

Brief Introduction to Judges 17-21

Most likely, the life of Samson overlapped with the lives of Eli and Samuel because the Philistines are mentioned as Israel's primary rival during their lives. So if you wanted to study what happened after the life of Samson, you would proceed to the book of 1 Samuel.

Chapters 17-21 do not tell of any additional judges but of what was happening among Israel after Joshua's death, when Israel did not know the Lord and did evil (2:10-11; 20:28 Phinehas, grandson of Aaron is high priest during the events of this section).

Judges 17 Individual Idolatry

v1-6 Micah illustrates that Israel's problems always began in the home.

Ephraim did not drive out the Canaanites (1:29) and this illustrates the results. No number of feasts, holy days, or appearances at the tabernacle could compensate for the lack of holiness in the home. Nothing ought to surprise us when we know that people are doing what is right in their own eyes.

What is lacking in this home, simply based on the facts presented?

List each item named in verse 5, discuss its purpose, and what, from God's plan, this was a substitute for.

Give a modern example you have seen of men substituting things that are borrowed from and substituted for God's plan.

We learned in Judges 2 that major changes can take place in just one generation. What have you learned from your study of Judges that helps you to know how to combat such changes in the generation which follows yours?

v7-13 Micah and the Levite show us how far Israel had gone

On what basis did Micah believe God would bless him?

If Micah had grown wealthier in the upcoming months and years, would that have proved that God was blessing him? How do we know when God is blessing us intentionally and specifically?

Verse 6 says *everyone did what was right in their own eyes*. Where were they getting their ideas for what was right? For example, where did Micah (obviously a Hebrew) get the idea for his shrine, ephod, household idol, and priests?

While the practice of Micah seems extreme to us, it simply shows the power of influence. What are some influences around us and our families today that are dangerous because of the external similarities?