

How a Nation Unravels: The Book of Judges

Lesson 9

Judges 17-18

March 6, 2022

When Everyone Does as They See Fit

Introduction

Have you ever tried to play a game where the rules are made up as the game is played? It's chaotic and inevitably leads to fights and disagreements even amongst the closest of friends.

At this time in Israel's history, the Israelites are not being faithful and obedient to the God who rescued them from enslavement in Egypt. The author of Judges makes this clear by telling the audience, "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit" (Judges 17:6). As we will see in our story today, that is precisely what everyone did.

The Apostle Paul tells us, "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord's people" (1 Corinthians 14:33). Thus, the level of chaos and disorder in stories like this one are not part of God's good design for this world but are a sign of sin's effects on this world.

Unfortunately, our world currently has the mindset to let people do whatever feels right to them. As God's people seeking to glorify God with our lives, how do we live in this kind of world? Our job is to stay faithful and obedient to the Lord no matter what anyone else does.

Memory verse: "In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as they saw fit."—Judges 17:6

Pray and read Judges 17-18. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

What does the passage say?

1. What did Micah's mother have him do with the silver? (Judges 17:1-4)
2. How does the author describe the condition of Israel at the time? (Judges 17:6)
3. What does Micah request of the Levite? (Judges 17:7-12)
4. How does Micah view the Levite coming to live in his house to be his priest? (Judges 17:13)
5. What had the Danites not yet received? (Judges 18:1)
6. What do the Danites ask of the Levite? (Judges 18:5-6)
7. What did the Danites find in the city of Laish? (Judges 18:7-13)

3. Micah gave credit to the Lord in providing the Levite for his shrine but was very clearly sinning for making the idol in the first place. Why do people justify their sin by giving credit to God? (Jeremiah 17:9; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Galatians 6:7-8)

4. The Danites could not acquire land in the promised land previously occupied by the Canaanites. So instead, they conquered and destroyed a peaceful and unsuspecting people from Sidon (not part of the nations they were told to conquer by God). How had the Danites stopped living faithfully to God? (Exodus 23:22; Isaiah 1:19; John 14:15; 1 John 5:3)

Applying the passage

1. Have you ever had a time in your life where you justified sin, thinking God was providing it to you? How were you deceived? How do you keep yourself from being deceived in this way now?

2. Why is it essential that we stay faithful and obedient to the Lord, even if the leaders over us are not? How do you do that daily?

3. If you're struggling to stay faithful and obedient to the Lord, know that "it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose" (Philippians 2:13). So, write a prayer below asking the Lord to work in you to be more faithful and obedient to Him.