

## **Judges 18:14-31 – The Epidemic of Ignorance Spreads**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Ignoritis Lex – ignorance of the law - is like chicken pox. It can be spread without the carrier knowing about it. The difference is that when Chicken Pox spreads, you might be left with a few spots, and maybe shingles. But it is much worse when Ignoritis spreads. The consequences for Ignoritis are usually severer. You will hear from God's Word about the epidemic of Ignoritis.

Our headings are:

**Ignorance Led to Thefts**

**Ignorance Led to Threats**

**Ignorance Led to Deaths**

Our goals are: **That you will see what the consequences of ignorance of God's Word are, but as children of Christ, you will learn to know and love his Word and therefore help to advance Christ's kingdom.**

### **Ignorance Led to Thefts – Intimidations**

14 Then the five men who had gone to spy out the country of Laish answered and said to their brethren, "Do you know that there are in these houses an ephod, household idols, a carved image, and a molded image? Now therefore, consider what you should do." 15 So they turned aside there, and came to the house of the young Levite man—to the house of Micah—and **greeted him.** 16 The **six hundred men armed with their weapons of war,** who were of the children of Dan, stood by the entrance of the gate.

**1. The 5 spies from Dan believed the lies that the Levite had told them -that God would bless their trip and that God approved of their behavior (steal innocent people's land).** But King Ignorance ruled Israel at this time. This was why the 5 Danites did not even know God's covenant name. They thought that the **illegitimate 非法的 priest** who pronounced an **illegitimate blessing on people** was trustworthy. (So they were boasting of their fake Rolex watch – not knowing it was Rolox.) The fact is, only a priest was to legitimately bless the people of God. But the 5 Danites didn't know that. This was like the wicked asking a pastor to bless your lottery ticket.

**2. These 5 spies convinced 600 soldiers from Dan of the lies they were told by the Levite. So they took up arms to go and conquer Laish.** These 5 spies convinced the 600 soldiers to make one "**pit stop**" **before they went north** to capture Laish – they stopped at the Levite's house on the way. These 5 spies gave the soldiers from Dan the "wink and the nod" to go into the Levite's house and rob him of the things he had and demand that he served them. They were convinced in their minds that the Levite and his idols were legitimate. Ignorance spreads.

**3. The 600 went to Micah's house to the Levite and waited outside.** Can you see how intimidating 恐吓 this was – to suddenly have 600 soldiers – armed to the teeth- in front of your house?

17 Then the **five men who had gone to spy out the land went up. Entering there, they took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image.** The priest stood at the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men who were armed with weapons of war. 18 When these went into Micah's house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image, the priest said to them, "What are you doing?"

**4. With the 600 covering them, the 5 spies entered the house and robbed the Levite of the carved image, the ephod, the household gods, and the molded image. Ignorance of the 2<sup>nd</sup> law caused them to break the 8<sup>th</sup> law.** Deuteronomy 27:15 **`Cursed is the one who makes a carved or molded image,** an abomination 厌恶 to the LORD, the work of the hands of the craftsman, and sets it up in secret.' And all the people shall answer and say, `Amen!'

19 And they said to him, "**Be quiet, put your hand over your mouth,** and come with us; be a father and a priest to us. Is it better for you to be a priest to the household of one man, or that you be a priest to a tribe and a family in Israel?"

**5. The Levite questioned the Danites about their robbery, so they intimidated him. They told him to keep his mouth shut.**

**6. But it is what they said next that was intriguing 荒诞不经. On one hand they wanted to control him, and on the other hand they wanted him to be their father and priest. How insidious 阴险 ignorance is!** Further, in their ignorance they were willing to **accept someone from out of Aaron's family to be their priest.** But this offer was attractive to

the young Levite who was ambitious. He was like the young man who applied to be a youth pastor at 17. No one is qualified to be as pastor at that age. Could it be that the 600 soldiers promised the Levite more for his consulting fees with his idols? Some scholars believe this.

### Lessons:

**a. Because many see innovative ways of worship as attractive – especially young people- churches try to embrace innovations.** They don't take the time to examine the legitimacy of the activity. They are simply attracted to new things or interesting things. This is one of the reasons for the weakness of the church in North America. **We treat ignorance with innovations and hope for a cure.** We don't know what God wants in worship, so we make up what we think is best.

**b. Do you see how God's rule about who should lead worship is ignored today?** If someone seems zealous or knowledgeable, a congregation can quickly make him into a minister or elder. I was made an elder in a Pentecostal church at age 15. That was insanity. This is the reason there are many women in the ministry today. God direct law is ignored. Women are not to rule or to have authority over men.

### Ignorance Led to Threats

20 So the **priest's heart was glad**; and he took the ephod, the household idols, and the carved image, and took his place among the people. 21 Then they turned and departed, and put the little ones, the livestock, and the goods in front of them.

**1. Ignoring the insults and appreciating the promise of a higher position, the Levite went along with Dan's plan.** He was a shepherd like the shepherds in Ezekiel 34 – governed by his own self-interest. So they took him and the things he had. He was won over by 10 shekels, guess what 20 shekels would do to him? He was a hireling 雇工, not a shepherd.

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

**2. Micah then gathered with his friends and neighbors to recover what was stolen from him.** When Micah and his friends caught up with the Danites, the Danites then asked: "What's wrong with you?" The Danites thought they could worship God with stolen property. That's like tithing off of lottery winnings.

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

**3. Micah's response perpetuated the ignorance of the times.** He accused the Danites of taking away his gods and his priest. He **did not even recognize that his gods violated God's law**. He did not know that the **Levite was not a legitimate priest**. He did not think it **strange that he had to fight to protect his god!** Take warning!

Isaiah 44:9 Those who make an image, all of them are useless, And their precious things shall not profit; They are their own witnesses; They neither see nor know, that they may be ashamed.

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!**" 26 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.

**4. The Danites, because they loved the priest and his gods, then threatened the life of Micah and the life of his family.**

Right and wrong were cast aside.

Lamentation 2:9 Her gates have sunk into the ground; He has destroyed and broken her bars. Her king and her princes are among the nations; The Law is no more, And her prophets find no vision...

And realizing that he had no ability to fight against Dan, Micah gave up. The thing to note is that Micah did not come to his senses and think that what he was doing was wrong. He would have fought for his idols if he had the ability to.

### 5. Lessons:

**a. Look how people with good intentions are deceived because of their ignorance.** Past US president, Jimmy Carter, recently said that Jesus would have welcomed homosexuals into his church. Surely President Carter wanted to care for homosexuals, but he is ignorant of God's Word.

**b. Look how greed can take over – in among ministers.** Luther to preachers: "...to see to it, that these three dogs did not follow them into the pulpit,—ambition, covetousness, and contentiousness..."

**c. Discontent is lethal.** It makes you a crook 骗子. It makes you covet. It makes you compromise. It makes you steal. Why do you pay so much tax? Because others are discontent and demand that the government steals from you!

## Ignorance Led to Deaths

27 So **they took the things Micah had made, and the priest who had belonged to him**, 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. 28 There was no deliverer, because it was far from Sidon, and they had no ties with anyone. It was in the valley that belongs to Beth Rehob. So they rebuilt the city and dwelt there. 29 And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel. However, the name of the city formerly was Laish.

**1. With the Levite and the idols in hand, Dan then went to conquer and kill the people of Laish.** It appears that this land **was not part** of what was originally promised to Israel. And the Bible notes that **these were a quiet** and **secured** people. They **did not have ties with anyone else**. This meant that they were **different** from the people of the land.

**2. After the slaughter of the people of Laish, Dan rebuilt the city and named it Dan.** They already had land in the south and there were other areas they could have captured, but based on the false promises of the Levite, they established themselves on the northernmost part of Israel. Influence of the idolatrous nation was stronger there.

30 Then the children of Dan set up for themselves the carved image; and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. 31 So they set up for themselves Micah's carved image which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

**3. Dan then established false worship.** What is sad here is that they then set up the gods they had taken, believing them to be Jehovah God, and set them up as an idol – a most abominable thing in God's eyes. This was an infection of ignoritis veritas. Infection spreads. It seems that they thought that since they were able to conquer the land, that God was blessing their effort. Henry: "Many justify themselves in their impiety不虔诚 by their prosperity." They saw God as a magical genie精灵. If they rubbed him, he would meet their requests. They did not rely upon the written Word. But this is what they should have done.

Isaiah 30:22 You **will also defile玷污 the covering of your graven images of silver**, And the ornament装饰 of your molded images of gold. You will throw them away as an unclean thing; You will say to them, "Get away!"

They even used their own people, who were not from Aaron's clan in Levi, to be priests. They argued from outside of the Word of God – they argued from ignorance.

### 4. Lessons:

**a. How many silly traditions haven't become established parts of Christianity today?** Where did "worship teams" come from? Where did "church board" come from? Where did inductive Bible study come from? Where did "children's church" come from? These are either created or secular things that have sneaked into the church.

**b. God's Word is the only reliable standard of truth in this world.** But wicked men, who reject God's Word, hate to do justice when asked. But God's Word is the standard for what we believe and how we live.

### Conclusion:

The ignorance of God's law concerning proper worship **caused Dan's theft of idols**. And believing they were doing what was right – using the gods for the whole tribe rather than a single family – **caused threats on Micah's life**. And foolishly believing what the Levite said – that God would bless their sins - Dan **caused the deaths of many innocent people**.

**Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: Ignorance causes shame.** Fight ignorance; don't embrace it.

Wouldn't you want to read love letters as you wait for your fiancée? So too you must **invest time in the Word of God** – God's love letter. **Learn of his love**. When you do, the time will pass faster as you wait for heaven. **Share his love**. Many more will come into his kingdom. Remember, Jesus lived and died for you. And he has gone to prepare a place for you. One day he will come back and take you to be with him.

Finally: If you are not a Christian, one of the common ways the Devil fools you is to use fake knowledge of how you could please God. He says things like: "Do good works. Be the best you can. All religions are of equal value. All roads lead to God." Have you been fooled this way? Don't be. You can only be saved through Jesus Christ. And you can be saved if you ask him to do so. He will save you for free. He will free you from your ignorance that leads to death.