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**Day 83 - March 24**

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## **Conquering a Land (1400 – 1100 BCE)**

### ***Micah and the Danites***

**Readings: *Judges 17:1-18:31***

### ***Reflections:***

- We must remember again in these final stories of the book of Judges that these stories exist to answer the question of, “How bad can it get?” We are meant to feel the shock and horror of how bad the human heart is even with the Law and the threat of punishment. This is setting the stage for Israel to cry out for a king! Now in the larger story we are working through a series of experiences to show that no external prop or support can ultimately fix or remedy the human heart. The law can't. Punishment can't. Godly leadership can't. Religion can't. Only God working from the inside out in a radically new and intimate way can change the human heart.
- The story of Micah kicks off with complete craziness. He takes some silver from his mother and consecrates it to the Lord by making an idol. Complete confusion here. Worshipping God by making idols. This is supposed to make you slap your forehead in disbelief.
- Notice the key line of Judges is repeated here after this: “In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit.”
- Next a Levite, one of God's own priests joins in the craziness and becomes this guy's personal priest and partner to this idolatry. Again the key line is restated, “In those days Israel had no king.”
- So the story is pretty easy to follow. Danites are still trying to secure some land for themselves. They find a nice, peaceful secure little city of people who have no allies to support them. They steal Micah's priest and idols. They attack and kill an unsuspecting city. Notice that the text is underscoring the peaceful nature of these people. It is clear from the text that these are not people God intended for Israel to attack and wipe out. They are not identified as a wicked people by God but a peaceful, secure city that is vulnerable because they have no allies. Dan doesn't care and the priest simply speaks out what they want to hear. There is no indication that he actually consulted the Lord. The fact that this is all done with idols makes it very clear that this is an offense to God.

- Micah comes to try to take back the idols but the Danites are too strong. Also notice that as the Danites move out, because they have stolen the idols, they have to put their fighting men as rear guard. The young children must go at the front of the pack and so because of their evil, they leave their children exposed.
- The Danites set up a city in their newly conquered area and set up worship to God and to Micah's idol. This shows the wickedness of Israel all over again. How bad can it get? Well, the next story takes it to an even deeper level of depravity.