### Judges

## Chapter 18

1Well, there was no king over IsraEl back then, and the tribe of Dan was looking for its own land to inherit, because they hadn’t received an inheritance among the tribes of the sons of IsraEl.  
  
2So, the sons of Dan selected 5 mighty men from among their families and sent them to spy in the land around SaraAh and EsthaOl, in order to find a land [that they could inherit]. Then when they reached the hills of Ephraim and the house of MicaYas, they spent the night there... 3For, because they’d recognized the voice of the young Levite man, they stopped and asked him questions such as:  
  
 ‘Who brought you here? What do you do here?’  
  
And:  
  
 ‘Do you enjoy [living] here?’  
  
4Then he explained how MicaYas had taken him in and hired him to be his priest.  
  
5So they said:  
  
 ‘Please use your powers to ask God whether the direction we’re headed in will be blest.’  
  
6And the priest told them:  
  
 ‘Go your way in peace, for the direction you’re heading is the direction of the Lord.’  
  
  
7Well thereafter, the men traveled on, and when they got to Well thereafter, the men traveled on, and when they got to <span class="placename">LaiShaWell thereafter, the men traveled on, and when they got to <span class="placename">LaiSha</span>, they saw that the people there lived peacefully and leisurely (like the Well thereafter, the men traveled on, and when they got to <span class="placename">LaiSha</span>, they saw that the people there lived peacefully and leisurely (like the <span class="placename">SidoniansWell thereafter, the men traveled on, and when they got to <span class="placename">LaiSha</span>, they saw that the people there lived peacefully and leisurely (like the <span class="placename">Sidonians</span>). For there was no crime or violence in the land or any robbery, because they were a long way from the Sidonians, and they were quite isolated.  
  
8So then the 5 men returned to their brothers at SaraAh and EsthaOl and they said:  
  
 ‘Why are you just sitting here? 9Let’s get up and attack these people, for we’ve looked at their land and found it to be very good!  
  
 ‘Don’t be silent and don’t restrain yourselves from going there and inheriting their land, 10for we’ve found a place where the people are living in security and where the land is large enough for all of us, and God has given it into your hands…  
  
 ‘It’s a place where the ground produces everything that we need!’  
  
11So thereafter, the families of Dan sent 600 armed troops to SaraAh and EsthaOl. 12First they went and camped in First they went and camped in <span class="placename">KiriAth JaiRimFirst they went and camped in <span class="placename">KiriAth JaiRim</span> in First they went and camped in <span class="placename">KiriAth JaiRim</span> in <span class="placename">JudahFirst they went and camped in <span class="placename">KiriAth JaiRim</span> in <span class="placename">Judah</span> (that’s why that place is still called ‘The Camp of Dan’ to this day. Look, it’s there behind First they went and camped in <span class="placename">KiriAth JaiRim</span> in <span class="placename">Judah</span> (that’s why that place is still called ‘The Camp of Dan’ to this day. Look, it’s there behind <span class="placename">KiriAth JaiRimFirst they went and camped in <span class="placename">KiriAth JaiRim</span> in <span class="placename">Judah</span> (that’s why that place is still called ‘The Camp of Dan’ to this day. Look, it’s there behind <span class="placename">KiriAth JaiRim</span>.  
  
13Then they marched on to the mountains of Ephraim, and when they reached the house of MicaYas, 14the 5 men who had come as spies into the land of LaIsha told their brothers:  
  
 ‘There’s a sacred breast piece, a religious emblem, and a molded and carved image in this place. So, let’s think about what we should do next.’  
  
15Well, they stopped there and they went up to the house of the young Levite man (which was really the house of MicaYas), and they asked him how things were going. 16But meanwhile, the 600 armed men of the sons of Dan were standing just outside of the gate!  
  
17Then the 5 men who had come as spies in the land [forced their way into] the house of MicaYas where the priest was standing 18and they grabbed up the image, the breast piece, and the religious emblem... And when the priest asked them what they were doing, they said:  
  
 19‘Put your hand over your mouth and be quiet, for we want you to come with us to serve as our father and priest!  
  
 ‘After all, which would be better for you, to be the priest of the house of one man, or to be the priest of a whole tribe and to become a house among the families of IsraEl?’  
  
20Well, this sounded good to the heart of the priest, so he went along with the men who had taken the sacred breast piece, the religious emblem, and the molded and carved image.  
  
21Now, these men had brought all their sons, all their property, and all their baggage with them. 22So even after they’d gone some distance from MicaYas’ house, MicaYas and his neighbors (who had seen them in his house) were able to catch up with them and they started shouting at them.  
  
23But the sons of Dan then turned and faced MicaYas, and asked:  
  
 ‘What’s the matter with you? Why are you shouting at us?’  
  
24And MicaYas replied:  
  
 ‘Because you’ve taken the image that I made and my priest!  
  
 ‘So, what have you left for me… Why do you think I’m shouting at you?’  
  
25And the sons of Dan said:  
  
 ‘Stop shouting or you’ll make us angry and our men will kill you and your entire household.’  
  
26Well thereafter, the sons of Dan traveled on... For MicaYas realized that they were more powerful that he was, so he just went back to his home 27and let them carry off the things that MicaYas had made along with his priest (who went with them).  
  
Then from there, the army traveled on to LaiSha, where the people had been living peacefully and securely, and they attacked them with their broadswords and burned down their city.  
  
28No one came to their aid, because the city was so far from Sidon that there was no way to communicate with the people there (it was located in a valley near No one came to their aid, because the city was so far from Sidon that there was no way to communicate with the people there (it was located in a valley near <span class="placename">the house of ReHobNo one came to their aid, because the city was so far from Sidon that there was no way to communicate with the people there (it was located in a valley near <span class="placename">the house of ReHob</span>). Then [the sons of Dan] rebuilt the city and took up living there, 29renaming it, ‘the renaming it, ‘the <span class="placename">City of Danrenaming it, ‘the <span class="placename">City of Dan</span>’ (after their ancestor, the son of IsraEl), although it used to be called renaming it, ‘the <span class="placename">City of Dan</span>’ (after their ancestor, the son of IsraEl), although it used to be called <span class="placename">LaiSharenaming it, ‘the <span class="placename">City of Dan</span>’ (after their ancestor, the son of IsraEl), although it used to be called <span class="placename">LaiSha</span>.  
  
30And it was there that the sons of Dan erected the carved image for themselves.  
  
So from then on, JoNathan (son of GerSon and grandson of ManasSeh) and his sons continued to be the priests of the tribe of Dan until the time that the nation was captured and carried away.  
  
31Also, the carved image that MicaYas made remained there for as long as the House of God was in ShiLoh; because back then, there was no king in IsraEl.