

## COMMUNITY GROUP STUDY GUIDE

**Self-directed Worship**

JUDGES 17-18

**OVERVIEW**

The famed philosopher Frederich Nietzsche once said that “God was dead...and we have killed him.” While this is an impossibility, let us imagine for a moment a world where this was true. What would it be like? If we all just did what was right in our own eyes, what would our world be like? What if self was supreme? This is the question that the book of Judges seeks to answer.

**APPLY // JUDGES 16**

1. How did the text/sermon lead you to worship?
2. Was there a particular song we sang that was worshipful to you?
3. What from the text/sermon was convicting and/or challenging?
4. How did Samson reveal his pride? How does pride blind us from our need of God? What might that look like in our lives?
5. What did Samson appear to be trusting in? Explain.
6. How are we tempted to live like Samson by trusting in things other than God?
7. When we talk about “weakness” what does that mean?
8. Give specific examples of being weak for the purposes of being strong.

**STUDY // JUDGES 17-18**

Study the passage of Scripture aiming to faithfully interpret and apply what you observe. Remember we study God’s word not just to increase our knowledge, but to increase our trust in and treasuring of Jesus Christ.

Note: Healthy Bible study asks three questions:

- **Observation:** What do I see?
- **Interpretation:** What does it mean?
- **Application:** Why does it matter?

These questions below are aimed at helping you observe and interpret the text. The following week’s questions for the same passage aim more toward application. While we cannot completely separate these three types of questions, this is a helpful framework to have in mind as you lead your group through the passage.

Note from ESV Study Bible: [Judg. 17:1–21:25](#) The Depths of Israel’s Apostasy. The book of Judges closes with two sections ([chs. 17–18 and 19–21](#)) characterized by the statements, “In those days there was no king in Israel” ([17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25](#)) and, “everyone did what was right in his own eyes” ([17:6; 21:25](#)). Whereas [chs. 2–16](#) describe external threats to Israel, [chs. 17–21](#) describe internal threats to religious worship and tribal unity. The most sordid and tragic stories in the book are found

here, for the ultimate depths of Israel's apostasy have now been reached. The message is that if Israel had had a godly king functioning as a king should ([Deut. 17:18–20](#)), things would have been better.

[Judg. 17:1–18:31](#) Religious Corruption. The first concluding section (cf. note on [17:1–21:25](#)) depicts Micah's establishment of his own private shrine, featuring an attendant priest, and tells of the Danites' migration, during which they took Micah's priest and the symbols of his shrine away from him.

1. Read Judges 17. What do you observe about Micah's character? What do you observe about Micah's mother's character?
2. What is the approach of Micah and his mother in relating to and worshipping God?
3. How is this different than the way God has commanded his people to relate to and worship him? (cf. Ex. 20:4)
4. How does verse 6 connect us to the rest of Judges?
5. What's the significance of being a Levite? Why does a Levite excite Micah?
6. What do you observe about the character of this Levite?
7. What is Micah's aim in all of this?
8. Read Judges 18. What do we learn about the tribe of Dan? Why don't the Danites have an inheritance (see 1:34)? What does this tell us about the peril of disobedience?
9. Notice in verse 5 the five Danite men ask the priest to inquire "God" not "the LORD/Yahweh" which is the covenant name of God. What's significant about this?
10. In verses 11–12 more Danites come to the house of Micah. What do they end up doing with the priest and images? What should they have done? What does this tell us about how the Danites relate to and worship God?
11. Trace the Levite priest's path (cf. 17:7–12; 18:18–21; 30–31). What seems to be driving his decisions?
12. What happens to eventually happens to Micah? How does this compare to his hopes of 17:13?
13. We finally get the name of the Levite priest – Jonathan from the lineage of Moses. Why is it significant he's in Moses' family tree?
14. Notice this account concludes with reminding us "the house of God was at Shiloh." How does this inform what Dan and Micah should have been doing?

## ACCOUNTABILITY

Relationships developed and deepened during accountability provide regular encouragement, and when necessary admonition, to spur each other on to delight in the supremacy of Jesus Christ. Ask one another heart-probing, clarifying questions, and help each other apply the gospel to your lives.

**QUESTION:** Are there areas of your life you're pretending to be strong? How might you become / recognize your weakness that God might become your strength?