

Elder Vernon Johnson

Numbers

The Army of Dan

Judg. 18:11 "And there went from thence of the family of the Danites, out of Zorah and out of Eshtaol, **six hundred men appointed with weapons of war.**"

Judg. 18:16 "And the **six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war**, which were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate."

Judg 18:17 "And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, and came in thither, and took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate with the **six hundred men that were appointed with weapons of war.**"

In the days of the judges, the tribe of Dan had not come into all the inheritance that had been promised unto them. The elders of the people appointed five men to go find and spy out a land suitable for a possession for the tribe of Dan: Judg. 18:7 "Then the five men departed, and came to Laish, and saw the people that were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure; and there was no magistrate in the land, that might put them to shame in any thing; and they were far from the Zidonians, and had no business with any man. 8 And they came unto their brethren to Zorah and Eshtaol: and their brethren said unto them, What say ye? 9 And they said, Arise, that we may go up against them: for we have seen the land, and, behold, it is very good: and are ye still? be not slothful to go, and to enter to possess the land. 10 When ye go, ye shall come unto a people secure, and to a large land: for God hath given it into your hands; a place where there is no want of any thing that is in the earth."

An army of six hundred men was appointed to go and destroy the inhabitants of the land and to secure it for the tribe of Dan. In the process of going to obtain the land the army of six hundred men and the tribe of Dan committed idolatry: Judg. 18:16 "And the six hundred men appointed with their weapons of war, which were of the children of Dan, stood by the entering of the gate. 17 And the five men that went to spy out the land went up, and came in thither, and took the graven image, and the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image: and the priest stood in the entering of the gate with the six hundred men that were appointed with weapons of war. 18 And these went into Micah's house, and fetched the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image.

Then said the priest unto them, What do ye? 19 And they said unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thine hand upon thy mouth, and go with us, and be to us a father and a priest: is it better for thee to be a priest unto the house of one man, or that thou be a priest unto a tribe and a family in Israel? 20 And the priest's heart was glad, and he took the ephod, and the teraphim, and the graven image, and went in the midst of the people."

Though the army of six hundred defeated the Zidonians and secured the land for the tribe of Dan, yet Dan committed idolatry in setting up the carved image, the ephod, and the teraphim, and the molten image and in appointing a Levite to be their priest: Judg. 18:30 "And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. 31 And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh."

The sin of idolatry they committed in obtaining the land led to their being expelled from the land that they fought to obtain. Now all this is a lesson to us today. There are those who at one time are good soldiers of Jesus Christ, but later their hearts are turned away to idolatrous practices and they lose their possession in God's church kingdom on earth. Examples of this in the New Testament are:

1. Matt. 13:22 "He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."

2. Phil. 3:17 "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ:"

3. 2 Tim. 4:10 "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia."

4. 2 Tim. 2:18 "Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."

