of the circle)

But what happens after the Judge dies? (the Israelites forget God and start worshipping idols again)

Then what happens? (the Israelites are punished when God allowed other nations to come into their land and enslave the people)

And after awhile the Israelites remember how God protected them when they worshipped Him, so what do they do? (they cry out to God to save them)

How does God answer them? (He sends a Judge to lead them and defeat their enemies)

(Let children take turns Velcro-ing on the pictures.)



ABIMELECH

Remember after Gideon defeated the Midianites, the people wanted Gideon to be their ruler? And Gideon said, "I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you."

Well, Gideon has now died and one of his sons, named Abimelech, decided he would make himself king. He was not a good man like his father Gideon was. "He went to his father's house... and killed his 70 brothers...on top of a large stone. But Jotham, the youngest son...survived, because he hid himself." (Judges 9:5) Abimelech was not a Judge chosen by God, but he ruled over Israel for 3 years (Velcro Crown on next to Abimelech) until God punished him.

"Abimelech went to a city, Thebez...and captured it. There was a strong tower inside the city, and all the men, women, and rulers of the city fled there. They locked themselves in and went up to the roof of the tower. When Abimelech came to attack the tower, he approached its entrance to set it on fire. But a woman threw the upper portion of a millstone on Abimelech's head and fractured his skull. He quickly called his armor-bearer and said to him, 'Draw your sword and kill me, or they'll say about me, "A woman killed him.'" So his armor-bearer thrust him through, and he died. When the Israelites saw that Abimelech was dead, they all went home. In this way, God turned back on Abimelech the evil that he had done against his father Gideon, by killing his 70 brothers." (Judges 9:50-56)



TOLA



JAIR

After the wicked Abimelech died, there were two good Judges. "Tola son of Puah, became judge and began to deliver Israel. He was from Issachar and lived in Shamir in the hill country of Ephraim. Tola judged Israel 23 years (Velcro gavel on) and when he died, was buried in Shamir." (Judges 10:1-2)

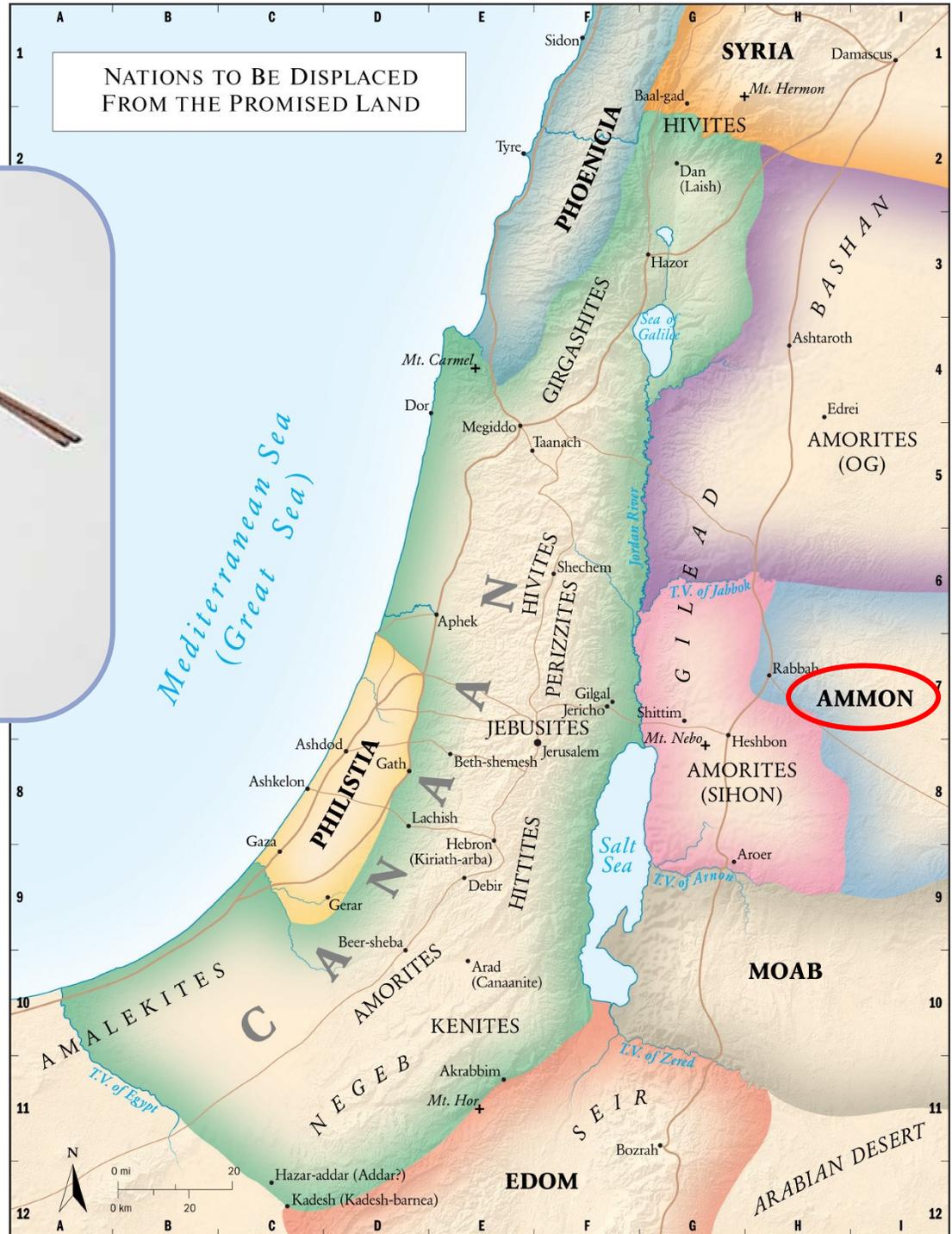
"After Tola came Jair the Gileadite, who judged Israel 22 years (Velcro gavel on). He had 30 sons who rode on 30 donkeys. They had 30 towns in Gilead, which are called Jair's Villages to this day. When Jair died, he was buried in Kamon." (Judges 10:3)



After these two Judges died, the time came again when the Israelites forgot God and began worshipping idols. God allowed more enemies to come into their country to conquer them. After several years of trouble, the Israelites prayed to God for help. God told the Israelites to pray to the idols they had chosen to worship and let them help them in this time of distress. But when the Israelites put away their foreign gods and showed that they had repented, God heard them and raised up a new Judge to lead them. His name was Jephthah.



"...they drove Jephthah out and said to him, 'You will have no inheritance in our father's house, because you are the son of another woman.' So Jephthah fled from his brothers and lived in the land of Tob." (Judges 11:2-3)



The Ammonites had come and camped near the land of Israel and they wanted to fight against Israel. The Israelites had nobody to lead them, so they sent for Jephthah who was a mighty warrior. But Jephthah did not want to go. Years before, his brothers had kicked him out of their father's land because he had a different mother than the rest of them. But the elders of the land of Gilead pleaded with him and promised him that he would be the head of all of Gilead if he would come and fight the Ammonites. So Jephthah agreed to come and help them.

The first thing Jephthah did was to send a message to the Ammonites and asked them what they wanted. The Ammonites replied back by messenger saying, "Israel took our land when you came up out of Egypt." But this wasn't true. Jephthah replied back saying, "We did not take your land or the land of Moab. We didn't even enter your territory. Let God be the judge between us!"



Jephthah wanted God's help to defeat the Ammonites, so he made a **vow** (promise) to the Lord. Jephthah said, "Lord if you will let me win this battle, then whatever comes out of my house first to meet me when I return from battle will be offered to you as a sacrifice." So Jephthah led his men into battle against the Ammonites and won a great victory for his people with God's help. Then Jephthah returned home. *Do you know who came out first?*



Yes, Jephthah's daughter! Jephthah was very sad. He only had one child. But he had made a promise to God and he had to keep it. Right away, his daughter said: "My father, if you have opened your mouth to Jehovah, do to me according to what has gone forth from your mouth." Then she asked to be left alone for two months so that she could go into the mountains to mourn. Even so, she did not view her own desires as the most important thing. She wanted to obey her father and to be loyal to God. ***Do you think that she made God and her father happy? How important do you think it is to keep our promises?***

So Jephthah sent his daughter away for two months with her girl companions. When she returned, her father carried out his vow.



IBZAN



ELON



ABDON

After Jephthah died, a man by the name of Ibzan from Bethlehem judged Israel. Ibzan had 30 sons and 30 daughters. Ibzan judged Israel for 7 years (Velcro gavel on) then he died and was buried in Bethlehem.

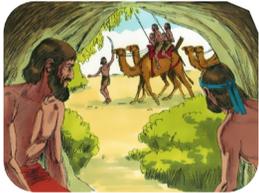
Then Elon, from Zebulun, judged Israel for 10 years (Velcro gavel on).

After Elon died, Abdon judged Israel. Abdon had 40 sons and 30 grandsons who rode on 70 donkeys. Abdon judged Israel 8 years (Velcro gavel on) and then died.

After Abdon, the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and the Lord punished them by allowing the Philistines to oppress (rule over) them for 40 years.



Israel Forgets God and Worships Idols
(Judges 2:17,19)



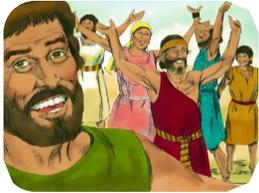
God Punishes Israel; Israel is Enslaved



Israel Cries Out to the Lord
(Judges 2:18)



God Raises Up a Judge
(Judges 2:16)



There is Peace in the Land

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3 Years



22 Years



10 Years



23 Years



7 Years



8 Years