

THE ONE YEAR BIBLE Reading for May 3:

Judges 17:1-18:31:

In today's reading we come into the last major section of the book: The Depths of Israel's Downward Moral Spiral (17:1-21:25). There are two incidents shared in these chapters—the record of each one beginning and ending with a statement about there being no king in Israel, two of the statements also including, “everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

Judges 17:1-18:31 records the first incident wherein an Ephraimite by the name of Micah sets up an unlawful priesthood with a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah which ends up in idolatry. Eventually the Danites took the Levite away and established their own place of worship in Dan which is northern Israel (east of Tyre). The Danites engaged in idolatry until the time of the captivity.

This incident was shared since it gives a good picture of the moral downfall of Israel. Truly the people had strayed far from the Lord. They need a godly king to lead them. Second, it also explains how Dan became such an idolatrous tribe. Each reader should learn that people have a tendency to spiral downward morally if sin is left unchecked.

John 3:1-21:

In these twenty-one verses we find the first discourse in John. In it Jesus teaches Nicodemus, a Pharisee who was part of the Sanhedrin (Jewish governing body), that in order for one to be part of the kingdom of God he must become a new person, in other words, he must be changed from the inside out by the Holy Spirit (1-15). The comments in verse five about being born of water and Spirit have reference to Ezekiel 36:25-27 where God says He will sprinkle water on people and cleanse them and it will happen by putting His Spirit in them which will give a new heart. How does a person get such a new heart from the Holy Spirit's work? A person must trust in Jesus Christ as savior who died to pay sin's penalty. Such will mean that person will not face God's judgment (he will not perish), but instead will have true abundant life that is marked by the eternal and itself becomes eternal. Such a person will be changed and have works that are according to the truth and light. (16-21)

Psalms 104:1-24:

This psalm praises God as the king and the creator. Allow the psalm to lead you in praise of Him.

Proverbs 14:20-21:

Verse 20 is one of those proverbs which do not call us to ethical behavior, but simply state the way things are—here in regard to how people treat the poor and rich. Verse 21 calls us to help those in need.