

# Judges 17 - 18

## First Epilogue:

### Tribe of Dan:

## Micah and the Northerly Migration

### I. Review

#### A. Prologues

1. Background (1:1 - 2:5)
2. Overview (2:6 - 3:11)

#### B. The Major Judges — The First Bunch

1. Ehud Ben-Gera, the Left-Handed Benjamite, assassinated Eglon, King of Moab and captured the Fords of Jordan. (3:12-31)
2. Deborah and Barak Ben-Abinoam defeated Jabin, King of Canaan's army, and Sisera, the commander, was killed by Jael. (4 - 5)
3. Gideon Ben-Joash (a.k.a. Jerub-Baal) the Abiezrite defeated the Midianites, Amalekites, and other eastern tribes. (6 - 8:32)

#### C. The Anti-Judge: Abimelech Ben-Jerub-Baal was made king and then fought against Shechem and against Thebez, where he was killed by a woman dropping a millstone on his head from a tower.

#### D. The Major Judges — The Second Bunch

1. Jephthah, Bastard Son of Gilead, defeated the Ammonites (but lost his own daughter as the result of a foolish vow) and fought a civil war with the Ephraimites. (10:6-12:7)
2. Samson Ben-Manoah, the Nazirite from Dan had supernatural strength but moral weakness and died while bringing down a temple on thousands of Philistines. (13 - 16)

### II. Introduction

#### A. Date: Early in the period of judges (See 18:30.)

#### B. Theme: Life without a king (See 17:6; 18:1.)

#### C. Players:

1. Micah: An Ephraimite thief and idolator with a very rich mother

2. Jonathan: An at-first-unnamed Levite descendant of Moses who becomes the priest of Dan
3. The Danites: Because they could not drive the Amorites out of their allotted land (See 1:34-36), they were seeking a new place to settle.

### **III. The Details**

#### **A. Micah (17:1-5)**

1. He returns his mother's stolen money.
2. They make idols (some probably used for divination purposes) in the name of YHWH and set up an unappointed priest.

#### **B. The Levite (17:7-13)**

1. From Bethlehem<sup>1</sup>
2. He travels to Micah's house.
3. He replaces Micah's son as priest for 10 silver pieces, clothes, and food.

#### **C. The Danites (18:1)**

#### **D. The 5 scouts' journey and report (18:2-10)**

1. From Zorah<sup>2</sup> and Eshtaol
2. They stopped in Ephraim at Micah's house on the way north.
3. They recognized the Levite or that he was not from Ephraim and learned about him.
4. They asked him to foretell their future.
5. They spied out Laish<sup>3</sup>.

#### **E. The Emigration (18:11-31)**

1. 600 armed men set out.
2. They stopped again at Micah's house.
3. They stole his idols and bribed his priest.
4. Sacking of Laish
5. The name of the Levite is revealed.

### **IV. Application and Discussion**

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<sup>1</sup> Bethlehem: This was not one of the assigned Levitical cities. (See Jos 21.)

<sup>2</sup> Zorah: where Samson would later be born (13:2)

<sup>3</sup> Laish: about 100 mi north of Dan's original territory; also called Leshem (Jos 19:47); occupied by Sidonians (a peaceful Phoenician people engaging in sea trade) or a related tribe

- A. The writer seems to link the moral corruption in Israel at the time with the lack of a king. Why then didn't God establish a king originally?**
- B. How could Micah's mother refer so often to YHWH and still have idols made?**
- C. Why would a Levite need to be traveling?**
- D. God had already given an allotment to Dan. Why did He allow them to emigrate and take the Sidonians land unfairly?**