

CHALLENGE 2014: BIBLE IN A YEAR

WEEK II: JUDGES 18 — 1 SAMUEL 20 (MARCH 9 — 15)

Summary:

It wasn't bad enough that you had this man named Micah stealing from his mother, making an idol from the stolen property and then hiring himself a levite to be his personal priest (instead of worshipping at the Tent of Meeting in Shiloh), but now we also have the tribe of Dan, no longer content in their inheritance in the land, abandoning that inheritance to find a land of their own. They steal not only the idols of Micah, but also his priest and go on their way.

The final account in the book of Judges is a testimony to the depravity of the people as well as to the theme that echoes through these chapters that there was no king in Israel so people did what was right in their own eyes. This is one of the more graphic accounts recorded in scripture. There is a Levite from Ephraim who had a concubine. She proved to be unfaithful and fled to her father's house. The Levite forgives her and mends relationships at her father's house. They head home, but on their way they spend the night in the city of Gibeah in the tribal region of Benjamin. We have a scene akin to that of Sodom with the angel warning Lot, but this time the man's concubine gets tossed outside the door to be gang raped until morning and left for dead. The Levite goes out the next morning, puts her dying body on his mule and travels the rest of the way home with her dying on the way. He then divides her body in 12 parts and sends them to all parts of the people of Israel.

The people get angry and go to war with this city, amongst other things, killing all of the women who had lived in the city. This raised a up a difficulty because without women, there would be no next generation or continuation of the covenant people. So, they stole wives from the neighboring cultures and things just get worse from there. Judges closes with the refrain once more that there is no king in Israel, setting us up for the first judge and the first king.

1 Samuel:

We skip over reading the book of Ruth this week as we are following the Jewish order of the Old Testament, an order which places Ruth as part of "The Writings" and not part of the "Former Prophets." Like Moses, Samuel is a form of covenant mediator for the people and is a pointer toward Christ, who is the greater Samuel. Thus we begin with the birth narrative and how his then barren mother comes to the Shiloh to pray that God will give her a son, promising in turn to dedicate him from birth as a Nazirite and to the service of God.

Samuel will grow up and replace the Priest Eli for Eli's sons were wicked. Samuel is established as a Judge of the people in Shiloh. Shortly before the death of Eli and his sons, there is an interesting account where the Israelites were in battle with the Philistines. The Israelites called for the Ark of the Covenant to be with them in the hopes that if it were there, God would bring them victory. Yet, in their hearts they were treating the Ark as an idol and God had not commanded such an action. In judgment, the Israelites were defeated and the Ark was captured and the sons of Eli died in the battle. Hearing the news of the Ark's capture, Eli collapsed, breaking his neck against a gate when he fell.

Yet, ultimately God can care for his Ark and there is a wonderful account of the persecution that God brought on the Philistines prior to their returning the Ark to the Israelites. The Ark was returned and put under the care of Eleazar in the house Abinadab. And here it will remain until David will bring it to Jerusalem.

1 Samuel 7 records a covenant renewal ceremony, much as we see with Moses at the end of Deuteronomy and with Joshua at the end of the book of Joshua. This sums the highlight of Samuel's Judgeship.

While chapter 8 follows right after chapter 7, there is a period of a number of years that takes place as by the time chapter 8 hits, Samuel is an old man. As he ages, the people decide they no longer want leadership

by a Judge and a Divine King, but by a human king. Saul, a king after the heart of man is chosen to lead the people. Saul proves himself a good leader in battle but hardly the godly man that is to rule over the people of God.

Saul's error was to offer the burnt offering to God instead of waiting for Samuel, now functioning as Prophet and Priest, to do so. He had overstepped his bounds as king and did that which only the rightful Priest should do. Saul never repents of this action, and in fact, only expresses remorse after Samuel tells him that God has rejected Saul's kingship — a sign of remorse over consequences, not the sin itself. And Samuel is sent to anoint David, the youngest son of Jesse, to be king after Saul. What is very interesting is that shortly after this anointing takes place, David is placed in Saul's service as a harp player to ease the evil spirits that plague Saul.

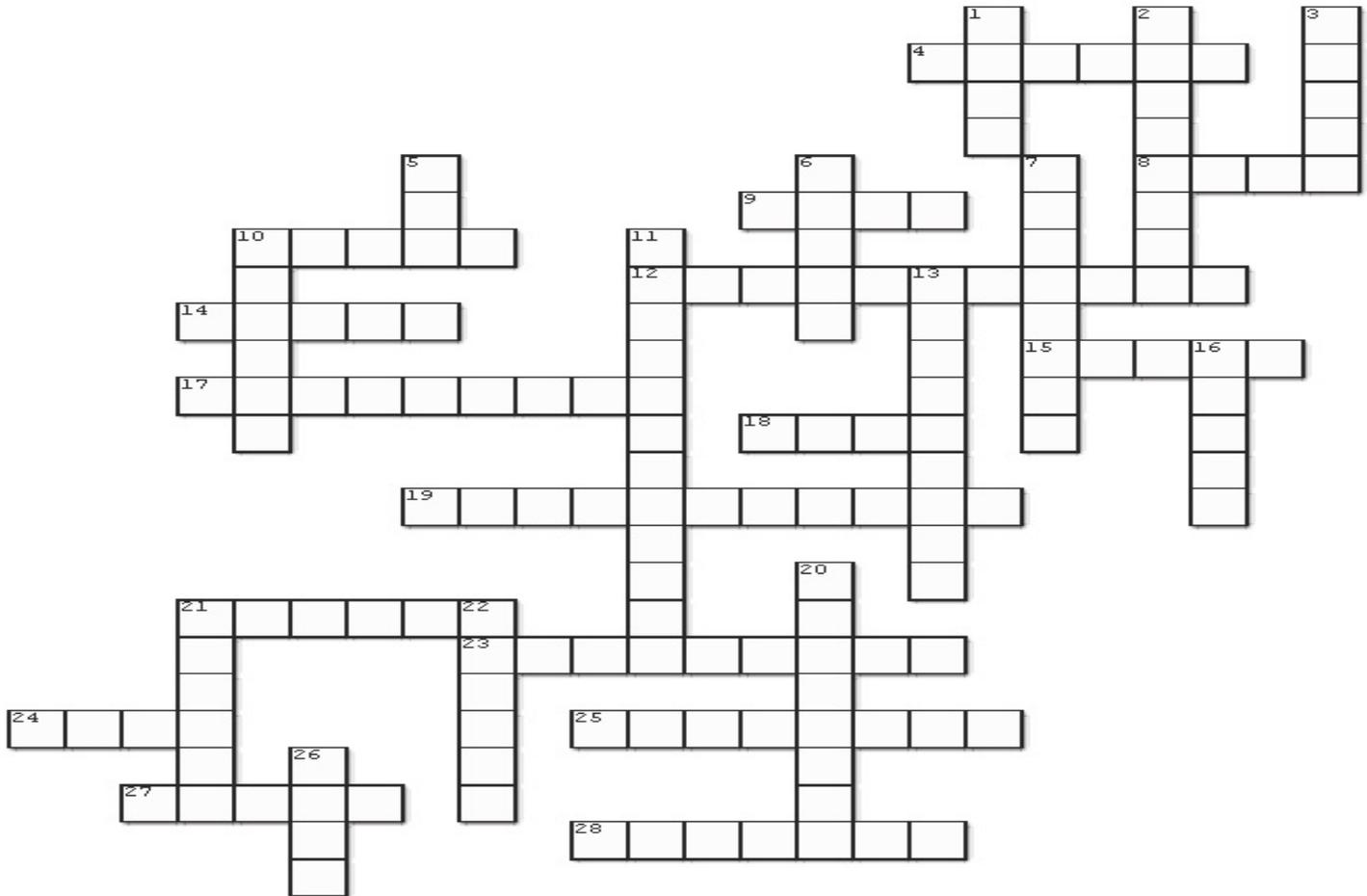
No reflection on 1 Samuel is complete without a discussion of David and Goliath. It should be remembered that at this point in David's life, he has already been anointed as king and he has already served as Saul's armor-bearer. Goliath has been mocking God himself as well as the people and David fulfills his Kingly duty to lead the troops in battle against their enemies by slaying Goliath and leading the charge against the Philistines. This event begins a life-long friendship with Saul's son, Jonathan, and will also earn David his first wife, the very "charming" Michal. Shortly after, Saul will begin trying to kill David off wanting to make sure that Jonathan will follow him as king. It takes the help of Michal, Jonathan, and David's loyal Mighty Men to escape the wrath of this angry king.

Chromatic Notes:

- Note that the tribe of Dan is the only tribe in Revelation 7 that is not mentioned. There is a Jewish tradition upon which some of the early Christian writers built, that said it would be from the tribe of Dan that the Antichrist would come. This is built upon the language of Genesis 49:17 that speaks of Dan as a serpent in the way. It is my opinion that the source of their absence in Revelation 7 is because they abandoned their inheritance as is recorded here in Judges 18.
- As gruesome as the cutting up of the Concubine's body is in Judges 19, her dismemberment was a reminder to the people of Israel that they had broken the covenant and that this is what they deserved. The message does not bring real repentance, but it does bring action.
- In the Hebrew tradition, 1&2 Samuel are a single book. The same is true for Kings and Chronicles.
- Note the song of Hannah; there are important similarities to the song that Mary will sing when she becomes pregnant with Jesus.
- It has been suggested that the Ark's capture by the Philistines is a mini exodus event complete with plagues prior to releasing the Ark from bondage and a season in the wilderness, kept by God until it is the right time to bring the Ark into Jerusalem.
- The tumors mentioned are a matter of some debate amongst scholars. Some have argued that the tumors were likely hemorrhoids that God had inflicted on the people.
- The people's request for a king is sometimes interpreted as something that was not meant to happen. Yet, in Deuteronomy 17 we have rules regarding the role of kings found within the Jewish law. Thus, the matter is not one of *if* the Israelites are to have a human king but a matter of *when* that is to take place. Like most humans, patience is not a strong suit of Israel.
- Notice that Saul is from the tribe of Benjamin, not Judah. This is significant for several reasons, most importantly, though, is that God gave the right to kingship to the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10). In addition, we read at the end of the book of Judges that the wives gotten for the tribe of Benjamin were largely pagan girls, thus the line of Benjamin had been corrupted with pagan people and ideas leading to a king that does not well understand God's sovereign command over him.
- Notice Saul's actions recorded in 1 Samuel 11 with his dividing the oxen in half -- like the dismembering by the Levite, once again we find a Covenant making ceremony of sorts.

Week 11: Judges 18-1 Samuel 20

Complete the crossword below



Created on TheTeachersCorner.net Crossword Make

Across

4. It is in this city of Benjamin that the Levite's concubine was killed.
8. Jonathan gave this to David as a sign of his covenantal friendship.
9. Goliath was from this city.
10. There were 700 chosen warriors from Benjamin who were particularly skillful with this ranged weapon.
12. David's first official job title in Saul's household (2 words).
14. The name of the man who stole money from his mother and in the end made idols out of it.
15. Jonathan ate this not knowing of his father's vow to curse the one who ate anything until he had defeated his enemies.
17. David brought two hundred of these from the Philistines to Saul to be the bride-price of Michal.
18. When Nahash the Ammonite attacked Jabesh-Gilead, he wanted to gouge out this body part of the city's elders.
19. These enemies of Israel captured the Ark.
21. This is a place where Israel often was brought together to discuss important matters (hint: see 1 Samuel 7).
23. God desires this over burnt sacrifices (hint: see 1 Samuel 15).
24. Saul's father's name.
25. When the Ark was returned, it was brought to this household.
27. In the battle at Michmash, the people sinned against God by eating food with this in it.
28. Hannah's husband.

Down

1. 'In those days there was no _____ in Israel.'
2. Samuel is dedicated as this from birth.
3. The Father of David
5. This tribe was not satisfied with their inheritance so moved north.
6. The Philistine idol that 'bowed' before the Ark of the Covenant.
7. This is the name of the Levite who became priest to the Danites; also the name of Saul's son.
10. The place where the worship of God took place in Samuel's day.
11. From this region, 400 virgin women were captured to be wives of the Benjaminites (hyphenated name).
13. Everywhere from Dan to _____ knew that Samuel was anointed as a prophet of the Lord.
16. The eldest brother of David.
20. Saul is from this tribe.
21. David's first wife and daughter of Saul.
22. One of Eli's wicked sons.
26. Michal made a pillow of this animal's hair to give the impression that David was asleep in bed.