

Judges Chapters 17 and 18

Review

The tribes are in the land yet failed on three levels.

1. They did not eradicate their enemies from the land.
2. They did not obey the law of Moses and keep the covenant.
3. They did not teach the next generation the ways of God.

The Book of Judges is the story of a people who

- Have no king – God was to rule over them through the covenant.
- They do what is right in their own eyes.
- They cannot work well together – civil war at times.
- They are contaminated by the pagan culture around them.
- They are in bondage and servitude to the other nations as judgment from God.

Downward progression:

- Apathy – they did not obey the covenant and did not teach their children the covenant.
- Apostasy – the “fell away” and intermingled with the culture through marriage and worship.
- Anarchy – everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

Chapters 17-21

- These chapters are not in chronological order but represent events that happened during the time of the Judges.
- They serve as a type of appendix to expound further the level of deterioration in the life of Israel.
- They chronicle the three major areas of confusion.
 - The home
 - The ministry – the Covenant and the Law of Moses (church)
 - The national social order (how one is governed, rules and functions in civil society).

The Home

Society is most stable when the nuclear family is healthy.

Matthew 7 – two foundations

Impact on children when the father is not present.

- Higher Rate of Depression and Suicide –.
- Greater Chance of Substance Abuse –.
- Higher Rate of Crime –
- Earlier Sexual Activity –
- Poor Educational Outcomes –

Inner Healing – most commonly focuses of “family of origin issues.”

The Church -Spiritual Leadership of the People.

- Malachi 2 – disobedient priests.
- Ezekiel 34 – Clergy failure
- 1 Samuel 2 and 3 – Sons of Eli
- 1 Samuel 13 – Sauls first offense
- 1 Samuel 15 – Saul’s second offense
- Matthew 23 – Jesus rebukes the Pharisees.

Leaders in the church, both lay and clergy are held accountable to God for them.

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|----------------|------------|-----------|
| ▪ Teaching | Doctrine | Behavior |
| ▪ Character | Motivation | Integrity |
| ▪ Faithfulness | Obedience | |

Jesus made a stern reference to those who lead little ones astray by mentioning it would be better if a millstone were put around their necks.

Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe to stumble, it would be better for him if, with a heavy millstone hung around his neck, he had been cast into the sea (Mark 9:42)

God normally brings the offense to the attention of the leader before He brings His judgment which is always based on mercy and love. His warnings always offer a way to return to Him.

Leaders that fail to listen will reap very painful consequences that include:

- Loss of position
- Loss of life
- Having the hand of the Lord against them
- Perpetual curse
- Dire personal difficulties

God disciplines those He loves and we are grateful later.

Failed Leader Produces:

- No gospel, no salvation
- No Holy Spirit, no power
- No confession, no freedom
- No repentance, no transformation
- No transformation, no witness
- No witness, no new people

National Order – Israel was originally a “theocracy” – governed by the Law of Moses.

- Duet 28
- Psalm 11: 3 – if the foundation’s crumble what can the righteous do?

Chapter 17 – Micah

VS 1-6

- Micah steals 1100 pieces of silver from his mother.
- She curses the thief.
- Micah restores the stolen money.
- Mom negates the curse.
- Mom uses some of the silver to craft an idol.
- The image became a household god to be worshipped.
- Micah installs one of his sons as priest to conduct worship of the shrine.

Moral and Spiritual Confusion in the home

- First commandment broken – no other Gods.
- Second commandment is broken. – no graven images
- Fourth commandment broken – no Sabbath.
- Fifth commandment broken– honor your father and your mother.
- Eighth commandment broken – do not steal.
- Ninth commandment broken – do not lie.
- Tenth commandment broken - do not covet.
- Only a Levite can be a priest – ignoring God’s law.

VS 7 – 13 The Levite – Spiritual Confusion

- He was not engaged in priestly ministry – why?
- He was looking for a position to support himself – why?
- He was focused on himself, not the kingdom of God.
- He became comfortable with the pagan culture.
- Sadly, Micah (the benefactor) actually thought he had “favor” with God.
- Micah practiced a false religion and worshipped a false God.
- Was it ignorance – they were not taught?
- Was it disobedience – they new better but did not care?

Chapter 18

VS 1 – 3

- No king in Israel
- Dan is looking for an inheritance to live in.

- The tribe of Dan was given a choice property by Joshua.
- Dan did not defeat the Amorites and Philistines in their land, so they looked elsewhere.
- They could have asked for help but did not.
- The tribe of Dan became the first to fall into idolatry.
- The tribe of Dan is not mentioned in the tribes in Revelation 7.
- Often military success was accompanied by spiritual obedience.
- Five spies were deployed to search for a better place.
- They meet the Levite and Micah's shrine.

VS 4 - 20

- The Levite affirms God's favor on their efforts.
- The spies find Laish to be unprotected and ripe for the taking.
- They gather 600 men and proceed.
- They also recruit the Levite and take the idols from Micah's shrine.

VS 21 – 31

- Micah tries to get the priest and the idols back.
- He is outmaneuvered and backs down from the fight.
- He is left with nothing – “What else do I have.”
- Dan conquers and destroys Laish then they rebuild it and name the city Dan.
- This became the northernmost city of Israel – hence the phrase, “from Dan to Beersheba.”