

The Idolatry of the Danites

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Preacher: Don Coleman

[0 : 00] I'm going to take the Bibles and you can open them to the book of Judges.

And we have a rather lengthy text.! As we go along, I think that's the best way to take a larger text like this.

It's Judges chapter 17 and 18, is our text tonight. Chapter 17 and 18. And I've entitled kind of this teaching tonight, this lesson or message or sermon, whatever term you want to use.

More teaching, less sermonic, although there's some tremendous applications to be made from this passage.

But I've entitled it, Israel Left to Her Own Devices. And that's really kind of what this is about.

Because that's exactly what our author, whoever he was, book of Judges.

[1 : 17] Certainly we can say the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the author of the book of Judges, that he did write or have it written through a man. And we can say, this is exactly what our author describes for us in the remaining five chapters of the book of Judges.

Israel pretty much left to their own devices. Now some commentaries have described this as really the complete canonization of Israel.

Now meaning, of course, the Promised Land was inhabited by the Canaanites. God had given Israel the Promised Land. They were to destroy the Canaanites because of their extreme wickedness.

But instead of annihilating them, getting rid of that influence, they were influenced by it. And very gradually, we've been able to see this as we've looked at all of the judges, kind of gradually along the way.

You know, and Israel would just kind of fall back into idolatry where they were influenced by the Canaanites of the land. And so what we have in these last five chapters is kind of a summary, a conclusion to the book of Judges that conveys to us, describes for us, the near complete Canaanites of Israel.

[2 : 47] And that's what we have. So I just prefer the title, Israel Left to Her Own Device. Now, by the way, this has been progressively taking place throughout the entire period of the ages.

And, you know, we've kind of become pretty used to this formula, kind of a pattern that God used, or the author uses. We could call it the pattern of four R's.

And that would be rebellion. It was rebellion. Israel would rebel against God. Second, retribution.

God doesn't allow that to go unjudged, unpunished, undisciplined.

And so there's first rebellion, then retribution, and then what? Repentance. You can probably guess. Israel repents, in a way.

Not always very convincingly, but they repent. And then, fourth, rescue. So the four R's. And we're kind of used to this pattern.

[3 : 56] From rebellion to retribution to repentance to rescue. And then, you know, we have a period of peace, period of time to move by. And then, what?

They go back into rebellion, and then the whole thing starts all over again. We're kind of used to that cycle. And it pretty much represents the kind of framework or the structure for that portion of the book of Judges.

That portion we call the account of the various Judges of history. Now, perhaps you've noticed along the way that the repentance part of this framework, the repentance stage, has really been figuring less and less and less as we've been going along.

I mean, in many cases, the reality of this repentance is a bit dubious suspect. While the rebellion stage has been growing, increasingly growing, more and more serious.

I don't know if you've picked up on that. We've kind of moved our way through the various Judges. We've seen this pattern. So, repentance has been kind of, well, a little there, a little not there, not really very genuine.

[5 : 19] And the rebellion, though, has been greater and greater and greater. And the only really consistent element in each of the kind of the separate narrations of the Judges was that sooner or later, God would raise up the Judges and rescue the people.

That was the only kind of consistent part of the framework. But having said that, when we come to the final five chapters of this book, things are different, decidedly.

And I would say from the standpoint of preaching, difficult to preach. In fact, I was trying to say, I can't remember, I know I've never preached from any of these chapters, and I can't remember every hearing a sermon preached.

From any portion of the last five chapters. I always sermon is about the various Judges, and specifically those Judges that are the most familiar to us, kind of their stories, and their stories are the most profound, and so forth.

But I can't make the same time I've heard a sermon out of the last five of those Bible. Things are different in these last five of our Judges.

[6 : 39] Things are different here. For one thing, we no longer have this cyclical kind of pattern. You know, rebellion, retribution, repentance, and rescue.

We don't have that anymore here. And for another thing, we no longer have any Judges. There aren't any Judges. That goes almost without saying. The two go together.

This pattern that ends in rescue goes along with God raising up Judges. Well, we don't have any of that in these last five chapters. And so, I guess most Bible readers, it just makes it a little bit uninteresting.

I'd rather go read Philippians or something else than read this portion of the Judges. But for another thing, and this is the most significant feature, we don't really see the Lord active in the course of things, like we've been seeing.

Now, you've mentioned a number of times, but really, we won't see this until next Sunday, next Sunday night. We don't really have anything that he's actively doing.

[7 : 45] Only one time we have that. The rest of the time, he's really not even seemingly present. Though, of course, we know he is. And I think that's by design, that's reason.

Because this is supposed to convey to the reader the, you know, the under-canonization of God's people. Now, up until now, no matter how weird or disturbing or sinful or wicked or inconsistent the key characters have been, their activities, no matter how weird that has been, we have always seen the Lord as the one who is ultimately in charge and for his purpose.

But now he's left Israel to their own devices. And so, it's kind of picked up on that as we look at these five chapters.

Now, I would be, it would be accurate to characterize this final five chapters of the book as an appendix. Some would call it a conclusion, and they see some interesting comparisons between the last five books, chapters of the book and the, kind of the introduction to the book of the Judges. So, they would say there's an introduction and inclusion. Really, these last five have moral characteristics of an appendix. Now, I'm not talking about the things sometimes like to have a mood.

[9 : 19] You know, it's inside the body. You know what I'm talking about? We're talking about an appendix. And, as a matter of fact, the book of Ruth is sometimes included in that appendix.

It's kind of interesting. And, we get that from the ancient Hebrew Bibles because many of them included Ruth in the book of Judges. Interesting. Now, the appendix then, as you know, is a kind of a body of material.

In this case, that the Holy Spirit added to the closing of the book, added to after the account of the period of the Judges.

And, chronologically speaking, the appendix includes some events that occurred during the period of the Judges. In fact, there is no real regard for chronology here.

So, don't think of these last five chapters as events that have taken place after the Judges. These events took place sometime in this time period of the Judges.

[10 : 29] And so, the author is not intending to, you know, give us some chronology or chronological list of events here. That's not his intent. And so, he has simply grouped these

accounts together in order to emphasize the spiritual truth.

That's what we need to understand. And, what is that spiritual truth? Well, specifically, the truth, the true spiritual condition of the people of Israel.

That's what he's conveying in these last five chapters. The true condition of the people of Israel during this time in their history. And now, this appendix can be divided into two parts.

I'm just kind of giving you this kind of introduction, kind of a rundown. So, you take notes, you kind of think about this. And, really, you can divide it very easily, very logically into two parts.

First, we could call it the idolatry of Dan or the Danites, the tribe of Dan. And, that's ultimately what we're going to see in these first two chapters.

[11:46] Or, the first two chapters of the appendix, chapter 17 and 18. The idolatry of the Danites or Dan. The second part, chapters 19 to 21 through to the end of the book, is the immorality of Benjamin.

The tribe of Benjamin or the Benjamites. So, you could divide it into those two parts. The idolatry of Dan, the tribe of Dan. And, the immorality of the tribe of Benjamin.

Those are the two key, out in the forefront, tribes that these passages have to do with.

Alright? Idolatry on the one hand and immorality on the other. Kind of the religious environment or really the decay of the true religion.

And, kind of under the surface, the immorality. So, what's out front? Idolatry. What's in underneath, in behind all of that?

[12:56] Under the surface? Immorality. And, so, you could divide it into those two parts. So, the idolatry of Dan, the immorality of Benjamin.

Now, it's interesting. And, I think this, too, is deliberate. That is, deliberate in mentioning the tribe of Dan and Benjamin.

That this be involved in those two tribes. This is deliberate. See, the territories of the tribes of Dan and Benjamin were located in what we might call the very heartland of Israel.

They were in between Judah to the south and Ephraim to the north. And, Judah, Ephraim, eventually during the divided kingdom.

Judah would be the leader of the southern kingdom. Ephraim, the northern kingdom. And, so, Dan and Benjamin right in the heart of the nation of Israel.

[13:55] And, so, the idea, I think God wants to convey. Is that this religious and moral degeneration going on in Israel was not some superficial thing.

Not some, you know, peripheral thing. You know, something that affected just the, kind of the fringe way out there territories of Israel.

But, it had infected the very heart of the nation. Immorality. Paganism. Idolatry.

All of these things. All right, so, let's get to it. First, the idolatry of Dan. And, that will be our focus tonight. Chapters 17 through 18. The idolatry of Dan.

These two chapters. We might break it down even further here. These two chapters. In these two chapters, we have three stories. Three stories that are told.

[14:58] And, so, with each kind of new scene that is introduced. We are introduced to a new character. Or, characters.

And, so, it's three stories. And, we're introduced this way in verse 1. Now, there was a man from the mountains of Ephraim. It's kind of told as, you know, a couple of guys sitting down telling stories.

Say, you know, there was this guy. And, so, it begins. There was this man from the mountain of Ephraim. And, then, the second story in chapter 17, verse 7. Now, there was a young man from Benjamin of Judah.

And, then, in chapter 1b. The second part of it. In those days, the tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance. So, those are the introduction to three stories.

Three scenes. And, with each scene, a new character is added. Is introduced to us. And, at first, it's kind of a first reading. Even though, you know, you can see the intersection of these three stories.

[16:05] They do somewhat seem unrelated. That's why it's kind of difficult. Kind of laborious if you're trying to read and make a sense out of it. But, there is a progression that I want us to see tonight.

Now, remember. The point of these two chapters is the idolatry of the tribe of Dan. That is the ultimate thing that is going to take place.

And, everything in these three stories is leading to that. And, showing how the initial stories contribute ultimately to that. All right.

But, this is the idea. The idolatry of the tribe of Dan. And, it begins first in the home. Begins in the home.

Or, with what I would call the corruption of an Israelite household. That's what we have in verses 1 through 6. The corruption of an Israelite household. The household of Micah.

[17:07] All right. All right. We'll get to that here in a minute. Then, it moves to what we could call the church. Okay.

So, they didn't have the church then. All right. But, something representative of it. The religion. The worship. Starts in the home. The corruption of an Israelite household.

Then, moves to the church. Or, the corruption of a Levitical priesthood. The Levitical priesthood.

And, that starts in verse 7 of chapter 17.

And, runs all the way really to the end of the chapter. Maybe on into the first half of the first verse of chapter 18. So, we have the corruption of an Israelite household.

It begins in the home. Then, we have the corruption of the Levitical priesthood. It moves to the church. And, then finally, it moves out to an entire nation.

[18:05] Well, representative. Represented by a tribe. Though, this tribe is representative of the entire nation. The condition of the entire nation.

And, so, thirdly, we have the corruption of an Israelite tribe. Or, a nation. And, that's the natural progression in the religious degeneration of the nation of Israel.

Of any nation. The home. Church. The nation. And, that's the progression we see in these three stories.

So, let's see how this plays out. First of all, the corruption of an Israelite household. In chapter 17, verse 1. The story begins.

Now, there was a man from the mountains of Ephraim. Whose name was Micah. Now, who was Micah? I don't know.

[19:05] It doesn't matter. But, what about him? Well, verse 2. And, he said to his mother. Micah said to his mother.

The 1100 shekels of silver. And, that's quite a lot, by the way. The 1100 shekels of silver that were taken from you. And, on which you put a curse.

Even saying it in my ears. Here is the silver with me. I took it. And, his mother said. May you be blessed by the Lord, my son.

Alright, so. What do we have in this one verse? The mother had a great hoard of silver. A lot of silver. Somebody stole it. She didn't know who it was.

So, she pronounces a curse upon the unknown thief. But, her son, Micah, overhears the curse.

Now, whether he gets really concerned about it. Or, afraid of that.

[20:01] Or, whatever. He confesses to the theft. Because, he stole it. And, he returns the silver. Alright, so far the story sounds pretty good. Doesn't it? I mean, shame on that young man.

For doing that to his mother. Stealing her silver. And, also kudos to the mom. For forgiving her son. All sounds good. And, so the mother then asks the Lord.

To bless her son. Great. Right? I mean, that's wonderful. You, you're a good son.

You were honest. In the end. And, so, no curse. I pray the Lord to bless you. For coming forward. Being honest. Wonderful.

Great, great story. What happens next? Verse 3. So, when he had returned the 1100 shekels of silver to his mother. His mother said. I had wholly dedicated the silver from my hand to the Lord.

[21:04] By the way, this is, this is not some generic word for the Lord. This is Yahweh. The one true God. I dedicated the silver from my hand to the Lord for my son.

I did it on your behalf. Now, what could be more appropriate than that? Right? The silver was lost. Now, it has returned.

And I'm dedicating it to the Lord. I think we ought to dedicate all of our money to the Lord. All of our resources. This is, I mean, this is.

You know, you might be thinking. Well, I thought, I thought this was. You know, this is bad stuff happening. This is all good. Right? But what she says next is.

Really meant to cause our mouths to drop open. Now, don't do that. It's unsightly. All right. Thank you, Mike. Well, what did she say?

[22 : 01] She said. I had wholly dedicated the silver from my hand to the Lord for my son. To make a carved image and a molded image. Now, therefore, I will return it to you.

You have made it. Now, you take it. Take it. Now, get that. I mean, would you be expecting that? I've said a number of times as we've been studying the book of Judges that the author was a master writer. And, you know, what a flagrant disregard for the second commandment, for one thing.

Right? And even more troubling than that. And perplexing. How in the world could she not see the total contradiction and incongruity of these two acts?

To dedicate the money to the Lord. The silver to the Lord. And then, at the same time, craft. Take that silver. And craft the silver that was dedicated to the Lord.

[23 : 10] And craft a pagan idol out of it. How in the world could she think that that was okay? That those two things could even possibly go together?

Now, if we were there witnessing this, you know, overhearing this, you know, the looks on our faces. I would have, we couldn't hide it. I can imagine that this woman probably look at me. You know, I'm maybe standing there and she says that and go, Huh? And she probably turns to me and says, What? What? She doesn't have a clue.

What's wrong with that? And so, what we have here is the story of the corruption of an Israelite household. And, you know, we can look at the rest of it.

I'm not going to comment on every detail in these three stories. I'm going to read it all, but I'm not going to comment on it all. It's pretty self-explanatory. If you look there, verse 4, Thus he, that's Micah, returned the silver to his mother.

[24 : 19] Then his mother took 200 shekels of silver, gave them to the silversmith, and he made it into a carved image and a molded image.

And they were in the house of Micah. The man Micah had a shrine. Kind of a place of worship in his home.

I mean, they didn't have, you know, the temple there or a place of worship there. A lot of that had not been established. He had his own little temple or place of worship, shrine. And made an ephod and household idols.

And he consecrated one of his sons who became the priest. He's got to have a priest, you know, make this legitimate. That's going to figure in in the next story, by the way.

But he has to have a priest. Well, no priest, no Levite. And so he designates his son to do that. By the way, in the next story, he's going to begin to, obviously, the implication is he's thinking, well, maybe his son isn't making all this valid.

[25 : 22] So I need a legitimate priest. We'll get to that in the next story. So he makes his son, consecrates his son, who became his priest.

And I'm sure, you know, he had every right to do that and power to do that. He can consecrate his own priest, right? Wrong. In those days, there was no king in Israel.

Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. And that's exactly what this man was doing. But you see the corruption of the household. That's where it begins.

Always begins. Now, can we identify? This is the challenge to us, each of us. Could we possibly identify some inconsistencies in our own lives?

Where we know the word, but what we do is totally incongruous. I mean, totally a contradiction.

[26 : 23] Things in our homes. Maybe things we watch, do, speak, think. You know, priorities. In our household budget or whatever it is.

You don't have to fill in those blanks. But see, this is the danger. And this is what we should be on guard against by the power of God. And that is to make sure that nothing in our home is inconsistent with the clear teaching of God's word.

Second story highlights the corruption of the Levitical priesthood. And so we have the corruption of the home.

And now we see corruption in the church. And we're going to see that these two things are connected. One leads to the other.

They interconnect here. Even though they may initially seem like two different stories. They come together. One has some influence on the next one.

[27 : 30] And then we get the third. There is, it carries on into the third story as well. And so verse 7. Now there was a young man. All right, so he's young.

Anything wrong with that? No, but in this case it probably is a clue to the man's immaturity. Young man, and by the way his name is Jonathan.

Sorry, Jonathan. We know that from verse 30. The Bible doesn't tell us initially his name, but we find out later. All right, so there's this young man from Bethlehem in Judea.

Or Judah, rather. Of the family of Judah. Tribe of Judah. He was a Levite. And was staying there. He was staying there.

Staying where? Well, verse 8. The man departed from the city of Bethlehem in Judah to stay wherever he could find a place. Pay attention to these words here.

[28 : 32] He's a Levite. Levite. It means he is totally separated by God to the service of worship in Israel.

Levites were not given any territory. Levites lived among all the tribes. They were the priests. They were the Levites. They were responsible for the oversight of the worship of Yahweh.

All right, so. And what's he doing? Well, he's, you know, going wherever he could find a place. Now, that sounds a little suspect.

And it is. Then he came to the mountains of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, as he journeyed. Now, the idea is he's just kind of journeying around. He's been a lot of places.

In the third story, the Danites, who come and visit Micah, and they talk to Jonathan, they recognize him.

[29 : 36] They know him. We're not told why. But I think we're to assume that this guy just got, he made the rounds. He got around. Kind of just shiftless.

Just out here and there and wherever he could find a place for himself. Find an opportunity. You know, he's looking for a job, looking for a home. Micah was looking for a priest.

Okay. Now, he had a son, but his son's not really a bona fide priest. And so, maybe, you know, he's not valid. So, he needs a real priest.

And so, here's a priest looking for a job. Here's a guy looking for a priest. Perfect match together. But notice, why did he leave Bethlehem?

Well, all we know is he's looking for a place. Place to serve. You know, it'd be kind of like me just leaving and just traveling around and visiting churches and say, Do you need a preacher?

[30 : 44] I don't have any idea whether God wants me here. But, you know, I'm just looking for a place. Just looking for opportunities. Wherever. Huh? And what do you pay? Right.

Well, of course. Of course. All right. But he's looking for a place. What kind of place? Well, we're not told. But we can assume.

The idea is profitable place. A place that would provide a home for him. And a work for him. And a position.

An opportunity. And so, he doesn't really have any idea where that's going to be. No real purpose. No real clear call of God. He's not following God's leadership here.

We know that because of, you know, ultimately what he does as priest. And so, he's just kind of shiftless and opportunist.

[31 : 39] He's a priest for hire. And no way was that how it worked. Not in that day and not in this day.

Or not supposed to work that way. Many preachers out there for hire today. All right. So, that's who he is. And so, let's just kind of read on there.

And starting with verse 9. And Micah said to him, Where did you come from? So, he said to him, I am a Levite from Bethlehem and Judah.

And I am on my way to find a place to stay. And Micah said to him, Dwell with me. Be a father. Kind of a title of respect.

And a priest to me. And I will give you 10 shekels of silver per year. A suit of clothes. And your sustenance. So, the Levite went in.

[32 : 35] Sounded good to him. Then the Levite was content to dwell with the man. And the young man became like one of his sons to him. So, Micah consecrated the Levite.

That is, he, in a sense, laid his hands on him to be his priest. And the young man became his priest and lived in the house of Micah.

Then Micah said, Now I know that the Lord will be good to me since I have a Levite as a priest.

Well, you don't really have to have this knucklehead standing up here and trying to explain this to you.

This is pretty clear, isn't it? When you think about it, he's a priest for hire. And Micah buys himself his own church. It's a family church.

We've got a lot of those in our country. Family churches run by families. I used to pastor one a number of years ago. That's another story.

[33 : 37] Probably one I won't tell. All right, so he's bought himself a pastor and a church. And it is a church, though, with a mixture of Yahweh worship and pagan worship.

Idolatry. It's a mixture of the two. Now, how you can mix the two is beyond me to understand. But Israel did that over and over and over again.

All throughout their history. They could not resist it. A kind of melding together, a syncretism of pagan worship and Yahweh worship.

Of course, it won't work that way. God won't allow that. He cannot have any gods before me. And so, really, there was no true Yahweh worship.

Just kind of lip service to it. And we see the lip service a number of times in this account. All right, so that's going on in this so-called church, this house church.

[34 : 47] And we see the corruption of the Levitical priesthood in that Jonathan did not, this Levite, did not condemn Micah. He should have right off the bat condemned him for his idolatry.

And demanded that it be removed and so forth. He didn't do that. Rather, rather, for reasons of personal status and wealth, I think is implied, he participated in that kind of worship.

Corruption of the church. That's just, I mean, it's just so easy to see. And how absurd is Micah's confidence? This is what we all chuckled at.

You know, now I know that the Lord will be good to me. Really? Since I have a Levite as a priest. Now everything is right.

Everything's legal. Everything's official. I've got a Levite now. And so all my worship is valid and God's going to bless.

[35 : 59] The Lord Yahweh is going to bless. So the corruption of the Israelite household. First, the home. The corruption of the Levitical priesthood. Second, the church.

And then the corruption of an Israelite tribe. Third, the nation. The nation in that progression. Verse 1 of chapter 18.

The second part of verse 1. And in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance for itself to dwell in. For until that day their inheritance among the tribes had not fallen to them.

And you have to go back, you know, earlier in the book of Judges to understand that Dan failed to possess their land initially. And they couldn't have their land.

And so this chapter here, chapter 18, is really kind of giving us an account of the Danites. Kind of just take it for themselves. The actions that they took to take it.

[37 : 03] First, they sent spies in. And then they sent in military expeditions. And in the course of these expeditions, they crossed paths with Micah.

And his corrupt house. And his corrupt church. And they kind of come together in this third story. So, let's just, let me read it to you.

In those days there was no king in Israel. By the way, it's repeated. That phrase repeated a number of times here. And kind of a kind of shadowed, kind of veiled statement about God was not their king.

And in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance. I read that a moment ago. Look at verse 2. So the children of Dan sent five men of their family from their territory.

Men of valor from Zorah and Eshtel. And they said to them, Thus and so Micah did for me.

[38 : 35] He has hired me. And I have become his priest. So they said to him, Please inquire of God. That we may know whether the journey on which we go will be prosperous.

Whether this is going to be successful. Tell us. I think somehow he's a prophet now. And the priest said to them, Go in peace. The presence of the Lord be with you on your way.

Now if they knew what we know about this Levite. Would they have believed him? I mean, how could we expect that God would possibly speak through him?

And speak truth. Anyway. So the five men departed and went to Laish. They saw the people who were there. How they dwelt safely. In the manner of the Sidonians.

Quiet and secure. They were just peace loving people. Minding their own business. And there were no rulers in the land. Who might put them to shame for anything. They were far from the Sidonians.

[39 : 35] And they had no ties with anyone. Then the spies came back to their brethren at Zorah and Eshtel. And their brethren said to them, What is your report? And so they said, Arise, let us go up against them.

For we have seen the land. And indeed it is very good. Would you do nothing? Do not hesitate to go. And enter to possess the land. And when you go, You will come to a secure people in a large land.

For God has given it into our hands. A place where there is no lack of anything that is on the earth. And 600 men of the family of the Danites. Went from there.

From Zorah to Eshtel. Armed with weapons of war. You know, don't have time to just kind of delve into all of these details.

Want to cut to the chase. And we'll talk about that. But these are the details of Dan. Obtaining their land.

[40 : 33] Trying to get their land. And so the 600 men of the family of the Danites. Went from there. And verse 12. They went up and encamped in Kirjath-Jerim.

In Judah. Therefore, they call that place. Manana. Manana. Something like that. Dan to this day. There it is. West of Kirjath-Jerim.

So you just go there right now. It's right there. Well, anyway. And they passed from there to the mountains of Ephraim. And came to the house of Micah. So here they are. They're back at Micah's house.

Then the five men who had gone to spy out the country of Laish. Answered and said to their brethren. Do you know that there are in these houses. An ephod. Household idols.

A carved image. And a molded image. Do you know that? Now, therefore, consider what you should do. So they turned aside there.

[41 : 31] Came to the house of the young Levite man. To the house of Micah. And greeted him. The six hundred men armed with their weapons of war. Who were of the children of Dan. Stood by the entrance of the gate.

Then the five men who had gone to spy out the land. Went up. Entering there. They took the carved image. The ephod. The household idols.

And the molded image. And they destroyed them. You know, I wish that was there. They didn't do that. The priest stood at the entrance of the gate.

With the six hundred men. Who were armed with the weapons of war. And when these went into Micah's house. And took the carved image. And the ephod. And the household idols. And the molded image.

The priest said to them. What are you doing? And they said to him. Be quiet. Put your hand over your mouth. And come with us. Be a father and a priest to us.

[42 : 31] Is it better for you to be a priest to the household of one man? Or that you be a priest to a tribe. And a family. In Israel. We've got a better situation for you.

So the priest's heart was glad. Of course he was. And he took the ephod. The household idols. And the carved image. And took his place among the people.

When they turned and departed. And put the little ones. The livestock. And the goods in front of them. When they were a good way. From the house of Micah.

The men who were in the house. Near Micah's house. Gathered together. And overtook the children of Dan. And they called out to the children of Dan. So they turned around. And said to Micah. What ails you?

That you have gathered such a company. And so he said. You have taken away my gods. Which I made. I just. Think about that. The gods.

[43 : 29] Which I made. Okay. And the priest. You took my priest. You took my preacher. It's just not right. To steal some church's preacher.

And you have gone away. And now what more do I have? I have lost all that really matters to me. The gods that I've made. And the priest is corrupt.

What do I have? How can I say. To me. How can you say to me. What ails you? And the children of Dan said to him. Do not let your voice be heard among us.

Lest the angry men. Fall upon you. And you lose your life. With the lives of your household. Well. Then the children of Dan went their way. And when Micah saw that they were too strong for him.

He turned and went back to his house. So they took the things Micah had made. Here's the. Kind of the epitaph. They took the things that Micah had made.

[44 : 27] And the priest who had belonged to him. So the gods. Made by Micah. The priest. That belonged to Micah.

Not the true God. And not. His priest. But a man made priest. Man made idols. And went to Laish. To be a quiet.

To be. To a people quiet and secure. And they struck them with the edge of the sword. And burned the city with fire. There was no deliverer. Because it was far from Sidon.

And they had no ties with anyone. It was in the valley that belongs to Beth Rahab. So they rebuilt the city. And dwelt there. And they called the name of the city Dan. After the name of Dan their father.

Who was born to Israel. However. The name of the city forever was Laish. Then the children of Dan. And set up for themselves. The carved image.

[45 : 26] 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.

So they set up for themselves. Micah's carved image. Which he made all the time. That the house of God was in Zion. The corruption. Of a tribe.

There it is. Very clear. Here's the deal. See. The Danites. Going to grab. Some of the land. On their own. Without God. And they run across.

This Levitical priest. Who's an apostate. Who serves as the priest. Of an apostate. Apostate. An idolater. And they seek a word.

From God. Through that apostate priest. Ridiculous. And on and on. It is the corruption. Of an Israelite tribe. And so.

[46 : 25] The corruption. Has run its course. And it's a natural course. As one that we should be. Very much aware of. Because it is a natural course. That works in all.

All cultures. All civilizations. The home. Church. The nation. The church. The nation.

We better take care of our homes. Amen. What's a church made up. Of. Bunch of homes. Nations made up of a bunch of homes.

The whole nation is. Bunch of homes. Bunch of households. What effect does a godly household have. Upon.

The church. And the nation. Tremendous. Bad.

[47 : 34]