

Judges 18:21-31 **(No King in Israel, Part IV)**

The Bible is a book of amazing words that convey incredible meaning. Rare and even unique words come into the narrative at times, some of which are hard to pin down as to their actual meaning.

Some words are found only once in the Bible. These are known as *hapax legomena* (said once). Some of these words are found only once in all ancient writings, meaning that they were coined by the author of that book and not used again.

Other words are coined in Scripture and later used outside of Scripture. Likewise, there are words that come from translations of the Bible only used within that translation. Others were developed by translators and became a part of the language, being used in other contexts.

This happens outside the Bible all the time as well. The German word *jein*, a combination of *ja* (yes) and *nein* (no), was brought into everyday language by a hip-hop band named Fettes Brot in their 1996 single, *Jein*. It means that you could go either way on a decision.

Another German word, of which there is no English counterpart, is *zugzwang*. It refers to when you are forced into making a decision. It comes from the game of chess, where the word *zug* means to move, and the word *zwang* is where you are forced to move, even if it harms your prospects of gaining the advantage or winning.

Text Verse: *“Dan shall be a serpent by the way,
A viper by the path,
That bites the horse’s heels
So that its rider shall fall backward.” Genesis 49:17*

The description of Dan in Genesis 49, and the wording concerning Dan in that passage matches what we will see in typology today. However, Dan is somewhat of a serpent by the way to Micah in these verses.

Because of this, Micah will have a choice to make. Like the German word *zugzwang*, I have coined a word for this. Maybe you will be able to identify it as we go. If so, maybe you can start using it in your own daily speech.

If so, maybe the word will become famous and a part of our standard lexicon. If so, maybe I will become famous, and this sermon will become notable as the first use of it. If so...

Well, let's just get on with it. Great things, such as interesting words, concepts, and ideas are a marvelous part of His superior word. And so, let us turn to that precious word once again, and... May God speak to us through His word today, and may His glorious name ever be praised.

I. A Difficult Forcison (verses 21-31)

With the events bringing these Danites to the house of Micah, and the agreement of the Levite to accompany them to their new home set, the narrative next says...

²¹ Then they turned and departed, and put the little ones, the livestock, and the goods in front of them.

vayiphnu vayelexhu vayasimu eth ha'taph v'eth ha'miqneh v'eth ha'k'vudah liphnehem – “And turn, and walk, and set the youngster, and the livestock, and the abundance to their faces.” Having plundered the gods of Micah's home, the Danites continue north to Laish.

The wording here is given to show their defensive strategy as they continued. If Micah were to challenge them to a battle over his things, they wanted whatever would inhibit their ability to strike back ahead of them. This is because Micah would be coming from their rear as they marched away from him.

The *taph*, or youngster, comes from *taphaph*, signifying small quick steps. Thus, it speaks of the wee ones. Having little ones implies bringing women along, but it is the children who need to be guarded and who also set the pace.

Likewise, the livestock would vary in kind. Some would walk at a slower pace and need more frequent stops, thus slowing the pace of the rest. Both of these are seen in the account of Jacob meeting up with his brother Esau –

“Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord in Seir.” Genesis 33:14

Lastly is the *kevudah*, abundance. It is a new and rare word coming from *kavad*, to be heavy or weighty. Scholars debate what it refers to, but as it is from a word meaning heavy, it probably means their baggage or other abundance that would slow them down.

By having these precious and needed items set the pace, it would avoid what happened in the wilderness as Israel trekked toward Canaan –

“Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, ¹⁸ how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you *were* tired and weary; and he did not fear God.”
-Deuteronomy 25:17, 18

²² When they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men who *were* in the houses near Micah’s house gathered together and overtook the children of Dan.

The words “gathered together” are a paraphrase. The word *zaaq* means to cry or call out. As such, it is often used as a cry for battle as gathering men to assemble and arm themselves: *hemah hirkhiqu mibeith mikhah v’ha’anashim asher babatim asher im beith mikhah nizaqu vayadbiqu eth b’ne dan* – “They far off from house Micah, and the men who in the houses who with house Micah cried and impinged sons Dan.”

As the men of the area were probably in the fields tending to daily work, it would take time for whoever saw what happened or noticed the missing articles to get to the field and start gathering people to pursue the thieves.

This gave the Danites time to remove themselves some distance. However, with the slowest of the travelers setting the pace, those in Micah’s area would eventually catch up with them. Therefore...

²³ And they called out to the children of Dan. So they turned around and said to Micah, “What ails you, that you have gathered such a company?”

As with the previous verse, the word *zaaq*, to cry out, is used: *vayiqreu el b’ne dan vayasebu p’nehem vayomru l’mikhah mah l’kha ki nizaqta* – “And calls, unto sons Dan, and turn their faces, and say to Micah, ‘What to you that cried?’” The words begin a rather comical exchange between the two parties.

Micah and his group are hollering at the Danites. We can assume it is something like, “Hey, hey you! Stop. What do you think you’re doing? Stop!”

The Danites, knowing very well why they are being pursued, look back and ask what the matter is, as if they had no idea on earth why anyone would be coming after them. “Wha...? What’s the matter with you?”

It is as if Dan is taunting them for the laughs they will have in the future when they sit around the bonfire and talk about the good old days. Micah, however, isn’t so excited about the events...

²⁴ So he said, “You have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and you have gone away.

vayomer eth elohay asher asiti l’qakhtem v’eth ha’kohen vatelkhu – “And says, ‘My gods which I made, taken, and the priest – and walk.’” We can’t read Micah’s mind as to whether he is using the word *elohay* as “God” (meaning a representation of Yehovah) or “gods” meaning several gods he served as god. However, verse 17 listed a panoply of things taken. Thus, “gods” seems appropriate.

With that in mind, everything about the entire statement is absurd in the extreme. Micah wants the gods he made back. If he made them, they are not gods.

If his “gods” were taken from him, then if they were real gods they are not “his” gods. And the Levite is not a priest, even if he was his “priest.”

The amount of unclear thinking by Micah is astonishing. He had completely deceived himself that the things he had were what he conjured them to be. It is exactly why understanding who the Lord is, what He is like, and what interacting with Him involves is so important.

He is not one of many gods.

He is not created, nor can any part of creation, including something formed by man, be equated to Him.

If He is someone’s God, He can never be taken from that person.

Because He is the One true God, He can always be a person’s God (in the sense of relationship).

Further, as God is omnipresent, He can never be absent from His people.

Also, because of man’s state before Him, meaning our sin nature, only a priest without sin who is designated by Him can actually be a priest before Him. As for the priests of the Law of Moses, their sin is dealt with under the law in a temporary way which was anticipatory of the coming Christ.

However, a Levite (or any other person) had no such provision to allow them even this accommodation.

²⁴ (con’t) Now what more do I have? How can you say to me, ‘What ails you?’”

u-mah li od u-mah zeh tomru elay mah lakh – “And what to me still? And what this says unto me, ‘What to you?’” Without the Lord, the statement is true, even if it is ridiculous. He was without the Lord as well as the tinker toys that he thought were his guidance and source of care and blessing.

Therefore, he was willing to chase after the people who carried away his gods and fight to rescue them so that his gods could continue to bless and guide him. His affliction was one of the mind, but he was too blind to even understand how preposterous his actions were.

Micah and those with him are like Laban who went chasing after Jacob when Rachel had stolen his gods. While he inspected the tents for his gods that supposedly directed his life, they sat under his daughter, who was in her time of impurity, having her period.

²⁵ And the children of Dan said to him, “Do not let your voice be heard among us, lest angry men fall upon you, and you lose your life, with the lives of your household!”

vayomru elav b’ne dan al tashma qolkha imanu pen yiphgu bakhem anashim mare nephesh v’asaphta naphsh’kha v’nephesh beithekha – “And say unto him, sons Dan, ‘Not let be heard your voice with us, lest impinge in you men bitter soul, and gather your soul and soul your house.’”

The comical tone continues, even if a bit grim. The sons of Dan threaten Micah’s life and the lives of his family members while pretending they are talking about some unknown individual who might happen to be among them.

As they had lived together, journeyed together, encamped together at Mahaneh Dan, and continued on to Laish together, everyone would have been perfectly aware of everyone else among them.

But the Danites’ words make it seem as if there might be some rogue person who could come unhinged at the words and actions of Micah and they needed to protect him from this unknown terror. The fact is that they all were in agreement and would have come down upon their pursuers like a pride of hungry lions.

²⁶ Then the children of Dan went their way.

vayelkhu b’ne dan l’darkam – “And walk, sons Dan, to their way.” It appears that after threatening Micah with this unknown but terrible person who might be among them, they simply turned around and started walking away. It leaves Micah in a difficult spot where he must now make his forcision...

²⁶ (con’t) And when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back to his house.

vayar mikhah ki khazaqim hemah mimenu vayiphen vayashav el beitho – “And sees, Micah, for stronger they from him. And turns, and returns unto his house.” Micah is

perfectly aware of his limitations. Thus, he must decide upon the lesser of two perceived evils.

Knowing that continuing the pursuit would be disastrous, he considers his next move and decides life without his gods is better than death without them.

27 So they took *the things* Micah had made, and the priest who had belonged to him,

v'hemah laqhu eth asher asah mikhah v'eth ha'kohen asher hayah lo – “And they took which made Micah, and the priest who was to him.” The words “And they” are emphatic. Because Micah is the nearest antecedent, the previous words appear to be parenthetical –

“And says unto him, sons Dan, ‘Not let be heard your voice with us, lest impinges in you men bitter soul, and gathers your soul and soul your house.’ And walks, sons Dan, to their way. (And sees, Micah, for stronger they from him. And turns, and returns unto his house.) And they took which made Micah, and the priest who was to him.”

This appears likely because it simply says they “took which made Micah,” without specifying what they took. However, that was explained in verse 24 – “My gods which I made, taken.”

Thus, Micah could have made his decision while they were still talking to him, or it could be that they finished talking and turned to walk away at the same time Micah turned and headed back home.

Regardless of the exact timing, Dan’s actions are the main point of focus, with the idols and their priest as the key points of their actions. They have secured their new prized possessions...

27 (con’t) and went to Laish, to a people quiet and secure; and they struck them with the edge of the sword and burned the city with fire.

vayavou al layish al am shoqet uvoteakh vayaku otham l’pi kharev v’eth ha’ir sar’phu ba’esh – “And goes upon Laish, upon people reposing and trusting, and struck them to mouth sword, and the city burned in the fire.” It is the same words, “reposing and trusting” that were used in verse 7.

Although some scholars take this as an unjustified action, it is what Israel was told to do when they entered the land –

“But of the cities of these peoples which the Lord your God gives you *as* an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive.” Deuteronomy 20:16

As these people dwelt within the original borders of the land of Canaan, they were required to be exterminated. However, nothing gave Dan the right to enter another tribe's inheritance. This land is within the inheritance of Naphtali.

Despite this, Joshua 19:47 acknowledges that this occurred without any sort of rebuke included concerning the matter. There was no written command for burning the city, and yet the text highlights the matter, calling attention to it.

²⁸ *There was no deliverer, because it was far from Sidon, and they had no ties with anyone.*

v'ei matsil ki rekhoqah hi mitsidon v'davar ein lahem im adam – “And no delivering, for far her from Sidon, and word no to them with man [*adam*].” The words of verse 7 are essentially repeated here, “And far they from Sidonians, and word no to them with man [*adam*].” The words are given to confirm how a small portion of a single tribe could take the city without any need for assistance.

Nobody came to the rescue of those in the city, and none from Naphtali were needed by Dan to complete the task as intended.

^{28 (con't)} *It was in the valley that belongs to Beth Rehob. So they rebuilt the city and dwelt there.*

v'hi ba'emeq asher l'beith rekhov vayivnu eth ha'ir vayeshvu vah – “And she in the valley which to Beth Rehob. And build the city and dwell in her.” The meaning is that this valley, which was in the tribal inheritance of Naphtali, was a valley that seems to have belonged to the Syrians of Beth Rehob noted in 2 Samuel 10 –

“When the people of Ammon saw that they had made themselves repulsive to David, the people of Ammon sent and hired the Syrians [*aram*] of Beth Rehob and the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thousand foot soldiers; and from the king of Maacah one thousand men, and from Ish-Tob twelve thousand men. ⁷ Now when David heard *of it*, he sent Joab and all the army of the mighty men. ⁸ Then the people of Ammon came out and put themselves in battle array at the entrance of the gate. And the Syrians [*v'aram*] of Zoba, Beth Rehob, Ish-Tob, and Maacah *were* by themselves in the field.” 2 Samuel 10:6-8

This would explain why some Greek texts say *aram* rather than *adam* in these words. It seems less likely, however, to say *aram* in verse 7 when the ownership of the valley is only stated at this point in the narrative. This is especially so when considering it is the Sidonians who are mentioned. They lived west of the location while the Syrians lived eastward.

As for the name, Beth Rehob comes from *beith*, house, and *rekhov*, to be or become large or wide. Thus, it means something like House of Wideness, House of Spaciousness, or something like that.

29 And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel.

vayiqru shem ha'ir dan b'shem dan avihem asher yulad l'Yisrael – “And call name the city Dan, in name Dan their father who born to Israel.” The reason for calling it Dan is because it was the name of their tribal father who was born to Israel. Thus, it was in honor of him.

However, it is probably a symbolic gesture as well. Even though they were at the furthest point north in the land and in Naphtali's tribal inheritance, they remained of the tribe of Dan, whose inheritance was to the southwest.

Because of its location, the name became a part of the all-encompassing term for the land of Israel, “from Dan to Beersheba” (or Beersheba to Dan) that is noted nine times in Scripture, Beersheba being the southernmost point.

29 (con't) However, the name of the city formerly was Laish.

v'ulam layish shem ha'ir larishonah – “and, however, Laish name the city to the first.” The name, as seen in verse 7, means Lion. However, that comes from *lush*, to knead, as in bread – which is how the word is always used. Kneading is possible. If it was a word originally spelled with two yods (our y), it would have the sense of I Have, To Me Possession, I Posses, etc.

30 Then the children of Dan set up for themselves the carved image;

vayaqimu lahem b'ne dan eth ha'pasel – “And stands, to them, sons Dan, the carved image.” The meaning is that these members of Dan stood in a state of apostasy from their inception. They arrived, subdued the land, built their city, and set up an image in order to worship or seek favor. Also...

30 (con't) and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan

The text has, without a doubt, been manipulated: *vihonathan ben gershom ben m'nasheh hu u-banav hayu khohanim l'shevet ha'dani* – “And Jonathan, son Gershom, son Manasseh, he and his sons, were priests to tribe the Danite.” The Levite's name is Jonathan, Yah Has Given, Given of Yehovah, or something similar.

He is a Levite. Levites do not descend from Manasseh. Rather, Moses was of the tribe of Levi. His son Gershom would have been one of the Levites enumerated during the census. Thus, Jonathan and his sons descended from Gershom, who was born to Moses. The names are identical but with the addition of the letter nun –

משה
מנשה

Ellicott notes what is obvious, saying, “in what is called the Masoretic text—i.e., the text edited by the Jewish scribes—the ך is not boldly inserted, but is timidly and furtively suspended...and is called *nun thaīūyah* (n suspended). This was done to conceal from the uninitiated the painful fact.” As such, it looks like this, מִי־שֶׁה.

Some ancient manuscripts, as well as the Latin Vulgate, which is translated directly from the Hebrew, bear out the proper reading.

Gershom means Stranger There, Stranger is His Name, or Exile. Moses means He Who Draws Out.

³⁰ (con’t) **until the day of the captivity of the land.**

The words are almost completely misunderstood and almost universally mistranslated: *ad yom g’loth ha’arets* – “until day denuding the land.” Almost all scholars and translations say, “the captivity of the land” (NKJV), “removal of the people of the land” (Young’s), or something similar.

The word is *galah*, to denude. In this case, it is not speaking of the exile by the Assyrians or the Babylonians that happened hundreds of years later. Rather, it is speaking of the capture of the Ark of the Covenant by the Philistines in 1 Samuel 4-6. At that time, the land was stripped of its covering, the glory of God’s presence –

“Then she named the child Ichabod, saying, ‘The glory has departed [*galah*] from Israel!’ because the ark of God had been captured and because of her father-in-law and her husband. ²² And she said, ‘The glory has departed [*galah*] from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured.’” 1 Samuel 4:21, 22

It is believed that Samuel is the author of Judges. This verse certainly makes the case for him as the most likely candidate. The image of idolatry lasted until this period. Nothing is said afterwards concerning it and it is unknown what became of it.

³¹(fin) **So they set up for themselves Micah’s carved image which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.**

These words confirm what was just said: *vayasimu la'hem eth pesel mikhah asher asah kal y'me heyoth beith ha'elohim b'shiloh* – “And set, to them, carved image Micah which made, all days is house the God in Shiloh.” The ark was taken from Shiloh into battle where it was lost to the Philistines –

“So the people sent to Shiloh, that they might bring from there the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts, who dwells *between* the cherubim. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, *were* there with the ark of the covenant of God. ... Also the ark of God was captured; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.” 1 Samuel 4:4-11

In 1 Samuel 7, the ark returned to the land of Israel and was in Kirjath Jearim for twenty years. After that, Saul had it brought to him, and later, David had it brought to Jerusalem. Until the land was denuded of their covering, however, the image was set up within the tribe of Dan.

Shiloh means Tranquility.

*How can you keep from being trapped
In a world of false religion and apostasy?
Where are the details mapped
That will keep you from heresy?*

*People go to churches everywhere
But how do they know if what is taught is right?
Does this bother you at all? Do you care?
Does it matter to you if you are pleasing in God's sight?*

*He has given us a way to know
He has provided it so that our choices can be right
The Bible! That's where to go
Let it daily be your guiding light*

II. An Idol is Nothing in the World

Chapter 18 begins with the same thought presented in Judges 17:6, “In the days, the those, no king in Israel.” This is a true statement concerning the church age as well. Israel has no king during the church age, even if they have remained as a people.

Likewise, there is no king apart from Jesus in the church, which is included in the commonwealth of Israel, but He is not a king in the sense of active rulership over the

churches that comprise His church. He is the King of Israel, but not currently the King in Israel.

Still in verse 1, it noted that the Danite was seeking an inheritance as he had not yet received one because it had not yet fallen to him. As this is west of the Jordan, it is after the time of Christ's coming.

As the tribe of Dan will receive an inheritance, as seen in Joshua 19, this verse speaks of a group who has not yet been saved but who are going to attempt to obtain their own inheritance apart from Christ.

In sending five men, the number of grace, from among them (verse 2) they are looking to inherit grace through their own efforts. This is something that cannot be accomplished. These reflect people in the church who are not saved. The church has always been full of them.

This is reflected in the fact that they are from Zorah and Eshtaol, Affliction and Entreaty/Bride of God, both of which pictured the church. In going to the Mountains of Ephraim, the home of Micah (Who Is Like This), it means they have gone into the false church to lodge.

While there (verse 3), they recognize the voice of the Levite. In Chapter 17, he pictured someone who appeared to be like Jesus, having all His attributes, but who isn't Jesus. They asked him about their journey, and he assured them the Lord was with them.

Verse 7 introduces Laish, Kneading (as in bread). The people there were safe and secure according to the manner of the Sidonians. Sidon means Fishery and pictures those who are fishers of men, as Jesus said.

They were quiet people living without insult or reproach, and they had no "word to them with man [*adam*]." They speak of a sound congregation that does not have any dealings with the carnal man.

The gender discord of verse 7 was noted. The word people is masculine, but the corresponding verb, dwelling, is feminine. Likewise, the words security, reposing, and trusting are each masculine.

Lange said, "the writer's imagination identifies the people with the city in which they live, and so speaks of them as feminine." That doesn't answer the reason, but it is a start. The church is a feminine entity, but those in the church, the saints, are identified in the masculine.

In verse 8, the five Danites return to their brothers in the church (Zorah and Eshtaol), who have no inheritance yet. They tell them they have just the place to take over and that they need to not dawdle but get about taking it.

From there it specifically notes the number who wanted to get this inheritance, six hundred girded for war. It is a number derived from six and ten fallen man without Christ, and the entire round of the cycle is complete. In this case, it is the time of the church age.

First, these men went up to Kirjath Jearim in Judah. Kirjath Jearim means City of Forests or City of Honeycombs. However, as seen in a previous Joshua sermon, Abarim says –

“The verb יער (*ya'ar*) isn't used in the Bible and it's a complete mystery what it might have meant. Noun יער (*ya'ar*) is the common word for forest or thicket, and the identical noun יער (*ya'ar*) means honeycomb. It is, of course, perfectly possible that these two nouns are not two but one, describing something general like a thing that consists of many elements, which contain energetic nutrients (either fruits or honey) ...” Abarim

Therefore, this is an explanation of the church, a group derived from many people, each filled with individual fruit of the Spirit. This is supportable by the comparison of Israel to a forest in Micah 7:14 –

“Tend Thy people with Thy staff, the flock of Thy heritage, That dwell solitarily, as a forest in the midst of the fruitful field; Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old” (JPS Tanakh).

Judah means praise. This group left one place reflecting the church. They now stop, naming the place Mahaneh Dan, and will then leave another.

It is the location where “the Spirit of the LORD began to move upon” Samson. It is a Spirit-filled place, but they move on. Next (verse 13), they went to Mount Ephraim. It is another picture of the church, a large but centralized gathering of people (Mount) from Jews and Gentiles who have been saved through faith in His substitutionary afflictions (Twice Fruitful/Ashes).

But where do they stop? Micah's. Instead of joining the church of the redeemed, they go to the false church with their false Jesus, who greets them (verse 15). While there, they take Micah's false modes of worship (verses 17-20). The words were very specific, showing that their actions were completely purposeful.

All of the falsities of the false church are accumulated together. It speaks of the ecumenical movement where everything is tolerated except the truth of Scripture and

true believers. The Levite, the false Jesus, is thoroughly pleased and takes his place among them.

Micah (now anyone of the false church who doesn't join the ecumenical movement) has had his idols stolen away and so he gathers neighbors to go after Dan. Their false religion was stolen away. They are faced with a forcision: do something about it or simply give up.

Actually, there is a third option not mentioned, They could have joined with Dan and gone with them. However, they will not try to join with the ecumenicalism of the great apostasy, and they will have no sway when all is said and done. They are left without any Jesus, even a false Jesus, to share with those in the false church.

This is true, for example, of the state of people like the Jehovah's Witnesses. They are not accepted into the ecumenical movement, but they also have no true Jesus. Their own false worship is seen for what it is. It is the pitiful words of Micah echoing throughout time, "And what to me still?" They have nothing.

The sad state of Laish is spoken of in the final verses. It is a group of saved believers, but they are kneading – making their own bread. They are just doing their own thing, not in contact with others.

Without evangelism and outreach, little churches without a purpose beyond themselves are eventually overtaken by law observance (being struck with the mouth of the sword) and by those who put forth nothing but false worship.

Verse 28 noted that there was no deliverance for a church like this. A stagnant church will come to an end. That this was in the valley (*emeq* – depth) that belongs to Beth Rehob (House of Spaciousness). It speaks of the greatness in size of the ecumenical movement as it progresses throughout the church age.

Noting that they called the city Dan, Judge, means that where they reside – the ecumenical blob that has slowly taken over the church since its beginning – considers themselves the judge of doctrine and propriety.

In verse 29, noting that Dan was born to Israel (He Strives with God), tells us that this church is striving with, meaning against, God through their false worship. Repeating that it was formerly known as Laish reminds us that this was once a place where Bread was made (the kneading of bread), but no longer is.

Verse 30 noted that Jonathan (Yah Has Given), son of Gershom (Exile), son of Moses (He Draws Out), and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan. Everything speaks of Jesus, and yet it is a false Jesus being presented.

According to Scripture, the true church has one High Priest and needs no other priests. Finally, in verse 30, it noted, “until day denuding the land.” As this passage refers to the church age, then these words anticipate the rapture of the church followed by the tribulation.

It is the time when the glory of God’s presence in the church will be removed, and judgment will come upon the world. The final verse of the chapter noted that the Danites set up the carved image of Micah all the days that the house of God was in Shiloh.

In other words, the apostate ecumenical church will remain throughout the rest of the church age. Their idolatry will only be ended after the church age comes to its conclusion.

Despite having the Bible available to us, this is the inevitable path of the church. God allows us to make our own choices. When we put our choice of church above God’s word, this will be the result. When we choose a particular denomination because it suits our social mores, this will be the result.

Studying the Bible is not fashionable to most. Adhering to it is even less so. It is so much easier to attend congregations where our friends attend, where the message may be appealing to us, or where we don’t have to think.

We can escape our problems for a short time each week with promises of blessing and prosperity, or we can face the fact that we live in a fallen world and bad times should be expected. I could go on, but the passage sufficiently presents the situation.

What we need is Jesus. The way we discover Him fully and intimately is through His word. When we neglect this word, or the application of it in our lives, we will inevitably weaken or be overthrown by that which is false.

With the world as it is, this is only increasing. Churches and denominations are either closing or going woke. Proper Christian thinking is quickly becoming a rare commodity. Let us not be a part of that trend. Instead, let us hold fast to Jesus and closely to His word. May it be so with each of us. Amen.

Closing Verse: *“He uncovers [galah] deep things out of darkness, And brings the shadow of death to light.” Job 12:22*

Next Week: Judges 19:1-21 *A sad story to tell, ain't no jive...* (No King in Israel, Part V)
(52nd Judges Sermon)

The Lord has you exactly where He wants you. He has a good plan and purpose for you. It is He who judges His people according to their deeds. So, follow Him, live for Him, and trust Him, and He will do marvelous things for you and through you.

No King in Israel, Part IV

Then they turned and departed without haw or hem
And put the little ones, the livestock, and the goods
-----in front of them

When they were a good way from the house of Micah
The men who were in the houses, yes every man
Near Micah's house gathered together
And overtook the children of Dan

And they called out to the children of Dan
So they turned around and said to Micah, "What can this be?
"What ails you
That you have gathered such a company?"

So he said, "You have taken away my gods,
Which I made, and the priest too
And you have gone away. Now what more do I have?
How can you say to me, 'What ails you?'"

And the children of Dan said to him
"Do not let your voice be heard among us, we are telling you
Lest angry men fall upon you, and you lose your life
With the lives of your household too!"

Then the children of Dan went their way
And when Micah saw that they were too strong for him
He turned and went back to his house
To him, things were lookin' grim

So they took the things Micah had made
And the priest who had belonged to him whom they did procure
And went to Laish
To a people quiet and secure

And they struck them with the edge of the sword
And burned the city with fire, such a ruthless horde

There was no deliverer, because it was far from Sidon
And they had no ties with anyone, a fatal snare
It was in the valley that belongs to Beth Rehob
So they rebuilt the city and dwelt there

And they called the name of the city Dan
After the name of Dan their father (Dan rhymes
-----with quiche)
Who was born to Israel
However, the name of the city formerly was Laish

Then the children of Dan set up for themselves the carved image
And Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh
-----who were at hand
And his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan
Until the day of the captivity of the land

So they set up for themselves Micah's carved image, doncha know
Which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh

Lord God, turn our hearts to be obedient to Your word
Give us wisdom to be ever faithful to You
May we carefully heed each thing we have heard
Yes, Lord God may our hearts be faithful and true

And we shall be content and satisfied in You alone
We will follow You as we sing our songs of praise
Hallelujah to You; to us Your path You have shown
Hallelujah we shall sing to You for all of our days

Hallelujah and Amen...