

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 38 – The Children Of Israel Are Doing What Is Right In Their Own Eyes (Judges 17-21)

1. As we begin this section of our study and conclude the book of Judges, what do you notice when reading Judges 17:6 and Judges 21:25?

- Aside from punctuation, the only difference in the two passages is the word “but”. This shows from chapter seventeen through chapter twenty-one, not much is going to change. The children of Israel will err in doing what they want instead of what God wants (**Deuteronomy 12:32**).
- There is also significance in the mentioning of no king in these passages (cf. **Deuteronomy 17:14-20**).
 - *“In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes”* (**Judges 17:6**).
 - *“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes”* (**Judges 21:25**).
- The children of Israel should have kept the reminders God placed before them (**Numbers 15:38-39**).
- This problem will plague Israel for generations to come (**Jeremiah 9:13-16**).

2. Who had taken the eleven hundred shekels of silver from Micah’s mother?

- Micah himself (**Judges 17:1-2**).

3. Once Micah’s mother received back that which was taken from her, what did she do next?

- *“And when he had restored the eleven hundred shekels of silver to his mother, his mother said, I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a graven image and a molten image: now therefore I will restore it unto thee. Yet he restored the money unto his mother; and his mother took two hundred shekels of silver, and gave them to the founder [silversmith], who made thereof a graven image and a molten image: and they were in the house of Micah”* (**Judges 17:3-4**).

4. What did Micah try to do to make his “house of gods” more “official”?

- *“And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim [family idol], and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest”* (**Judges 17:5; cf. Exodus 28:3-4**).
- This is like the many today who try to appear as Christians, churches, etc. They build things, have Bibles, but are not true to the Lord.

5. What was Micah’s thinking in consecrating a Levite as a priest in his house of idols?

- *“And there was a young man out of Bethlehemjudah of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there. And the man departed out of the city from Bethlehemjudah to sojourn where he could find a place: and he came to mount Ephraim to the house of Micah, as he journeyed. And Micah said unto him, Whence comest thou? And he said unto him, I am a Levite of Bethlehemjudah, and I go to sojourn where I may find a place. And Micah said unto him, Dwell with me, and be unto me a father and a priest, and I will give thee ten shekels of silver by the year, and a suit of apparel, and thy victuals. So the Levite went in. And the Levite was content to dwell with the man; and the*

*young man was unto him as one of his sons. And Micah consecrated the Levite; and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah. Then said Micah, **Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest**" (Judges 17:7-13).*

6. Thinking from the things we have studied through the book of Joshua, how did the Lord view Micah?

- God is furious with Micah (**Exodus 23:13, Leviticus 19:4, Deuteronomy 6:14-15, Deuteronomy 29:17-21, and Joshua 23:16**).

7. Who tells the Danites that the Lord is with them as they are spying out a land to conquer? Was this "messenger" trustworthy?

- The Levite that Micah hired comforted the Danites by telling them God was with them in their way (**Judges 18:1-6**).
- No, they should not trust him for he dealt falsely in being a priest in a house of idolatry rather than the house of God (cf. **Jeremiah 6:12-15**).

8. What did the spies and soldiers from Dan take from Micah?

- They fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, the molten image, and the priest (**Judges 18:13-20**).

9. Was Micah successful in regaining his items from the children of Dan?

- No, when they [Micah and his neighbors] overtook [caught up with] the children of Dan they realized how they were outnumbered (**Judges 18:22-26**).

10. Were the children of Dan able to conquer the people of Laish?

- Yes, there was no challenge or others to help Laish (**Judges 18:27-29**).

11. Did the children of Dan serve and worship the Lord in their new land?

- No, they practiced idolatry and established an unscriptural priesthood of the sons of Manasseh (**Judges 18:30-31**).

12. Were the Levite and his concubine reunited after she ran from him to her father's house?

- Yes, they were as the Levite went to gain her back (**Judges 19:1-10**).
- A concubine was considered bound to her HUSBAND, though not a wife (**Judges 19:3; cf. II Chronicles 11:21**).

13. Was this Levite willing to stay in the land of strangers?

- No, he wanted to be among the children of Israel in Gibeah (**Judges 19:11-12; cf. James 4:4**).

14. Were there any in Gibeah willing to be hospitable?

- Yes, there was an old man sojourning there willing to show hospitality (**Judges 19:15-21; cf. Deuteronomy 10:18-19, Romans 12:13, and I Peter 4:9**).

15. What is similar about some of the men of Gibeah and those of Sodom which we read about in our study of the book of Genesis?

- These homosexual men wanted to rape men who came to their cities and lodged there. In both cases there was a plea to no do so wickedly (**Genesis 19:1-7** and **Judges 19:22-23**).

16. What did the corrupt men of Gibeah do unto the Levite's concubine?

- They raped her to death (**Judges 19:25-28**).

17. How did the Levite react to the wrong done unto his concubine?

- *“And when he was come into his house, he took a knife, and laid hold on his concubine, and divided her, together with her bones, into twelve pieces, and sent her into all the coasts of Israel. And it was so, that all that saw it said, There was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt unto this day: consider of it, take advice, and speak your minds”* (**Judges 19:29-30; 20:5**).

18. How did the children of Israel respond to the message sent by the Levite whose concubine was defiled?

- *“And all the people arose as one man, saying, We will not any of us go to his tent, neither will we any of us turn into his house. But now this shall be the thing which we will do to Gibeah; we will go up by lot against it; And we will take ten men of an hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and an hundred of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to fetch victual for the people, that they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the folly that they have wrought in Israel. So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as one man. And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, What wickedness is this that is done among you? Now therefore deliver us the men, the children of Belial, which are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and put away evil from Israel”* (**Judges 20:8-12**).
- Justice had to be served (**Deuteronomy 22:25-27**).

19. When the children of Benjamin decided to defend the criminals among them (Judges 20:14-17), who did the other tribes of Israel consult about the matter?

- The Lord (**Judges 20:18**).
- When facing an enemy that has “seven hundred chosen men left handed; every one could sling stones at an hair breadth, and not miss”, you'd better think about the Lord (**Judges 20:16**).

20. What did the other tribes of Israel do when Benjamin destroyed 22,000 and then 18,000 men of Israel (Judges 20:21; 25)?

- Again, they went before the Lord which they should have been doing much before battle (**Judges 20:23; 26-28**).

21. How did the other tribes of Israel finally defeat the tribe of Benjamin?

- By ambushing Benjamin in many directions as they thought they were defeating the other tribes of Israel when the Lord smote Benjamin (**Judges 20:29-48**).

22. What had the men of Israel sworn in Mizpeh?

- *“...There shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife” (Judges 21:1).*

23. Did the men of Israel regret what they had sworn in Mizpeh?

- Yes, this was a vow they regretted (Judges 21:2-7).

24. Why did the children of Israel slay all but the virgin women in Jabeshgilead?

- *“And they said, What one is there of the tribes of Israel that came not up to Mizpeh to the LORD? And, behold, there came none to the camp from Jabeshgilead to the assembly. For the people were numbered, and, behold, there were none of the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead there. And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children. And this is the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man. And they found among the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead four hundred young virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan” (Judges 21:8-12).*
- *“And the children of Israel said, Who is there among all the tribes of Israel that came not up with the congregation unto the LORD? For they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD to Mizpeh, saying, He shall surely be put to death” (Judges 21:5).*

25. What “plan” did the elders of the congregation come up with to give wives unto the men left of Benjamin since they vowed not to do so from their daughters?

- Since the 400 young virgins from Jabeshgilead did not suffice (Judges 21:7-14), they had another plan...
- Kidnapping the daughters of Shiloh: *“Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin? And they said, There must be an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel. Howbeit we may not give them wives of our daughters: for the children of Israel have sworn, saying, Cursed be he that giveth a wife to Benjamin. Then they said, Behold, there is a feast of the LORD in Shiloh yearly in a place which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah. Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards; And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. And it shall be, when their fathers or their brethren come unto us to complain, that we will say unto them, Be favourable unto them for our sakes: because we reserved not to each man his wife in the war: for ye did not give unto them at this time, that ye should be guilty. And the children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught: and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and repaired the cities, and dwelt in them” (Judges 21:16-23).*