

14.01 Tribes Conquer (Judges 1)

✓ “*Check*” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *inhabitants*: people who live in a place
- *to devote to destruction*: at the command of God, to destroy totally a city and its inhabitants because of wickedness
- *tribute*: tax money paid by inhabitants to a controlling government; also forced labor

Scripture (ESV)

Judges 1:1 After the death of Joshua, the people of Israel inquired of the Lord, “Who shall go up first for us against the Canaanites, to fight against them?” 2 The Lord said, “Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand.” 3 And Judah said to Simeon his brother, “Come up with me into the territory allotted to me, that we may fight against the Canaanites. And I likewise will go with you into the territory allotted to you.” So Simeon went with him. 4 Then Judah went up and the Lord gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand, and they defeated 10,000 of them at Bezek. 5 They found Adoni-bezek at Bezek and fought against him and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. 6 Adoni-bezek fled, but they pursued him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and his big toes. 7 And Adoni-bezek said, “Seventy kings with their thumbs and their big toes cut off used to pick up scraps under my table. As I have done, so God has repaid me.” And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

8 And the men of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it and struck it with the edge of the sword and set the city on fire. 9 And afterward the men of Judah went down to fight against the Canaanites who lived in the hill country, in the Negeb, and in the lowland. 10 And Judah went against the Canaanites who lived in Hebron (now the name of Hebron was formerly Kiriath-arba), and they defeated Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai.

11 From there they went against the inhabitants of Debir. The name of Debir was formerly Kiriath-sepher. 12 And Caleb said, “He who attacks Kiriath-sepher and captures it, I will give him Achsah my daughter for a wife.” 13 And Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb’s younger brother, captured it. And he gave him Achsah his daughter for a wife. 14 When she came to him, she urged him to ask her father for a field. And she dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb said to her, “What do you want?” 15 She said to him, “Give me a blessing. Since you have set me in the land of the Negeb, give me also springs of water.” And Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs.

16 And the descendants of the Kenite, Moses’ father-in-law, went up with the people of Judah from the city of palms into the wilderness of Judah, which lies in the Negeb near Arad, and they went and settled with the people. 17 And Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they defeated the Canaanites who inhabited Zephath and devoted it to destruction. So the name of the city was called Hormah. 18 Judah also captured Gaza with its territory, and Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory. 19 And the Lord was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country, but he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron. 20 And Hebron was given to Caleb, as Moses had said. And he drove out from it the three sons of Anak. 21 But the people of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem, so the Jebusites have lived with the people of Benjamin in Jerusalem to this day.

22 The house of Joseph also went up against Bethel, and the Lord was with them. 23 And the house of Joseph scouted out Bethel. (Now the name of the city was formerly Luz.) 24 And the spies saw a man coming out of the city, and they said to him, "Please show us the way into the city, and we will deal kindly with you." 25 And he showed them the way into the city. And they struck the city with the edge of the sword, but they let the man and all his family go. 26 And the man went to the land of the Hittites and built a city and called its name Luz. That is its name to this day.

27 Manasseh did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean and its villages, or Taanach and its villages, or the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, or the inhabitants of Ibleam and its villages, or the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages, for the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land. 28 When Israel grew strong, they put the Canaanites to forced labor, but did not drive them out completely. 29 And Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer, so the Canaanites lived in Gezer among them. 30 Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron, or the inhabitants of Nahalol, so the Canaanites lived among them, but became subject to forced labor. 31 Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Acco, or the inhabitants of Sidon or of Ahlab or of Achzib or of Helbah or of Aphik or of Rehob, 32 so the Asherites lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, for they did not drive them out. 33 Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh, or the inhabitants of Beth-anath, so they lived among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land. Nevertheless, the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became subject to forced labor for them. 34 The Amorites pressed the people of Dan back into the hill country, for they did not allow them to come down to the plain. 35 The Amorites persisted in dwelling in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and in Shaalbim, but the hand of the house of Joseph rested heavily on them, and they became subject to forced labor. 36 And the border of the Amorites ran from the ascent of Akrabbim, from Sela and upward.

Introduction/Review:

How much older were Joshua and Caleb than any of the people they led? Joshua and Caleb were around 85 years old when they entered the Promised Land. If the children of the generation not allowed into the Promised Land were at least 15 years old before the 40 years' wilderness wandering and therefore about 55 years old upon entering, it appears that Joshua and Caleb were at least 30 years older than the other Israelites. They would have been like parents in comparison to these "children."

Now that Joshua and the armies had opened the land for the tribes to settle, the immediate work before the people was to finish conquering the cities allotted to them. God had said He would be with them in their endeavor as they trusted Him.

Story:

Judah and Simeon

After Joshua died, the people asked the Lord, "Who should go fight against the Canaanites ✓to secure their inheritance first?"

God answered, "Judah."

So the tribe of Judah said to the tribe of Simeon, "Come help us conquer this land, and we will help you gain your territory afterward." Simeon answered that they would help Judah, and together the two tribes conquered Canaanites and Perizzites in their territory [locate Judah and Simeon in the second map below]. Actually, the Bible states, "*The Lord* gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into the hand of Judah and Simeon"; so let's give credit where credit is due.

At one city, Bezek, just west of Jerusalem [locate on second map], 10,000 enemy troops were slain by Judah. When the king of Bezek fled, Judah and Simeon chased him, caught him, and subdued him by cutting off his thumbs and big toes.¹ This king said, "When I conquered seventy kings, I cut off *their* thumbs and great toes, and they ate food under my table. The Lord has paid me back."

Judah took the king of Bezek to Jerusalem to live out his days. (At that time portions of Jerusalem were possessed by both Judah and Benjamin.² Judah had overtaken and burned one section. Benjamin had gained

a foothold, too, but could not drive out the Jebusites, who still lived in part of the city.)

As Judah had promised, that tribe helped Simeon defeat Canaanites who lived at Zephath (Hormah) [locate]. They devoted that city to destruction.

Judah captured three additional cities—Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron [locate]—and the land around them in Philistia. The Lord was with Judah, and he took possession of the hill country. However, he could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron.³ Wasn't God able to drive out these people? Certainly! ✓ Obviously, Judah did not trust God to fight for them against armies with chariots.

Caleb

Another example of an individual who bravely conquered his inherited land is Caleb. Remember him, the spy sent out by Moses who trusted God to give Israel the Promised Land about forty years earlier? In order to gain Hebron [locate], brave Caleb at the age of 85 slew three giants!

Debir [locate] was also in his territory. Caleb announced, "Whoever takes the city of Debir will get my daughter Achsah for a wife." Othniel became the man to take over that area. His prize? Caleb's daughter.

She, too, was rather enterprising, for she asked her father for more land with springs of water. Caleb granted her request.

The Kenites

Long ago, Moses had asked his father-in-law to go to Canaan with Israel. It appears that at least some of the family did go, for we read of the Kenites from the family of Jethro: "The descendants of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up with the people of Judah from the city of palms (Jericho) into the wilderness of Judah, which lies in the Negeb near Arad [locate], and they went and settled with the people." In other words, the Kenites lived among the people near Arad, which was in Judah's land, but did not conquer them.

Ephraim and Manasseh

Joseph had two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. One-half tribe of Manasseh had already gotten land on the east side of the Jordan River. The other half of Manasseh and the tribe of Ephraim together are called the house of Joseph in this Scripture. The Lord was with them, and they went to fight against Bethel [locate]. Spies who were scouting saw a man come out of the city. They requested of him, "Please show us the ✓ best way into the city, and we will deal kindly with you."

The man helped those two tribes of Joseph, showing them how to get into Bethel. Joseph was victorious, striking the city with the sword, and when they had conquered Bethel, they freed the man who had helped them. He and all his family moved to another place, built a city, and called its name Luz, the name Bethel had had earlier.

Although Ephraim and Manasseh were successful at Bethel, they were not completely effective in other places. Manasseh fought against five cities, gaining control but being unable to drive out the inhabitants. Ephraim did the same in one city.

Other tribes

This story of controlling but not driving out the inhabitants was true of other tribes of Israel: instead of driving out or completely destroying the population, Israelites lived among the people, sometimes demanding tribute from them and sometimes causing the conquered ones to work hard for them. In the case of Dan, however, the enemy actually forced Dan out of their valley land and into the mountains.

Living among the residents

Why did the tribes not totally drive out the occupants? One reason given in our Bibles is that God left the enemy in the land to prove whether Israel would follow Him or not (Judges 2:21–23). Would they prove to believe God and obey? How could they if they lived among people who worshiped false gods? Israel's

dwelling among the enemy was not a healthy situation because they would be tempted to serve the false gods of the people around them. Will they turn away from God? We will learn the answer in following lessons.

¹“ . . . whereby he was disabled both for fighting and for fleeing. So the Athenians cut off the thumbs of the right hand of the . . . inhabitants of the island of Aegina, to disable them from holding a spear” (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/judges-1-6.html>).

²“*And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem.* That is, that part of it which belonged to them, for it lay between Judah and Benjamin; and neither of them separately, nor both conjunctly, could drive out the Jebusites from it, particularly the strong hold on the top of Mount Sion, which they held to the times of David. Abarbinel is of opinion, that Jerusalem in those times was not a city enclosed about, but was a large province, part of which belonged to the tribe of Judah, and another to the tribe of Benjamin, and another was possessed by the Jebusites” (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/judges-1-21.html>).

³“ . . . *but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley*; “God forsaking them, because they were afraid of them, for a reason after mentioned, or through slothfulness, and being weary of fighting, or because they fell into some sins, which occasioned the divine displeasure . . . *because they had chariots of iron*; but this was no reason why they could not drive them out, if God was with them, who could as easily have delivered these into their hands, as the inhabitants of the mountains; but is the reason why they were afraid to fight with them, and to attempt to drive them out, and which they themselves gave why they did not” (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/judges-1-19.html>).

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:

“Judah was the tribe out of which our Lord was to spring: so that in Judah, Christ, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, went before them” (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/judges/1.html>).

One day the enemies of Jesus will come against Him for the last time. He will have complete victory, and those who believe in Him will be with Him forever. “They [God’s enemies] will make war on the Lamb [Jesus], and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful” (Revelation 17:4).

- Believers in Jesus Christ are in a battle against Satan. Through Christ we can be victorious.
- “Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up” (Galatians 6:9).

Activities:

- Play dough: sword; hand; foot; chariot
- Snack: “Crumbs” like popcorn or pieces of cookies. Have young students sit under a table and catch the “crumbs,” in a bowl perhaps, as Adoni-Bezek’s conquered kings would have done.
- Have two swords (plastic toys or ones prepared for “Handwork” below). Divide students into two groups—tribes and enemies. Give one sword to each group. Using the “cheat sheet” found below, when the teacher names a tribe, students will perform the actions listed.
- Sing “Fight the Good Fight with All Thy Might” found at <https://hymnary.org/hymn/CP1998/page/599>.
- Review questions: (Game: Print, back with paper towel (if using a flannel board), and cut out the nine clipart chariots found below. Place all the chariots in a pocket chart or on a flannel board. The student

who answers a question correctly removes a chariot from the board or chart. The idea is to defeat the iron chariots in the plains of the land.)

1. Which tribe did God say should be the first to fight the Canaanites? [Judah.]
2. Which tribe helped Judah? [Simeon.]
3. How many men from the city of Bezek died? [10,000.]
4. Who gave the Canaanites and the Perizzites into the hands of Judah and Simeon? [The Lord.]
5. What happened to the king of Bezek? [His thumbs and big toes were cut off; he died at Jerusalem.]
6. Name one of the two tribes who had portions of Jerusalem. [Judah; Benjamin; also the Jebusites.]
7. What or who did Caleb offer the man who could take the city of Debir? [His daughter, Achsah.]
8. Why could Judah and other tribes not drive out the inhabitants of the plain? [Because they had chariots of iron; they failed to trust God.]
9. What did the inhabitants who were not driven out do to or for the tribes that controlled them? [They paid tribute; they did hard labor.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- Revelation 17:4: They will make war on the Lamb [Jesus], and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are called and chosen and faithful.

Handwork:

- Using the clipart sword found below as a pattern, the teacher should cut out swords from heavy cardboard. Students may color the hilt and cover the blade with aluminum foil. Glue or tape the memory verse (found below) to one side of the sword.

inhabitants

to devote to destruction

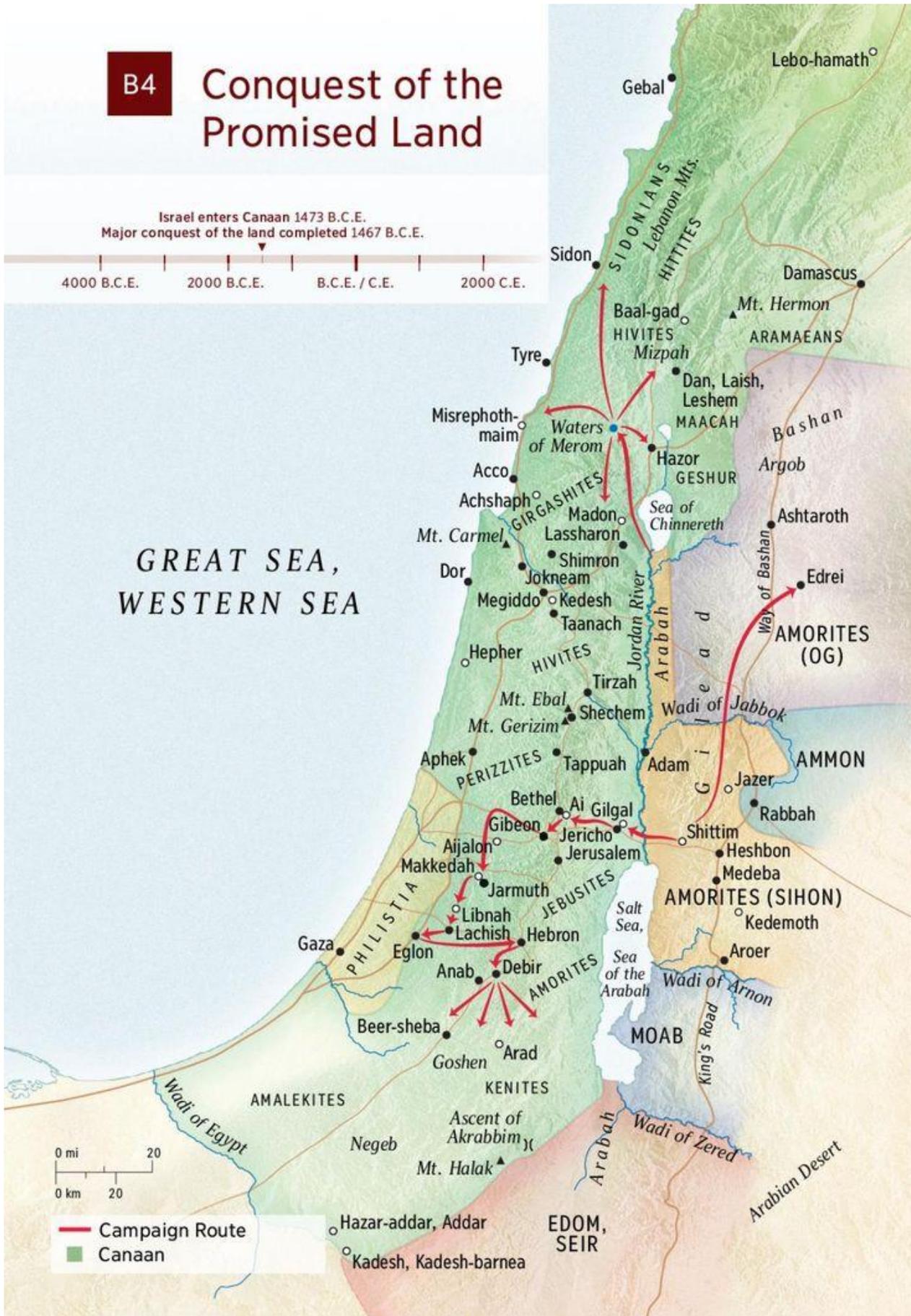
tribute

B4

Conquest of the Promised Land

Israel enters Canaan 1473 B.C.E.
Major conquest of the land completed 1467 B.C.E.

4000 B.C.E. 2000 B.C.E. B.C.E. / C.E. 2000 C.E.



This map is a tool to locate the previous nations of the Promised Land.

<https://i.pinimg.com/736x/8a/69/69/8a6969e003395892156f9c0312fc0d2e.jpg>

THE 12 TRIBES OF ANCIENT ISRAEL

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“Thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water.”—*Judges* i. 15.

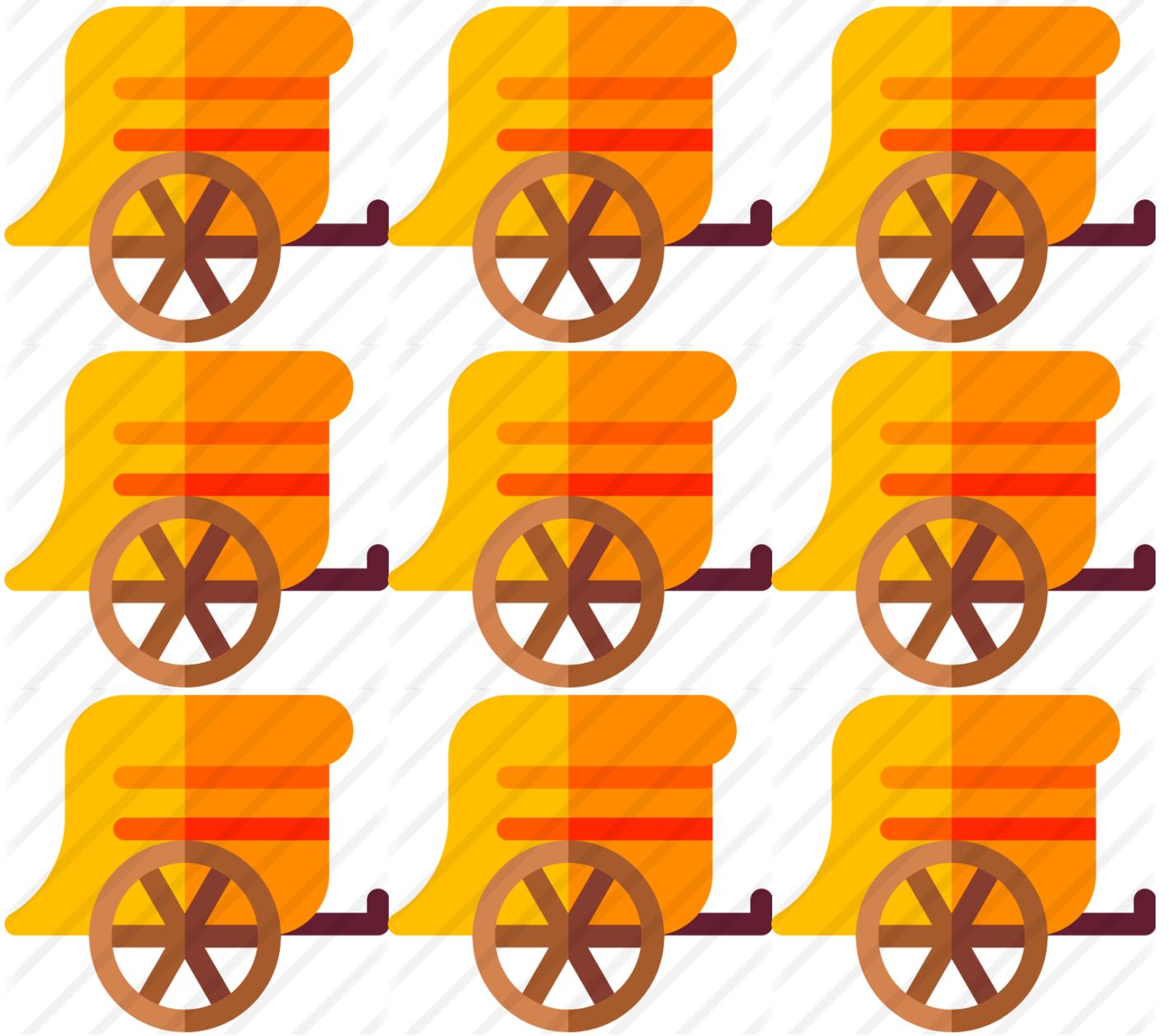
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<https://st-takla.org/Gallery/Bible/Illustrations/Black-and-White-Bible-Images/Initials-A-P/judges-1-15-thou-hast-given-me-a-south-land.html>

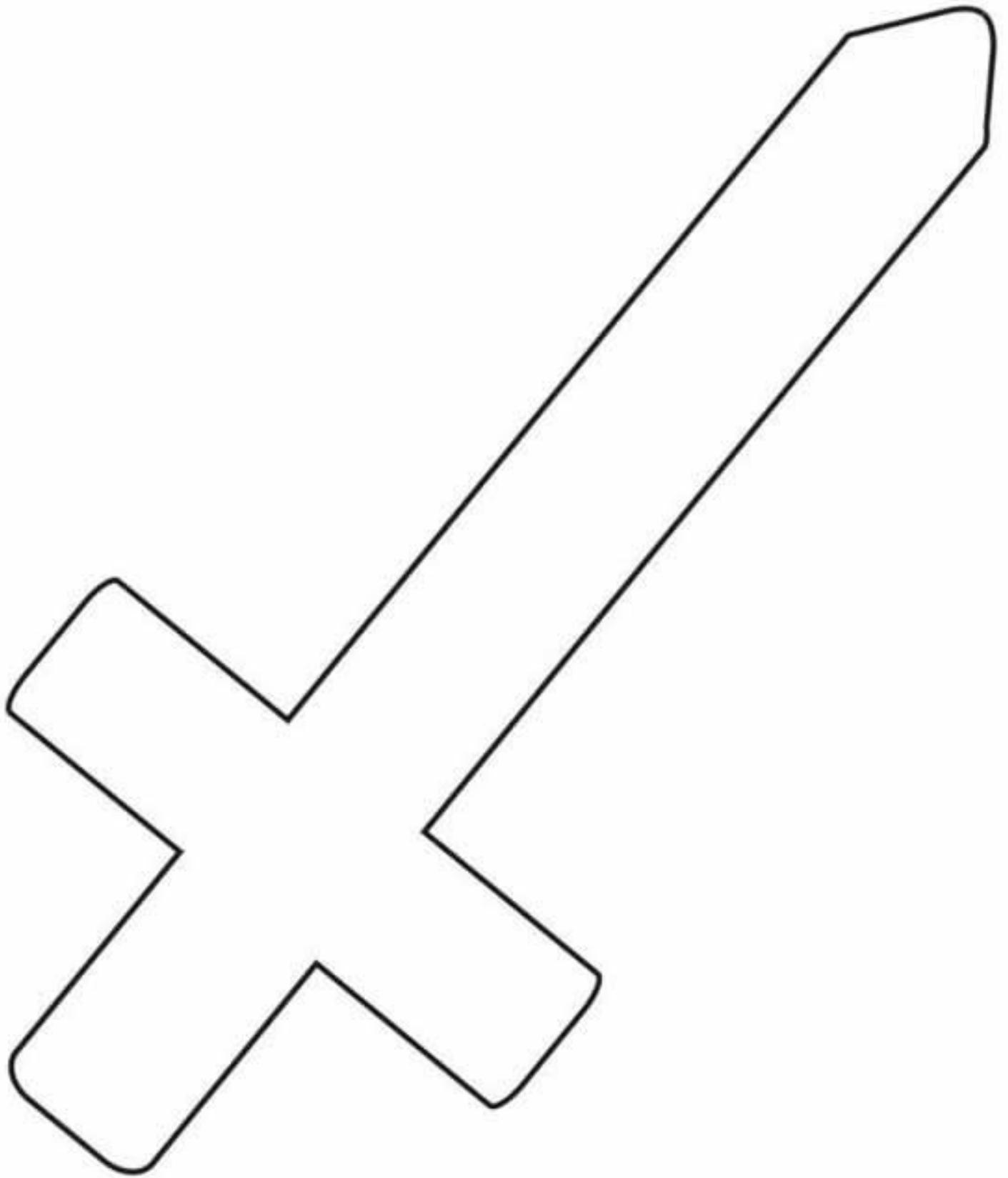




Tribe	Tribe Action	Enemy Action
Judah and Simeon	Advance against enemy	Fall down “dead”
Ephraim and Manasseh	Advance against enemy	Fall down “dead”
Manasseh	Advance 5 times	Stand still 5 times
Ephraim	Advance once	Stand still once
Judah and Simeon when enemy had iron chariots	2. Retreat	1. Advance against tribe
Dan	2. Retreat several steps	1. Advance against tribe
Benjamin and Judah at Jerusalem	Advance	Stand still
Other tribes	Advance against enemy	Stand still; pay money; work



<https://image.flaticon.com/icons/png/512/2276/2276563.png>



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for he is Lord of lords and King of kings,
and those with him are called and chosen and faithful
(Revelation 17:4).**

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