

Mass Chaos

A Study of the Book of Judges

Session 10: Micah & Danites

Introduction

Like many other professions, our synod is currently experiencing a high number of vacancies for called workers. What are all the barriers or challenges to ministerial recruitment today?

Micah's Idols

17:1-13

Literary Note: The Book of Judges does not have a strict chronological outline. Instead, it opens with the cycle of the “four R’s” (chapter 2), and each of the life stories of the judges (generally) fit that pattern. The book concludes with two appendices or epilogues, both of which show just how far Israel has fallen. This is the first one, which focuses on their religious corruption. The book’s theme, “In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit,” coalesce in these two closing epilogues (17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21:25).

Micah is a Hebrew name that means, “Who is like the LORD?”, but things don’t seem quite right here. Use the passages to list all the problems in this chapter:

- Exodus 20:15 / Judg 16:5
- Exodus 20:4, 23 / Ezek 21:21
- Exodus 28:1-4
- Deuteronomy 12:4-7 / 1 Kings 12:31
- Numbers 3:5-10
- Joshua 21:9-16
- Exodus 29:28
- 1 Timothy 3:3d

Micah thought that the Lord would be good to him because he had this Levite as his personal priest. Contrast this attitude to the basics of the covenant as found in Deut 6:13-18.

Micah basically hired this Levite to be his family's personal priest. Evaluate the pros and cons of saying, "He is *my* pastor" (from the perspective of an individual) vs. "He is *our* pastor" (from the perspective of the congregation).

Danites Settle in Laish

18:1-31

Geographic Note: The tribe of Dan received an inheritance from Joshua along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea (Josh 19:40-48). However, despite the Lord's command to possess the land, they never did. They faced opposition from the Amorites (1:34), and their allotted city of Ekron (Josh 19:43) later became one of the five major cities of the Philistines (1 Sa 5:10). The city of Laish (also called Leshem) was located in the far north, near Mt. Hermon, about 100 miles away. Under its new name, it eventually became synonymous with the northernmost town of Israel ("from Dan to Beersheba," cf. 20:1) and with idolatry (Jeroboam's golden calves at Bethel and Dan, cf. 1 Ki 12:28-30). Archaeological evidence points to a fiery destruction in the twelfth century BC and a subsequent city that had clay jars not native to the local region—which confirms the biblical account here.¹

The priest at Micah's house promised that the Danites' journey had the Lord's approval and would be successful (v. 6). Was he telling the truth or lying? Defend your answer.

Contrast what motivated the priest at Micah's house to go with the Danites (v. 19-20) to what should be the motivations to pursue ministry today (1 Tim 3:1).

Conclusion

Ministry is never perfect, and this particular episode in the book of Judges certainly illustrates that vividly. Despite those challenges, how would you encourage people to consider ministry today?

¹ "The Migration of the Danites" in Walther Kaiser & Duane Garrett, ed., *Archaeological Study Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 378.