

The Book of
JUDGES

Testing the Heart of God's Children



Divide and Conquer

Judges 12:1-15

Lesson 12

Introduction

The tribe of Ephraim is sulking again, because they were left out of the battle. As before, they wanted to share the glory of the victory, but they hadn't been too eager to risk their lives in the battle. Their underlying intent was a land grab to claim what land they thought they deserved. It should be remembered that the original tribes of Israel were set up as individual entities joined together by their common faith and heritage. Ephraim attempted to nullify any territorial claims by the Gileadites by negating their tribal status. Gilead was historically one of the clans from the tribe of Manasseh. By identifying them as mixed stock (from Ephraim and Manasseh), they were classifying them as squatters on the land with no rights to the territory they had reclaimed from Ammon.

Jephthah was overcome by his anger when Ephraim's insults ignited his rage. Civil war erupts and the Ephraimites were defeated, playing an important role in Israel's subsequent history. Joshua encouraged all of Israel to be united together and help each other but by the time of the Judges, relationships have deteriorated into tribal rivalry and war.



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 Num. 21:21-26, Proverbs 15:1-2, 17:14, Matthew 12:25, Luke 11:17, Rom. 12 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 12:1-7

1 Then the men of Ephraim gathered together, crossed over toward Zaphon, and said to Jephthah, "Why did you cross over to fight against the people of Ammon, and did not call us to go with you? We will burn your house down on you with fire!"

2 And Jephthah said to them, "My people and I were in a great struggle with the people of Ammon; and when I called you, you did not deliver me out of their hands. 3 So when I saw that you would not deliver me, I took my life in my hands and crossed over against the people of Ammon; and the Lord delivered them into my hand. Why then have you come up to me this day to fight against me?" 4 Now Jephthah gathered together all the men of Gilead and fought against Ephraim. And the men of Gilead defeated Ephraim, because they said, "You Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim among the Ephraimites and among the Manassites." 5 The Gileadites seized the fords of the Jordan before the Ephraimites arrived. And when any Ephraimite who escaped said, "Let me cross over," the men of Gilead would say to him, "Are you an Ephraimite?" If he said, "No," 6 then they would say to him, "Then say, 'Shibboleth!'" And he would say, "Sibboleth," for he could not pronounce it right. Then they would take him and kill him at the fords of the Jordan. There fell at that time forty-two thousand Ephraimites.

7 And Jephthah judged Israel six years. Then Jephthah the Gileadite died and was buried among the cities of Gilead.

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 12:1-7 _____

Judges 12:8-15 _____



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 12:1-7 _____

Judges 12:8-15 _____

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



Storing up Your Treasure . . .

What did God say through Joshua? Josh. 1:13-15

Did Jephthah have a valid complaint?

How could Jephthah have better handled the confrontation? Romans 12:17-21

What is God's thought on settling a dispute? Rom. 12:21

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 12:1-7 _____

Judges 12:8-15 _____

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

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
For brethren to dwell together in unity! Ps 133:1

Radiating His Truth . . .

When people are wrong and refuse to accept logical reasoning and confess their faults, they often turn to violence in order to protect their reputation. – Warren Wiersbe

