

# A Family's Example

## A Family's Example: Study Guide

### SHORT-ANSWER QUIZ

*Instructions: Answer the following questions in 2-3 complete sentences, drawing your information from the provided lesson materials.*

1. Who were the Recabites and what was their ancestral origin?
2. What specific commands did the ancestor Jonadab give to his descendants?
3. What was the primary purpose of Jeremiah's test of the Recabites?
4. Describe the historical context that led the Recabites to be in Jerusalem at the time of Jeremiah's test.
5. How did the Recabites respond to Jeremiah's offer of wine, and what justification did they provide?
6. According to the pastor's notes, what specific quality of the Recabites did God commend?
7. How does the lesson use the musical *Fiddler on the Roof* to illustrate the role of tradition?
8. This test was one of several "visual aids" Jeremiah used. Name at least one other example mentioned in the lesson context.
9. Despite their strict adherence to tradition, what command were the Recabites forced to modify, and why?
10. Who was Jonadab, and what significant role did he play in the history of the northern kingdom of Israel?

## ANSWER KEY

1. The Recabites were a separatist clan who stemmed from their ancestor Jonadab, the son of Rechab (c. 840 B.C.). They were related to the Kenites, which made them kindred of Jethro, Moses' father-in-law. They sought to return to the simplicity of a nomadic lifestyle.
2. Jonadab commanded his descendants to never drink wine, build houses, sow seed, or plant vineyards. Instead, they were to dwell in tents all their days. This established an austere and nomadic lifestyle for the clan.
3. The test was commanded by the Lord as a visual aid and a rebuke to the nation of Judah for its unfaithfulness to God. The Recabites' steadfast obedience to their ancestor was used to highlight Judah's disobedience to God's commands.
4. The events occurred at the close of King Jehoiakim's reign (c. 606 B.C.), a time when the armies of the Babylonians (Chaldeans) and Syrians were ravaging the land. The nomadic Recabites were driven from the open country and forced to take refuge inside the city of Jerusalem for safety.
5. The Recabites refused to drink the wine Jeremiah offered them. They stated that their "father" or ancestor, Jonadab son of Rechab, had commanded them and their descendants to never drink wine.
6. God did not necessarily approve of the ascetic restrictions themselves, but He commended the Recabites' fidelity. Their unwavering obedience to the commands of their forefather for over two hundred years was the praiseworthy characteristic.
7. The lesson quotes Tevya from *Fiddler on the Roof*, who explains that traditions help people know who they are and what God expects of them, providing stability. Without them, life would be "as shaky as a fiddler on the roof."
8. Other visual aids Jeremiah used as teaching tools included a soiled linen sash (girdle), a visit to a potter's house, and wearing a makeshift yoke to symbolize submission to Babylon.
9. The Recabites were forced to stop dwelling in tents in the open country. The invasion of the land by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar and the Syrians compelled them to seek shelter within the walls of Jerusalem.
10. Jonadab (also called Jehonadab) was the ancestor of the Recabites who lived around 840 B.C. He was a prominent figure who assisted Jehu in purging the northern kingdom of Israel from Baal worship.

### Essay Questions

*Instructions: The following questions are designed for deeper reflection and longer-form answers. Use the source materials to construct a thorough response.*

1. Analyze the contrast between the faithfulness of the Recabites to their human ancestor and the unfaithfulness of the nation of Judah to God. How does Jeremiah leverage this contrast to deliver a powerful rebuke?
2. Discuss the role and value of tradition as presented in the source materials. Using the example of the Recabites and the analogy from *Fiddler on the Roof*, explain when traditions are beneficial and what ultimately validates their worth.

3. The pastor's notes state that God did not necessarily approve of the specific restrictions Jonadab placed on his descendants, but rather commended their fidelity. Explore the implications of this distinction between the content of a conviction and the faithfulness to that conviction.
4. Describe the historical setting and the specific location of the test in Jeremiah 35. How did the public nature of the event, taking place within a chamber of the temple, contribute to the impact of Jeremiah's message?
5. Examine the austere lifestyle mandated by Jonadab. Based on the source context, what were the likely motivations for these rules, particularly the prohibitions against wine and agriculture, in relation to the religious practices of the time like Baal worship?

---

### Glossary of Key Terms

Term/Name	Definition
<b>Baal worship</b>	A form of worship prevalent in the region which the Recabites' prohibition on wine may have been intended to help them escape. It was associated with wine drinking and carousing, and Jonadab was prominent in purging it from the northern kingdom.
<b>Chaldeans</b>	The army of Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Their presence in the land, along with the Syrians, forced the Recabites to seek refuge in Jerusalem.
<b>Hanan</b>	Referred to as "a man of God," likely a prophet in sympathy with Jeremiah. The test of the Recabites took place in the temple chamber belonging to his sons, who were probably his disciples.
<b>Jaazaniah</b>	The probable leader of the group of Recabites whom Jeremiah brought into the temple for the test.
<b>Jehonadab (Jonadab)</b>	The son of Rechab and ancestor of the Recabites, who lived around 840 B.C. He commanded his descendants to live a nomadic lifestyle, abstaining from wine, permanent houses, and agriculture. He was also prominent in helping Jehu purge Baal worship from the northern kingdom.
<b>Jehoiakim</b>	The son of Josiah and king of Judah during whose reign the events of Jeremiah 35 occurred (c. 606 B.C.).
<b>Jehu</b>	A figure from the northern kingdom's history (c. 840 B.C.) who, with the help of Jonadab, purged the kingdom of Baal worship.
<b>Jeremiah</b>	The prophet who, at the Lord's command, tested the Recabites to create a visual lesson for the unfaithful people of Judah.
<b>Jethro</b>	Moses' father-in-law. The Recabites were kindred of Jethro through their relation to the Kenites.
<b>Kenites</b>	A group to whom the Recabites were related.
<b>Maaseiah</b>	The son of Shallum, identified as the "keeper of the door" at the temple. He was probably in charge of the money for temple repair and ranked next to the high priest and his deputy.
<b>Nazirites</b>	A group mentioned for comparison. The Recabites' austere and nomadic lifestyle was reminiscent of the Nazirites (cf. Numbers 6:1-21).

<b>Nebuchadrezzar</b>	King of Babylon. His army's invasion of the land of Judah forced the Recabites to relocate to Jerusalem.
<b>Recabites</b>	A separatist clan descended from Jonadab. For over two hundred years, they faithfully followed his commands to live a nomadic life, abstaining from wine and sedentary occupations as a way to maintain simplicity and avoid corrupting influences.
<b>Syrians</b>	An army that, along with the Babylonians, was ravaging the land of Judah, causing the Recabites to flee to Jerusalem for safety.