



Conquering Canaan

Lesson 11: The Wickedness In Dan And Benjamin

(Judges 17:1-21:25)

Sometime during the period of the judges, there was a man named Micah from the hill country of Ephraim. He had stolen 1,100 silver pieces from his mother. But, he returned them to his mother and told her he had stolen them.

His mother wanted her son to be blessed. So, she took some of the silver to a silversmith and had an idol made for her son. Micah put the idol in his house. He had a shrine and made an ephod and household idols. Then, he had one of his sons be his priest.

During this time, a young man from the tribe of Levi left his home and was looking for a place to stay. He came to Micah's home and spoke with Micah. When the young man explained who he was and what he was looking for, Micah invited him to stay and become his priest. For this work, Micah would pay the young man ten silver pieces (about four ounces) each year, along with clothing and everything he would need to live. So, the Levite agreed and became like one of Micah's sons, serving as the priest and living in Micah's house.

Evidently, Micah thought he was doing right by making this idol to worship God and getting a Levite to serve as the priest. But, he was disobeying the second of the Ten Commandments by using a carved image to worship God! So, God was not pleased with them!

At this time, some people from the tribe of Dan were looking for land to live in. So, they sent five men to scout some land. When they were in the hill country in Ephraim, they came to Micah's home and spent the night there. The Levite who served as Micah's priest told the men why he was there and said that God was watching over them on their journey.

When the men returned home, they told the others that they had found some good land in Laish, with people living there who were quiet and unsuspecting. So, they told the people they should not hesitate to invade the land and take it for their own. Then, 600 people left to take the land.

During their trip, the five men told the people about the idols in Micah's house – and they went to the house and took the idols, the ephod, and the young man who had become priest. They told the young man to be quiet and become their priest. They said it would be better for him to be priest for a whole tribe and family in Israel rather than for just one person.

After taking the idols, they defeated the people in Laish and lived in their city. They named the city Dan. Then, they set up the carved image they had stolen for themselves and made the young Levite priest. This wickedness continued for a long time.

Also during the time of the judges, some people in the tribe of Benjamin were wicked. As a man and his wife were traveling back to their home, they stayed with an old man in Gibeah (a city in Benjamin's land). But, some wicked men in the city took the man's wife, abused her, and killed her.

When the man found his wife the next morning, he put her body on his donkey and went home. When he got home, he let all the tribes of Israel know about the wicked things that had happened to his wife. But, rather than the people of Benjamin punishing the people responsible for the wickedness, they fought against the Israelites who fought against them.

Although Benjamin won the battles on the first two days of fighting against the Israelites, God told the Israelites they should keep fighting because He would cause them to win against Benjamin the next day. When the next day came, the Israelites ambushed the people of Benjamin and burned the city of Gibeah.

Memory Verse:

“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did whatever seemed right to him” (Judges 21:25).

Draw a picture of the lesson you learned about: