

MICAH'S IDOL WORSHIP**Judges 17 – 18**

Lesson Memory Verse: Psalm 34:14 – “Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.”

Lesson Aim: Sin will be punished. We should fear sin and keep far away from it.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes)

KEY (for Attention): Children have a natural sense of fairness. If some child does wrong, the other children generally agree that that child should be punished for his wrong-doing. Use this sense of fairness to attract their attention by telling a story (either true or fiction) of a child that did something wrong. Then ask them what kind of punishment they think that child should receive. Most, if not all of the children in your class, will believe the child in the story should be punished. Be sure to get each child to answer. No matter what discipline they suggest, you have made your point: **sin will be punished**. If you wish, you may remind them that God's punishments may be different than ours, but He is fair and will punish all sin.

HE (for Authority): Since God punishes all sin, He tells us what to do in Psalm 34:14. Explain this verse in simple language for children. “Depart from evil” – stay away from sin; go away from people who are doing bad things. “Do good” – think of something that is good and do it. “Seek peace” – do not pick a fight; do not get into a fight, if you can help it; stop a fight, if you can. “Pursue it” – try every way you can think of to stop a fight without getting into to sin.

Explain that this verse is God's command. When it is obeyed, it will protect them from getting into sin and then getting punished for doing wrong.

SEE (Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scriptures for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.

As you read Judges 17-18 make notes on the thoughts that blessed your own heart. Also make notes on the thoughts that you believe will be helpful for your class. After you have carefully studied the Bible, you are ready to read these notes to see if they can give any further information to help you in your preparation for teaching. In the lesson notes that follow you will find the **SEE** Section (**Facts to Know for Apperception**) is for teaching Biblical truth and the **WE** Section (**Lessons to learn for Application**) is for applying Biblical truth. In this lesson we shall find ten sins that Christians must run away from.

1. Sin of Stealing (17:1, 2)

Micah stole 1100 pieces of silver from his mother, a large amount of money. After she put a curse on the thief, he returned the silver.

WE: We must not steal from anyone (Ex. 20:15).

2, Sin of Making Idols (17:3-5)

Micah's mother gave 200 pieces of silver to the idol-maker for making a graven image and a molten image (this could be one idol or two). They probably used an idol in their worship of the Lord, but this was wrong. The Lord forbid it in Ex. 20:4. This idol (or idols) was given to Micah to put in his shrine, where he kept the teraphim (household gods), so it could be worshipped (v. 5).

WE: We must remove all idols, crosses, medallions, pictures, and any items that are used for worshipping God. In John 4:24 we are told to worship God in spirit and in truth, so anything that is used in worshipping God displeases Him.

3. Sin of Worshipping Idols (17:5)

Micah worshipped the idols that he had in his shrine and had one of his own sons made into a priest so he could feel more religious in his worship. All of this was against God's Word. God had said they were not to worship idols (Ex. 20:5). He also said that priests were to be chosen from only the tribe of Levi and from the family of Aaron (Num 18), and his son was from the tribe of Ephraim. Therefore, his son was not qualified to be a priest.

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WE: We must never worship or bow down to anything but God. Also, since Jesus died for us and rose again to go to heaven, we need no priest on earth to worship God. Jesus is our priest (Heb. 4:14-16).

4. Sin of Lawlessness (17:6-12)

Everyone did that which they thought was right. They had no king to obey and they did not obey God's laws. As a result, they sinned greatly. Even the tribe of Levi, which God had chosen to serve Him in His holy tabernacle, was not obedient to Him. In this story a Levite was willing to become a priest in a house of idols! This was a terrible sin against God.

WE: We must obey those whom God has chosen to rule over us (parents, teachers, pastors, police). However, we are not to obey them if they tell us to do something that would cause us disobey God's commands. We must always obey God.

5. Sin of Superstition (17:13)

Micah thought God would be good to him because he had a Levite for a priest. This was being superstitious. God could not favor him because he was sinning with idols in his worship.

WE: We must not live by superstitions that people tell us. We must live by God's laws. We show our respect for Him and our love for His commandments when we obey them (John 14:23).

6. Sin of Unbelief (18:1-12)

The tribe of Dan had been given a good portion of land in which to live, but because of unbelief they failed to conquer it (Jud. 1:34, 35; 18:1). Instead of trusting God to help them conquer the land that He had given them, they decided to find some other land that they could conquer without His help. So the Danites looked for a different place to live even though God had not directed them to do it. They did find some other land, but it caused them to drift away from God because of their unbelief in His power to help them. Their city of Dan later was appointed to be one of the main places for idolatry in Israel. It was where King Jeroboam put a golden calf and told his people to worship it. God later punished them by letting the King of Assyria conquer them and remove them from their land to live in foreign countries.

WE: We must love God, believe God and obey God. Then God will be very good to us. We must not be like the tribe of Dan in their unbelief. Unbelief is the most wicked of all sins (Heb. 3:12) and will keep us from being blessed by God. Instead, God will punish us for our unbelief and for the sins that come from not believing Him.

7. Sin of Covetousness (18:13-16)

The tribe of Dan had learned from their spies that Micah had idols (18:2-6), and it appeared that these idols had directed their spies to a good land (18:7-10). Therefore, they coveted these idols for themselves. But God says it is a sin to covet (Ex. 20:17).

WE: We must not covet, that is, we must not strongly desire what someone else has. If it is good for us to have it, ask God for it, and He will give it to us. If it is not good for us, God will keep it from us, and we will be happier without it.

8. Sin of Shameless Stealing (18:17-21)

The sin of stealing by the Danites was different than that of Micah (17:2). Micah secretly stole from his mother and then he returned the money. The Danites openly stole Micah's idols and his priest and then refused to return them. Both sins are wicked, but the Danites were shameless in their sin which made it even worse.

WE: We must never steal, and never be shameless in stealing. That is being proud of our sin and "God resists the proud" (1 Peter 5:5).

9. Sin of Murder (18:22-29)

Micah overtook the Danites and asked for his idols and priest to be returned, but they threatened to kill him if he kept asking. There was wicked murder in their hearts (Ex. 20:13; Mt. 5:21, 22). Notice, Micah

earlier had stolen money and now his things were being stolen from him. Sin is always punished, and oftentimes the punishment is the same as the sin.

WE: We must beware of hating anyone. Jesus said that hating someone is like murder. God will punish our hatred and all of our other sins, but He sent His Son to take our sins and suffer the punishment for us. That is why He died on the cross. He died for our sins. He died for us. If we believe Jesus was punished for our sins and we sincerely thank Him for doing it, we can ask Him to save us from going to Hell and He will do it. Have you asked Jesus to be your Savior?

10. Sin of Spreading Idolatry (18:30, 31)

The Levite priest that sinned was Jonathan, a grandson of Moses. It was bad enough for him to be an idolatrous priest for a family, but it was far worse for him to be an idolatrous priest for the whole tribe of Dan. As a result, he spread his sin to many more people, and Dan became a center for idolatry (1 Kings 12:26-30). He will be punished for this horrible sin when he stands before God someday.

WE: We are warned not spread our sin to others by the way we live, or by what we say. It is bad enough to sin without spreading it to others. If we spread our sins, we will be responsible for all those who follow us in our sins (Luke 12:48).

BE (for Action): How many sins can you name that were mentioned in this lesson? How was Micah's sin punished? (He had his idols and priest stolen from him.) How will the Danites be punished? (They became a center for idolatry, which caused them to be conquered by the Assyrians and taken from their land.) How will the Levite priest be punished? (He, no doubt, will have to stand before God as the chief person responsible for the sin of idolatry in the tribe of Dan.)

How about your sins? Are you ready to be punished for your sins by God? There is Someone Who has already taken the punishment for your sins. It is Jesus Christ. If you will turn away from your sins and confess them to God, and if you will receive Jesus Christ as your Savior, He will save you from your punishment. Do you want to be free from your sins and from the punishment of them? Then humbly ask Jesus to be your Savior today. (Offer to pray with those who want to be saved right after class is dismissed.)