

The Book of
JUDGES

Testing the Heart of God's Children



Self-Made Religion

Judges 17:1-13
Lesson 17

Introduction

The last chapters of Judges seem to be written as an appendix to the rest of the book. They don't take on the same tone as the previous chapters showing us a picture of the Judges, but instead focus on the extent of the depravity of God's people. Israel has so mixed the worship practices of the pagan nations into their worship of the Lord that it became a self-made religion.

The true sanctuary where all worship was to take place was in Shiloh at this time. Micah made a shrine, where he placed his pagan idols. He also made a copy of the Ephod and consecrated one of his sons as a priest. When the Levite journeyed through, Micah was only too happy to have him as his own personal priest. The Levite's background would add legitimacy to his service, hoping to gain God's favor. It is a vivid picture of the marriage of pagan culture and worship of the Lord that Israel was engaged in.

Things were so bad that the author says "Everyone did what was right in their own eyes." With no central authority, the judges did not undertake significant spiritual or social reform among the people, nor were they in a position to judge inter-tribal issues that arose. The priesthood, the tribal leadership and the judges that God instituted, are seen in the narrative to be part of the problem rather than part of the solution.



Looking for Gold - What does it say?

The first step in mining for gold is getting the lay of the land. **Carefully observe the text** looking to see where you might dig to find hidden treasure. **Mark your text** looking for repeated words, contrasts or similarities. Look for answers to, Who? What? When? Where? Why or How?

Setting the scene: Read Ex. 32:26-29, Num 1:49-53, Deut. 10:8-9, 12:1-8, 29-32, Hebrews 11:32-12:29 for added insight. Use an atlas or other sources to place the cities in the appropriate place on your map. Pay attention to who's inheritance they are occupying.

Judges 17:1-6

1 Now there was a man from the mountains of Ephraim, whose name was Micah. 2 And he said to his mother, "The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from you, and on which you put a curse, even saying it in my ears — here is the silver with me; I took it." And his mother said, "May you be blessed by the Lord, my son!" 3 So when he had returned the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, "I had wholly dedicated the silver from my hand to the Lord for my son, to make a carved image and a molded image; now therefore, I will return it to you." 4 Thus he returned the silver to his mother. Then his mother took two hundred shekels of silver and gave them to the silversmith, and he made it into a carved image and a molded image; and they were in the house of Micah. 5 The man Micah had a shrine, and made an ephod and household idols; and he consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. 6 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.



Digging Deeper

Dig deeper using other resources such as a dictionary, concordance, maps, cross-references. Notate where you found it to share with the group. Look for commands to obey or questions to be answered. What does God want you to know about Himself?

Boiling it Down – What does it mean?



What **lesson** can I draw from my observations?
State each lesson in a simple sentence (aim for 10 words or less).

Judges 17:1-6 _____

Judges 17:7-13 _____



Refined as Gold - How can I apply it?



How should it change me? Ask yourself, "What **course of action** do I need to take to apply each lesson?" (aim for 10 words or less)

Judges 17:1-6 _____

Judges 17:7-13 _____

Challenge: Use cross-references to find correlating scripture that backs up the main point of the chapter. Summarize your findings in your own words.



Storing up Your Treasure . . .

What did God say? Deut. 12:32

What wrong thoughts did Micah's mother exhibit?

In what way did Micah mix his thoughts with what God said?

What is wrong with Micah's thinking in v.13?

What words or phrases are repeated?

Checking for Clarity: See if you can boil down the meaning of **each section** into one or two words. This helps you fully understand what the author is trying to convey. (It's fun to alliterate if you want to try) Did you catch the vision?

Judges 17:1-6 _____

Judges 17:7-13 _____

Bars of Gold: State the main **point** of the passage in the form of a title.

Flex Your Muscles: Can you discover an N.T. example of this O.T. truth?



Hide Your Treasure in your Heart

Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the hearts. Prov 21:2

Radiating His Truth . . .

God has revealed Himself, and He demands that our understanding of Him conforms to what He has revealed about Himself in His Word. – Gary Inrig

