

The Book of Judges
MICAH, THE SPOILED BRAT AND THE COLLAPSE OF ISRAEL
March 15, 2017
Session 9

1 It has been brought out repeatedly in this study of Judges that the nation went through
2 seven cycles - revival / apostasy. *It starts with Israel in the place of blessing. They*
3 *are serving God. Then there is a departure from God and they do evil. They follow*
4 *their own way. Then they are sold into slavery. In their slavery and servitude they cry*
5 *out to God for deliverance. Then they return to God and repent. God then raises up*
6 *judges to deliver them. Then Israel comes back to the place of blessing and becomes a*
7 *nation that serves God. Just when everything is in order, they lapse into sin and turn*
8 *from God again. Altogether Israel went through seven apostasies. This gives us the*
9 *philosophy of history. Every nation goes down in this order: (1) religious apostasy; (2)*
10 *moral awfulness; (3) political anarchy. Deterioration begins in the temple, then to the*
11 *home, and finally to the state. That is the way a nation falls.*

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13
14 In this study you are going to hear of the tribes of Dan, Ephraim and others. Remember
15 the tribes were named after the 12 sons of Jacob. When the people of Israel conquered
16 most of the Promised Land, each tribe was assigned to an area. I have provided a map
17 for you on the next page which will help you better understand this lesson.

18
19 MICAH, THE SPOILED BRAT IN EPHRAIM

20
21 Judges 17:1-6 (The Living Bible)

22 **In the hill country of Ephraim lived a man named Micah.**

23 **[2] One day he said to his mother, "That thousand dollars you thought was stolen**
24 **from you, and you were cursing about--well, I stole it!"**

25 **"God bless you for confessing it," his mother replied. [3] So he returned the**
26 **money to her.**

27 **"I am going to give it to the Lord as a credit for your account," she declared. "I'll**
28 **have an idol carved for you and plate it with the silver."**

29 **[4] So his mother took a fifth of it to a silversmith, and the idol he made from it**
30 **was placed in Micah's shrine. [5] Micah had many idols in his collection, also an**
31 **ephod and some teraphim, and he installed one of his sons as the priest. [6] (For in**
32 **those days Israel had no king, so everyone did whatever he wanted to--whatever**
33 **seemed right in his own eyes.)**

34
35 What an awful kid! A spoiled brat, in my opinion. He was aware that his mother had



THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL

- | | | | | |
|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Reuben | Judah | Naphtali | Issachar | Zebulun |
| Simeon | Dan | Gad | Asher | Benjamin |
| Ephraim | Manasseh | | | |

1-A

1 been saving some money. He stole it. His mother didn't know it was her kid who did it
2 and pronounced a curse on whoever did it. For some reason, Micah's conscience got the
3 best of him and he confessed it to his mother.

4
5 What did she do? Punish him? Oh, no. Don't want to hurt this kid's feelings, do we?
6 Instead she decided to part of it back to him to use to make a pagan image. This of
7 course was in direct violation to the first and second of the Ten Commandments: Exodus
8 20:3-4 **Thou shalt have no other gods before me. [4] Thou shalt not make unto thee
9 any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in
10 the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:**

11
12 This was rank idolatry! Micah, who by now was old enough to be a parent himself, was
13 an idolater. He apparently had quite a few of these idols, even adding to it with an ephod
14 and a teraphim.

- 15
- 16 • An ephod - was a vestment meant to be worn by a priest of God - in this case worn
17 by a false god
- 18 • Teraphim - a term used of a kind of household idol
- 19

20 Last of all, Micah had a dedication of his son to god – no, not the God of Creation, but a
21 false god. Micah wanted his child to be a priest to a pagan god. How far had these
22 people fallen in their spiritual lives!

23 24 The Itinerant Preacher

25
26 Judges 17:7-10 (The Living Bible)

27 **One day a young priest from the town of Bethlehem, in Judah, [8] arrived in that
28 area of Ephraim, looking for a good place to live. He happened to stop at Micah's
29 house as he was traveling through.**

30 **[9] "Where are you from?" Micah asked him.**

31 **And he replied, "I am a priest from Bethlehem, in Judah, and I am looking for a
32 place to live."**

33 **[10] "Well, stay here with me," Micah said, "and you can be my priest. I will give
34 you one hundred dollars a year plus a new suit and your board and room."**

35
36 Yes, you could hire this guy! He was a preacher for money. This fellow was a Levite -
37 of the Tribe of Levi, dedicated to the priesthood for the Lord. Instead he became a hired
38 hand!

39
40 One of the finest preachers I ever knew ended up in prison on a variety of charges. I

1 asked him later, face-to-face, "What happened to you? You could have become a great
2 leader in Christianity; instead you became a jailbird. Why?" He answered, "Dan, I had
3 just never seen so much money!"

4
5 God have mercy on any church group led by a money-hungry preacher. I see some of
6 these "ministers" on television bragging about their riches. God have mercy!

7
8 Judges 17:11-13

9 **The young man agreed to this and became as one of Micah's sons. [12] So Micah**
10 **consecrated him as his personal priest.**

11 **[13] "I know the Lord will really bless me now," Micah exclaimed, "because now**
12 **I have a genuine priest working for me!"**

13
14 "A priest (minister) working for me" versus "a minister working for God." These verses
15 are a clear picture of the low spiritual level to which Israel had fallen. It will get worse.

16 17 IDOLATRY IN THE REGION OF DAN

18
19 When we are in Israel, I take our folks to the foothills of mighty Mount Hermon, a
20 mountain nearly 10,000 feet high, that separates the countries of Israel, Lebanon and
21 Syria.

22
23 The main focal point of our visit there is Banias, where Jesus asked His disciples, "Who
24 do people say I am?" Peter replied, "You are the Christ!" To which Jesus replied,
25 "Blessed art thou, Peter!" It was upon Peter's admission, his confession, of faith that he
26 became a leading disciples. **PETER WAS NEVER THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH -**
27 **NOT THEN AND NOT NOW. JESUS WAS - AND REMAINS SO.**

28
29 Jesus then declared that not even the "Gates of Hell" could prevail against His Church.
30 What are the "Gates of Hell?" At that time, in nearby Banias, there was the cave of Pan
31 where horrible acts of debauchery, even human sacrifice, took place. Jesus was saying
32 that not even that evil place could withstand the power of the Gospel. (Why is it called
33 Banias rather than Panias? The people in that area could not pronounce properly the
34 letter "p", instead making it sound like "b." Hence – Banias.

35
36 From there, I take our group a bit west into the very heart of the region of Dan. While
37 quite a bit of Israel to the south is arid, Dan is just the opposite. There is water
38 everywhere. It was here that the Danites founded a city called Laish, which comes a bit
39 later in our story.

1 The tribe of Dan had been assigned territory (by God through Joshua) in an area heavily
2 populated by the Philistines. So how did they get settled in the north part of Israel?

3
4 Judges 18:1-2

5 **As has already been stated, there was no king in Israel at that time. The tribe of**
6 **Dan was trying to find a place to settle, for they had not yet driven out the people**
7 **living in the land assigned to them. [2] So the men of Dan chose five army heroes**
8 **from the cities of Zorah and Eshtaol as scouts to go and spy out the land they were**
9 **supposed to settle in. Arriving in the hill country of Ephraim, they stayed at Micah's**
10 **home.**

11
12 Ah...we are back to the spoiled brat, Micah! And there they encountered Micah's hired
13 personal priest:

14
15 Judges 18:3-4 (The Living Bible)

16 **Noticing the young Levite's accent, they took him aside and asked him, "What are**
17 **you doing here? Why did you come?" [4] He told them about his contract with**
18 **Micah, and that he was his personal priest.**

19
20 Remember this "priest" was a Levite (the tribe from whom God's priests were to
21 originate). But this fellow is at best a "hired hand," not a messenger from God. The
22 marks of real apostasy (extreme backsliding) are compromise, corruption and confusion.

23
24 I believe a key indicator of this apostasy is when pulpits talk more about politics,
prosperity, carnal manifestations and other subjects than the Word of God. Paul
admonished Timothy in 2 Timothy 4 to PREACH THE WORD. Not preach *about*
the Word. Faith comes by hearing the Word: Romans 10:17 **So then faith cometh**
by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. The lack of knowledge about the
Bible within the Christian world is just staggering. It is no wonder there are so many
false teachings and cults! This is a major tragedy of today's generation.

25
26 So these Dan immigrants ask the phony priest for direction:

27
28 Judges 18:5-6

29 **And they said unto him, Ask counsel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know**
30 **whether our way which we go shall be prosperous. [6] And the priest said unto**
31 **them, Go in peace: before the Lord is your way wherein ye go.**

32
33 Without hesitation the Danites listened to this direction:

1 Judges 18:9-11

2 **And the men replied, "Let's attack! We have seen the land and it is ours for the**
3 **taking--a broad, fertile, wonderful place--a real paradise. [10] The people aren't**
4 **even prepared to defend themselves! Come on, let's go! For God has given it to us!"**

5 **[11] So six hundred armed troops of the tribe of Dan set out from Zorah and**
6 **Eshtaol.**

7
8 The primary city in that region at the time was named Laish. The Danites captured it and
9 renamed it Dan. Laish was held at that time by the Phoenicians (Lebanese).

10
11 Students of the book of Genesis recognize that name "Laish," for when Abraham's
12 nephew Lot was captured in an early battle and whisked away from the south part of
13 Israel, Abraham assembled his hired hands and pursued the captors clear to Laish, near
14 the foothills of Mount Hermon. (In fact, Abraham pursued his enemies clear to
15 Damascus in Syria.)

16 17 The Disintegration of God's Laws in Dan

18
19 Judges 18:30-31 (The Living Bible)

20 **Then they set up the idols and appointed a man named Jonathan (son of Gershom**
21 **and grandson of Moses!) and his sons as their priests. This family continued as**
22 **priests until the city was finally conquered by its enemies. [31] So Micah's idols were**
23 **worshiped by the tribe of Dan as long as the Tabernacle remained at Shiloh.**

24
25 What in the world? Jonathan? The grandson of Moses now a priest to a pagan god? It
26 had taken only a couple generations for this to happen.

27 28 FMCS (Fort Myers Christian School)

29
30 This spotlights the primary reason why this church has a school! The early years of
31 learning are extremely formative! Proverbs 22:6 **Train up a child in the way he**
32 **should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.** I am a very strong
33 believer in good education. But the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom:
34 Proverbs 9:10 **The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge**
35 **of the holy is understanding.** That truth is so vital it's a repeat of an earlier verse:
36 Proverbs 1:7 **The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise**
37 **wisdom and instruction.**

38
39 How important are those early years (at FMCS - it's K-3 through 8th grade)? Listen, I
40 can remember the names of every grade school teacher I had! They formed a fantastic

1 foundation for learning in my young brain. Imagine how much more so that is true
2 when the school for the youngster is based on Christ and the Bible!

3
4 Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles....whatever....if you have a youngster in those grade
5 categories, please consider FMCS. The education will be first-class, and the training in
6 God's Word will be so formative in their early years. It only took Moses' grandchildren
7 two generation to shuck away everything he stood for. Give you children a fighting
8 chance in this world with a solid beginning scholarship and a knowledge of God.

9
10 **Remember that Moses had said, speaking for God, "Thou shalt have no other gods**
11 **before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of**
12 **anything that is in heaven above or that is in the earth beneath....(Ex. 20:3,4) Yet**
13 **here is his grandson serving as a priest to an idol!**

14
15 **PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN - AT ALL COSTS!**

16
17 Apostasy is a damnable thing - and America is riding it to its destruction unless there is a
18 turn-around, a revival.

20 THE HORRORS OF JUDGES 19

21
22 Judges 19:1-30

23 **At this time before Israel had a king, there was a man of the tribe of Levi living on**
24 **the far side of the hill country of Ephraim, who brought home a girl from Bethlehem**
25 **in Judah to be his concubine. [2] But she became angry with him and ran away, and**
26 **returned to her father's home in Bethlehem, and was there about four months. [3]**
27 **Then her husband, taking along a servant and an extra donkey, went to see her to**
28 **try to win her back again. When he arrived at her home, she let him in and**
29 **introduced him to her father, who was delighted to meet him. [4] Her father urged**
30 **him to stay awhile, so he stayed three days, and they all had a very pleasant time.**

31 **[5] On the fourth day they were up early, ready to leave, but the girl's father**
32 **insisted on their having breakfast first. [6] Then he pleaded with him to stay one**
33 **more day, as they were having such a good time. [7] At first the man refused, but his**
34 **father-in-law kept urging him until finally he gave in. [8] The next morning they**
35 **were up early again, and again the girl's father pleaded, "Stay just today and leave**
36 **sometime this evening." So they had another day of feasting.**

37 **[9] That afternoon as he and his wife and servant were preparing to leave, his**
38 **father-in-law said, "Look, it's getting late. Stay just tonight, and we will have a**
39 **pleasant evening together and tomorrow you can get up early and be on your way."**

40 **[10] But this time the man was adamant, so they left, getting as far as Jerusalem**

1 (also called Jebus) before dark.

2 [11] His servant said to him, "It's getting too late to travel; let's stay here
3 tonight."

4 [12] "No," his master said, "we can't stay in this heathen city where there are no
5 Israelites--we will go on to Gibeah, or possibly Ramah."

6 [13]

7 [14] So they went on. The sun was setting just as they came to Gibeah, a village of
8 the tribe of Benjamin, [15] so they went there for the night. But as no one invited
9 them in, they camped in the village square. [16] Just then an old man came by on his
10 way home from his work in the fields. (He was originally from the hill country of
11 Ephraim, but was living now in Gibeah, even though it was in the territory of
12 Benjamin.) [17] When he saw the travelers camped in the square, he asked them
13 where they were from and where they were going.

14 [18] "We're on the way home from Bethlehem, in Judah," the man replied. "I live
15 on the far edge of the Ephraim hill country, near Shiloh. But no one has taken us in
16 for the night, [19] even though we have fodder for our donkeys and plenty of food
17 and wine for ourselves."

18 [20] "Don't worry," the old man said, "be my guests; for you mustn't stay here in
19 the square. It's too dangerous."

20 [21] So he took them home with him. He fed their donkeys while they rested, and
21 afterward they had supper together. [22] Just as they were beginning to warm to the
22 occasion, a gang of sex perverts gathered around the house and began beating at the
23 door and yelling at the old man to bring out the man who was staying with him, so
24 they could rape him. [23] The old man stepped outside to talk to them.

25 "No, my brothers, don't do such a dastardly act," he begged, "for he is my guest.
26 [24] Here, take my virgin daughter and this man's wife. I'll bring them out and you
27 can do whatever you like to them--but don't do such a thing to this man."

28 [25] But they wouldn't listen to him. Then the girl's husband pushed her out to
29 them, and they abused her all night, taking turns raping her until morning. Finally,
30 just at dawn, they let her go. [26] She fell down at the door of the house and lay
31 there until it was light. [27] When her husband opened the door to be on his way, he
32 found her there, fallen down in front of the door with her hands digging into the
33 threshold.

34 [28] "Well, come on," he said. "Let's get going."

35 But there was no answer, for she was dead; so he threw her across the donkey's
36 back and took her home. [29] When he got there he took a knife and cut her body
37 into twelve parts and sent one piece to each tribe of Israel. [30] Then the entire
38 nation was roused to action against the men of Benjamin because of this awful deed.

39 "There hasn't been such a horrible crime since Israel left Egypt," everyone said.
40 "We've got to do something about it."

1 This awful story stands on its own without much commentary. Remember the title of this
2 series on Judges: THE THRILL OF VICTORY AND THE AGONY OF DEFEAT. In
3 the seven horrendous cycles we have studied, Israel has gone from great conquest under
4 Gideon and others to this vile and vicious 19th chapter.

5
6 The story is a virtual repeat of the men in Sodom, screaming for the angels to come out so
7 they could rape them. The husband's act was also vicious, but it alerted the whole
8 country of Israel to its precarious moral state. The last couple chapters of Judges deal
9 with Israel's reaction.

10
11 When the tribes of Israel received a part of this dismembered woman they were angry at
12 the tribe of Benjamin. They demanded justice. However, the tribe of Benjamin took
13 umbrage at this and declared war on the eleven tribes.

14
15 Judges 20:1-2 (The Living Bible)

16 **Then the entire nation of Israel sent their leaders and 450,000 troops to assemble**
17 **with one mind before the Lord at Mizpah. [2] They came from as far away as Dan**
18 **and Beersheba, and everywhere between, and from across the Jordan in the land of**
19 **Gilead.**

20
21 It would sound at firsts as if Benjamin's tribe was outnumbered. However, in their army
22 there some "killing specialists:"

23
24 Judges 20:16 (The Living Bible)

25 **(Among all these there were 700 men who were left-handed sharpshooters. They**
26 **could hit a target within a hair's breadth, never missing!)**

27
28 No, they did not have rifles or guns; they had slings with which they had deadly aim. It
29 was the same weapon David would use later against Goliath. Don't even think about a
30 "sling shot." These were deadly weapons. To this day in Israel, there are some fellows
31 who can shoot a bird out of the air with a sling.

32
33 But despite these hotshots, Benjamin's tribe was out numbered.

34
35 Judges 20:44-46 (The Living Bible)

36 **Eighteen thousand of the Benjamin troops died in that day's battle. [45] The rest**
37 **of the army fled into the wilderness toward the rock of Rimmon, but 5,000 were**
38 **killed along the way, and 2,000 more near Gidom.**

39 **[46] So the tribe of Benjamin lost 25,000 thousand brave warriors that day,**
40 **leaving only 600 men who escaped to the rock of Rimmon, where they lived for four**

1 **months.**

2
3 Let's consider "Benjamin" for a moment. Remember Benjamin in the beginning was his
4 father Jacob's favorite, second only to Joseph:

5
6 Genesis 35:16-20

7 **And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to**
8 **Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour. [17] And it came to pass,**
9 **when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt**
10 **have this son also. [18] And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she**
11 **died) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin. [19] And**
12 **Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. [20] And**
13 **Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.**

14
15 That monument to Rachel is still there in Bethlehem and is considered a very holy site to
16 both Jews and Muslims.

17
18 But now years and years later, the tribe of Benjamin is considered a pariah in the land.
19 Israel was now filled with political anarchy. Tribe against tribe; class against class. We
20 seem to be heading in that direction in our precious nation now. God help us!

21
22 The slaughter of the Benjamites caused Israel to be faced with a major dilemma. So
23 many men of that tribe had been killed and the relatively few men who remained there
24 were treated like lepers by the rest of the nation. Those tribes vowed not to allow their
25 daughters to marry into the tribe of Benjamin.

26 27 The End Of The Period Of The Judges

28
29 Judges 21:25

30 **In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in**
31 **his own eyes.**

32
33 The nearly 400 year period is coming to its awful conclusion, ended only by the birth of
34 the great prophet Samuel.

35
36 But next week we will study a fabulous story that took place in the time of the judges -
37 the remarkable and romantic story of RUTH.