

Lesson 11: Judges 18 and 19

Micah and Migration of the Danites, Danites Settle in Laish, Levite from Ephraim, Outrage of Gibeah

In our last lesson we met a man named Micha and his mother. Micah stole substantial amount of silver from his mother but returned it when he heard her curse the one who stole from her. We also see a disturbing picture of their Jewish home, complete with a shrine, two idols and an ephod! The importance of having a legitimate priest, **who was one of the Levites**, was stressed in the short introduction to Micah, (*not* the prophet). However, Micah's Levite did not destroy the idols! In this lesson, Micah, with his ephod, teraphim and idols return. These chapters are used to show the moral decay of Israel and her religion.

1. Read Judges 18: 1-1-6 and footnotes. Share any information in your footnotes with your group.
Read also Joshua 19:40-47 below.

Joshua 19:40-47 The seventh lot fell to the tribe of Danites by their clans. ⁴¹Their heritage was the territory of Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-shemesh, ⁴²Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, ⁴³Elon, Timnah, Ekron, ⁴⁴Eltekoh, Gibbethon, Baalath, ⁴⁵Jehud, Bene-berak, Gath-rimmon, ⁴⁶Me-jarkon, and Rakkon, with the coast at Joppa. ⁴⁷ **But the territory of the Danites was too small for them; so the Danites marched up and attacked Leshem, which they captured and put to the sword.** Once they had taken possession of Leshem, they dwelt there and named it after their ancestor Dan.

Why have the Danites arrived in Ephraim?

What do they ask the Levite to do for them?

2. Read Judges 18:7-13.
How is Laish described here?
3. Read Judges 18:14-26 and footnotes. Read also Psalm 115:4-7 below.
What have the Danites taken from Micah?

What about this situation pleased the Levite/priest in 18:20?

What is the irony about Micah's statement in 18:24?

Psalm 115:4-7 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands.

⁵They have mouths but do not speak, eyes but do not see.

⁶They have ears but do not hear, noses but do not smell.

⁷They have hands but do not feel, feet but do not walk; they produce no sound from their throats.³¹

4. Read Judges 18:27-31 and footnotes.
What is the Levite's name? What is revealed about his ancestry?

The Danites were served by the Levites and their descendants who allowed idol worship.

Check footnotes for the meaning of "captivity" in verse 30. What happened to the tribe of Dan?

5. **Biblical scholars believe that chapters 17-21 are not in chronological order, but would have occurred *prior* to the chapters in Judges that we have already read. Chapter 19 is the first part of a three-part saga that ends in chapter 21.**

Read Judges 19:1-9 and footnotes. Share any information you find in the footnotes with your group. Do we have any idea why this woman left her husband?

Why did the husband go to find his concubine/wife - what did he hope to achieve?

How did they spend their time in her father's home in these verses?

6. **Read Judges 19:10-15 and Leviticus 19:33-34.**

Why did the man sit in the town square?

Leviticus 19:33-34 “When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. ³⁴The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

7. **Read Judges 19:16-21.**

What does the man, with his wife, donkeys and servant say to make it seem his stay would not be a burden to the old man in these verses?

8. **Read Judges 19:22-26. Compare the translations in your bible for verse 22 to other bibles being used in your group.**

9. **Read Genesis 19:5-11 below. The event in Genesis 19 occurred in Sodom. How are the stories similar? What does this say about the morality of the people of Israel in Judges 19?**

Read Genesis 19:5-11 ⁵They called to Lot and said to him, “Where are the men who came to your house tonight? Bring them out to us that we may have sexual relations with them.” ⁶Lot went out to meet them at the entrance. When he had shut the door behind him, ⁷he said, “I beg you, my brothers, do not do this wicked thing! ⁸I have two daughters who have never had sexual relations with men. Let me bring them out to you, and you may do to them as you please. But do not do anything to these men, for they have come under the shelter of my roof.” ⁹They replied, “Stand back! This man,” they said, “came here as a resident alien, and now he dares to give orders! We will treat you worse than them!” With that, they pressed hard against Lot, moving in closer to break down the door. ¹⁰But his guests put out their hands, pulled Lot inside with them, and closed the door; ¹¹they struck the men at the entrance of the house, small and great, with such a blinding light that they were utterly unable to find the doorway.

10. **Read Judges 19:27-30 and Numbers 19:11, 13 below.**

Do the husband's actions in these verses give us a clue as to why his wife left him in the first place?

What do you think the members of Israel's 12 tribes would react to receiving their parcels from this man?

Numbers 19:11 Those who touch the corpse of any human being will be unclean for seven days.

Numbers 19:13 Those who touch the corpse of a human being who dies and who fail to purify themselves defile the tabernacle of the LORD and these persons shall be cut off from Israel.