

1/19/14

Judges 17-18

The last five chapters of the book of Judges is really an appendix, giving an sense of the general confusion, corruptness and apostasy of the people of God, focusing on two events.

1. The establishing of the city of Dan in the north, which became an idolatrous shrine. Judges 17-18
2. The moral confusion that nearly brought the tribe of Benjamin to a point of extermination. Judges 19-21
3. Three times we are told that there was no king in Israel in those days. Judges 17:6; 18:1; 19:1; 21:25
4. This tells us that all these event were written when the kingdom was established by David.

These five chapter are not in chronological order, after the death of Samson, but possibly occurred during Samson's time, if not earlier.

17:1-18:31 The religious and civil anarchy.

17:1-6 *The religious confusion of Micah and his mother.*

- 1) Micah means, "who is like God" was from the mountains of Ephraim, whose name was Micah. vs. 1
- 2) Micah confessed he had stolen 1,100 shekels of silver, reflecting on the curse she had pronounce, but she blessed him,

"And his mother said, "*May you be blessed by the LORD, my son!*" vs. 2

- 3) She then revealed she had dedicated the money to the LORD for Micah all along to make an idle, so he wanted to returned it to her. vs. 3
 - a) Such a dedication is a contradiction to God's word. Ex. 20; Deut. 5
 - b) A carved image was out of various materials.
 - c) A molded image was pour into a mold.
- 4) His mother gave Micah 200 shekels of silver, he gave them to the silversmith, who made him a carved and molded idle, setting up a shrine in his house. vs. 4
- 5) Micah also made an ephod and household idols, consecrating his son to be his priest. vs. 5
 - a) In the law the first-born were to be the priest of the home.
 - b) After the Exodus God redeemed back the first-born priesthood by taking the tribe of Levi to Himself.
- 6) The rule of the day in the time of the book of Judges was religious and civil anarchy, relativism. vs. 6

* "In those days *there was* no king in Israel; everyone did *what was* right in his own eyes."

17:7-13 *Micah hired a Levite to be his priest.*

- 1) A young man from Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah and a Levite departed looking for a place to live and work, arriving to Micah's house in the mountains of Ephraim. vs. 7-8
 - a) Bethlehem was about 7 miles south of Jerusalem, Ephraim about 25 miles north of Jerusalem.
 - b) The Levite was the priestly tribe.
- 2) Micah finding out he was from Bethlehem and a Levite priest, he offered him housing, clothes, so he accepted. vs. 9-10
- 3) Micah loved him like a son, consecrated him as his priest, living with him. vs. 11-12
 - * Totally contrary to the law of Moses!
- 4) Micah was convinced he had the blessing of God, due to having a Levite as priest! vs. 13
 - * Again we see the religious attitude of the day a corruption of a personal relationship with God!

18:1-6 *The tribe of Dan searched new territory.*

- 1) The entire political, religious and civil order was apostate and anarchical, "In those days *there was no king in Israel.*" vs. 1a

- 2) The tribe of the Danites had failed to take possession of all their land given to the by Joshua. vs. 1b-c
 - * They had allowed the Philistines to keep them from the plains in the hill country. Judges 1
- 3) The tribe of Dan sent five men of valor from Zorah and Eshtaol, to spy out the land and search it, arriving at the mountains of Ephraim and took rest at the house of Micah. vs. 2
- 4) While at the house of Micah, they heard and recognized the voice of the young Levite and enquired how he got there and his purpose. They turned aside and said to him. vs. 3
- 5) Micah informed them he had been hired to be the priest of Micah's priest. vs. 4
- 6) The Danites asked the Levite to enquire of God if their journey would prosper and he affirmed it would and pronounced the presence of God to go with them. vs. 5-6
 - a) What a contradiction an apostate priest that hired himself out and now certainly will give the answer wanting to be heard by those enquiring!
 - b) He is neither speaking for God nor knows God.

18:7-10 *The report of the new territory.*

- 1) The five men proceeded north to Laish encountering a group of people. vs. 7
 - a) The area is beautiful with a great nature reserved, at the foot of Mount Hermon, the other is at Caesarea Philippi, which are two of three headwaters of the Jordan Rives.
* About 100 miles north of Mount Ephraim.
 - b) The people dwelt safely, like the Sidonians, quiet and secure. vs. 7a-e
 - c) They had no rulers in the land to oppose them and far from the Sidonians, having no ties with anyone. vs. 7f-h
- 2) The five spies returned to Zorah and Eshtaol and were asked for the report. vs. 8
- 3) The spies declared four things. vs. 9
 - a) To arise and go against them.
 - b) They had seen the land, it *is* very good.
 - c) They were to not hesitate, but go and possess the land.
- 4) They would come to a secure people and a large land that God had given to them having all the necessary provisions on earth. vs. 10

18:11-13 *The migration of the Danites.*

- 1) Six hundred men with their families of the tribe of Dan went from Zorah and

Eshtaol, armed with weapons of war moved to the north. vs. 11

- 2) The Danites encamped in Kirjath Jearim in Judah and called it Mahaneh Dan, camp of Dan to this day, west of Kirjath Jearim. vs. 12
 - a) Originally Kirhath Jearim was a Gibeonite town. Josh. 9:17
 - b) About eight miles northwest of Jerusalem, on the west boundary between Judah and Benjamin.
- 3) From there to the mountains of Ephraim, and to the house of Micah. vs. 13

18:14-21 *The Danites steal Micah's shrine.*

- 1) The five men that spied out the country of Laish told their brethren about the ephod, the household idols, the carved and molded image, in preparation to take them. vs. 14
- 2) They greeted the Levite and the six hundred men armed with their weapons of war, stood by the entrance of the gate. vs. 15-16
- 3) Then the five men entered the house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image, while the priest was at the entrance with the six hundred men *who were* armed with weapons of war. vs. 17
- 4) The Levite asked the what were doing? vs. 18

- 5) They cautioned him to be quiet and that it would be better for him to come and be a priest to them, rather than to one man. vs. 19
- 6) The priest was persuaded easily for he was a hireling. vs. 20
- 7) So they departed placing their little ones, the livestock, and the goods in front of them for protection. vs. 21

18:22-26 *The objection of Micah is dismissed.*

- 1) Men near Micah's house and caught up with the children of Dan in objection and declared to Micah, "What ails you, that you have gathered such a company?" vs. 22-23
- 2) Micah accused them of stealing his gods and priest, stating, "What ails me?" vs. 24
- 3) The Danites swiftly told him it was best for him to watch what he said before others heard him and killed him. vs. 25
- 4) The Danites went their way and Micah seeing he could not resist them returned to his house. vs. 26

18:27-31 *The Danites conquer Laish.*

- 1) The Danites move on with all they took and fell upon Laish with the sword and burned the city with fire. vs. 27
* There is the gate of Laish that we visit on our trip to Isreal and it is made of

mud and straw dating back to the time of Abraham, he walked through this gate.

- 2) No one was around to deliver them, due to their solitary life in the valley that belongs to Beth Rehob and rebuilt the city. vs. 28
- 3) They called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel, before it was called Laish. vs. 29
* The expression from Dan to Beersheba indicated the length and breath of the land. Judges 20:1; 1Sam. 3:20
- 4) They set up an idolatrous worship of a carved image; and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. vs. 30
 - a) The grandson of Moses.
 - b) The Northern kingdom under Jeroboam set up this very worship again under Rehoboam, the captivity came in 722 B. C. when they went into Assyria.
- 5) This was an false place of worship un Micah and his image, the real worship was at Shiloh where Eli was the High Priest with his two corrupt sons, Hophni and Phinehas, who abused their office and Samuel was being raised up as the 13th judge. vs. 31

a) They stole from the offerings and laid with the women in the tabernacle.

1Sam. 1-2

b) The first twelve chapter of First Samuel belong to the time of Judges, Samuel being the 13th judge.