

Word Notes Sunday 26/01/14
Clare Reed – Who is moulding whom?

Summary (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

Key Texts: Judges 17-18

The last 4 chapters of Judges (17-20) are illustrative examples of what life was like in Israel when “everyone did what was right in his own eyes”. Here we find the story of Micah. Micah’s mother has had a significant sum of money stolen, and has uttered a curse against the thief. This would not be a throw away comment, but speaking out a harsh desire of ill will against the thief, in the belief that these words would be powerful against him. Imagine her horror when she realised she has spoken this curse against her son! God’s law required that Micah should return the stolen money, plus an extra fifth, and make a guilt offering to atone for his sin. (Lev 6:1-6). However, he does not appear to do this. Micah’s Mother seems to attempt to put things right with her “solemn consecration” of her silver to the Lord. There are a number of problems with this:

1. Making a gift to God cannot atone for our sin
2. She does not follow up her words in actions.
3. According to God’s law, she shouldn’t have been making idols anyway!

Micah’s mother seems to be trying to impress God, but it’s not about the impression we make on God, but the impression he makes on us.

Micah has his own shrine, installing first his own son as priest and later a Levite. God had told the Israelites they should only make their sacrifices at the one place he chose (Deut 12). Priests interceded between the people and God in many ways. By having his son, and later the Levite who “became like a son to him”, as his priest, Micah is likely the real power figure in the relationship. Rather than genuinely seeking God’s will, he is seeking approval of his own way. As Micah discovers, things we have built for ourselves do not last. In chapter 18, Micah’s idols and his priest are stolen from him and he is powerless to defend himself. What we have received through Jesus the “great high priest” cannot be stolen from us.

Application (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

- As a group, brainstorm what you know about the role of an Old Testament priest.
- Can you identify how Jesus fulfils these roles?

- Micah and his mother both try to make an impression on God instead of allowing themselves to be moulded by His law. How might we be similarly tempted today?

- How does your knowledge of Jesus the great high priest encourage you to allow yourself to be moulded by God?

Witness (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

How would explain to a non-believer that “our gifts to God cannot atone for our sin”?