

Judges

JOS 23:6 "Be very firm, then, to keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses.

JDG 21:25 In those days ... everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Judges

- 300 years of ups & downs, apostasy, discipline, rescue...
- Now the Lord sets before us two closing stories to provide more detail of what was going on in Israel during Judges
- Last week: The First Epilog
 - ((Judges)) Parenthesis come in pairs – work inside to out
 - 1st Epilog is companion to religious introduction 2:6-3:7
- Religious Introduction Summary (from 2:6-3:7)

JDG 2:10-11 And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel. Then the sons of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served the Baals

- So God left other nations around to test Israel (2:22-3:4)

Judges: Religious Epilog

- Details about inter-generational failure to pass on the knowledge of YHWH
 - Failure within a family to pass correct worship of YHWH
 - Failure of the Levite (teachers / worship leaders)
 - Failure of the tribe of Dan to pass the test / Adopted Incorrect Worship
 - Yet their actions were Right in their own eyes
- Remember the location & setting
 - Most likely the generation after Joshua
 - Hill country of Ephraim – Joshua's home, Shiloh, Shechem, etc.

JDG 17:1 Now there was a man of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Micah. 2 And he said to his mother, "The eleven hundred pieces of silver which were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse in my hearing, behold, the silver is with me; I took it." And his mother said, "Blessed be my son by the Lord." 3 He then returned the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother, and his mother said, "I wholly dedicate the silver from my hand to the Lord for my son to make a graven image and a molten image; now therefore, I will return them to you." 4 So when he returned the silver to his mother, his mother took two hundred pieces of silver and gave them to the silversmith who made them into a graven image and a molten image, and they were in the house of Micah. 5 And the man Micah had a shrine and he made an ephod and household idols and consecrated one of his sons, that he might become his priest. 6 In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes.

Family fails to pass correct worship

- Observations/comments/questions?
- Last week looked at Micah's Mom blessing & curse, money
- How did this mother try to pass YHWH to her son?
 - She named him after YHWH (Micah = "Who is like YHWH?")
 - Her blessings included YHWH as source
 - She gave Micah a visual symbol of YHWH
 - Some knowledge of YHWH worship – Levite, ephod
 - She did what seemed right to her - sincere
- What did Micah do with what she gave him?
 - He had a shrine (house of God)
 - He made an ephod (revelation from God) (1SA 23:6-12, 28:6, 30:7-8)
 - He made household idols – teraphim (divination & oracle & foresight) clearly sin (1SA 15:23), oracle (EZE 21:21, HOS 3:4, ZEC 10:2)
 - He consecrated his son (filled, hand – ordained him) as priest
 - He did what seemed right to him - sincere

Family fails to pass correct worship

- What was lacking in this situation?
 - There was no authority figure to tell them they were wrong
 - Lacking good examples – curses, \$, YHWH words but not life
 - They didn't know or pass along God's written word
 - Instead he sought for new revelation
 - They didn't know what was right/wrong in YHWH's eyes
 - WHERE WERE ALL THE TEACHERS?
- Let's find out...

JDG 17:7 Now there was a young man from Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah, who was a Levite; and he was staying there. 8 Then the man departed from the city, from Bethlehem in Judah, to stay wherever he might find a place; and as he made his journey, he came to the hill country of Ephraim to the house of Micah. 9 And Micah said to him, "Where do you come from?" And he said to him, "I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to stay wherever I may find a place." 10 Micah then said to him, "Dwell with me and be a father and a priest to me, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year, a suit of clothes, and your maintenance." So the Levite went in. 11 And the Levite agreed to live with the man; and the young man became to him like one of his sons. 12 So Micah consecrated the Levite, and the young man became his priest and lived in the house of Micah. 13 Then Micah said, "Now I know that the Lord will prosper me, seeing I have a Levite as priest."

Religious leaders fail to pass correct worship

- Observations/comments/questions?
- Levites – Priests, Worship leaders
 - Most Educated, Responsible for Teaching
 - DEU 33:8-10 "And of Levi he said... They shall teach Thine ordinances to Jacob, And Thy law to Israel. They shall put incense before Thee, And whole burnt offerings on Thine altar.
 - Spread throughout the land (although Bethlehem not assigned city)
- What did Micah offer?
 - Title, Position, Pay, Uniform, Room & Board
- "Father" V10 - One with authority / honor, words should be followed
 - OT Prophet Elisha (2KI 6:21; 13:14)
 - Pharisees loved it
 - Jesus warned against it (MAT 23:9)
- "Priest" V10?
 - Intermediary between God & man
 - Someone who can approach God

Religious leaders fail to pass correct worship

- What was Micah's Benefit? Why offer this?
 - Already had Right God, Right Words of Honor for God, Place to Worship God, Sensory-rich Method of Worship...
 - Now a Levite (Pastor / Teacher) to approach God – Receive New Revelation
- What does Micah believe this will accomplish?
 - His actions will merit God's favor – classic legalism

JDG 17:13 Then Micah said, "Now I know that the Lord will prosper me, seeing I have a Levite as priest."

- He proudly assumes he is doing RIGHT in YHWH's eyes

1SA 15:22 Samuel said, "Has the Lord as much delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. 23 "For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He has also rejected you from being king."

- Why did Jonathan the priest agree??

JDG 18:1 In those days there was no king of Israel; and in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance for themselves to live in, for until that day an inheritance had not been allotted to them as a possession among the tribes of Israel. 2 So the sons of Dan sent from their family five men out of their whole number, valiant men from Zorah and Eshtaol, to spy out the land and to search it; and they said to them, "Go, search the land." And they came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and lodged there. 3 When they were near the house of Micah, they recognized the voice of the young man, the Levite; and they turned aside there, and said to him, "Who brought you here? And what are you doing in this place? And what do you have here?" 4 And he said to them, "Thus and so has Micah done to me, and he has hired me, and I have become his priest." 5 And they said to him, "Inquire of God, please, that we may know whether our way on which we are going will be prosperous." 6 And the priest said to them, "Go in peace; your way in which you are going has the Lord's approval." 7 ¶ Then the five men departed and came to Laish and saw the people who were in it living in security, after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure; for there was no ruler humiliating them for anything in the land, and they were far from the Sidonians and had no dealings with anyone. 8 When they came back to their brothers at Zorah and Eshtaol, their brothers said to them, "What do you report?" 9 And they said, "Arise, and let us go up against them; for we have seen the land, and behold, it is very good. And will you sit still? Do not delay to go, to enter, to possess the land. 10 "When you enter, you shall come to a secure people with a spacious land; for God has given it into your hand, a place where there is no lack of anything that is on the earth."

11 Then from the family of the Danites, from Zorah and from Eshtaol, six hundred men armed with weapons of war set out. 12 And they went up and camped at Kiriath-jearim in Judah. Therefore they called that place Mahanehdan to this day; behold, it is west of Kiriath-jearim. 13 And they passed from there to the hill country of Ephraim and came to the house of Micah. 14 ¶ Then the five men who went to spy out the country of Laish answered and said to their kinsmen, "Do you know that there are in these houses an ephod and household idols and a graven image and a molten image? Now therefore, consider what you should do." 15 And they turned aside there and came to the house of the young man, the Levite, to the house of Micah, and asked him of his welfare. 16 And the six hundred men armed with their weapons of war, who were of the sons of Dan, stood by the entrance of the gate. 17 Now the five men who went to spy out the land went up and entered there, and took the graven image and the ephod and household idols and the molten image, while the priest stood by the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men armed with weapons of war. 18 And when these went into Micah's house and took the graven image, the ephod and household idols and the molten image, the priest said to them, "What are you doing?" 19 And they said to him, "Be silent, put your hand over your mouth and come with us, and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for you to be a priest to the house of one man, or to be priest to a tribe and a family in Israel?" 20 And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod and household idols and the graven image, and went among the people. 21 Then they turned and departed, and put the little ones and the livestock and the valuables in front of them.

JDG 18:22 When they had gone some distance from the house of Micah, the men who were in the houses near Micah's house assembled and overtook the sons of Dan. 23 And they cried to the sons of Dan, who turned around and said to Micah, "What is the matter with you, that you have assembled together?" 24 And he said, "You have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and have gone away, and what do I have besides? So how can you say to me, 'What is the matter with you?'" 25 And the sons of Dan said to him, "Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest fierce men fall upon you and you lose your life, with the lives of your household." 26 So the sons of Dan went on their way; and when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his house. 27 ¶ Then they took what Micah had made and the priest who had belonged to him, and came to Laish, to a people quiet and secure, and struck them with the edge of the sword; and they burned the city with fire. 28 And there was no one to deliver them, because it was far from Sidon and they had no dealings with anyone, and it was in the valley which is near Beth-rehob. And they rebuilt the city and lived in it. 29 And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father who was born in Israel; however, the name of the city formerly was Laish. 30 And the sons of Dan set up for themselves the graven image; and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land. 31 So they set up for themselves Micah's graven image which he had made, all the time that the house of God was at Shiloh.

Tribe of Dan fails the test

- Observations/comments/questions?
 - JDG 2:20-22 So the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, and He said, "Because this nation has transgressed My covenant which I commanded their fathers, and has not listened to My voice, I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died, in order to test Israel by them, whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk in it as their fathers did, or not. "
- How did Dan deal with the test of Amorites & Philistines?
- Do they know what LORD said about taking possession of land?
 - Ignoring God's words about taking possession, they ask for God's word about what they are doing
- Where did Jonathan's prophecy come from?
 - Compare to 20:18, 23, 28
 - Like 1KI 13