

## Micah's Idols

cf. Judges Chapter 17  
(NRSV: Newly Re-revised Saunders Version)

17 There was a man in the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Micah; the man, not the hill country. <sup>2</sup>He said to his mother, "The eleven hundred pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse, and even spoke it in my hearing - you rude old witch! - that silver is in my possession; I took it; but now I will return it to you." He told her because he'd felt guilty as hell when his mother had told him that she'd planned to use the money to buy an orphanage for little orphan Ephraimites. And his mother said, "May my son be blessed by the LORD!" What she thought, however, was, "What a thieving git, but ha! ha! ha! my manipulating emotional blackmail worked a treat." <sup>3</sup>Then he returned the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother; and his mother said, "Where am I going to keep all of this? There are four wheelbarrows full of coins, you could have just written me a cheque! Anyway, I consecrate the silver to the LORD from my hand for my son, to make an idol of cast metal, and he can change his name to Billy Idol - the god of Heavy Metal." <sup>4</sup>So when he returned the money to his mother, his mother took two hundred pieces of silver, and gave it to the silversmith, who made it into an idol of cast metal; and it was in the house of Micah, which was eventually taken over by the House of Fraser who sold knitted idols of Micah, which were extremely popular with young children and sentimental middle-aged women. <sup>5</sup>This man Micah had a shrine, and he made an ephod - that's a pretty dress to you and me, or some little bug which infests plants - and teraphim (he tried at first to make a turtle but it was



"There are four wheelbarrows full of coins"v.3

too big to fit in his ephod, so he just made do with a teraphim!), and installed one of his sons, who became his priest. <sup>6</sup>In those days there was no king in Israel - Elvis was on the 1970 BCE Red-Sea Suede Shoes tour in Egypt; all the people did what was right in their own eyes.

<sup>7</sup>Now there was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, of the clan of Judah. He was a Levite residing there, lets call him Cecil. <sup>8</sup>This man, Cecil, left the town of Bethlehem in Judah, to live wherever he could find a place. He was on his way to his grandma's in the forest with a basket of goodies. <sup>9</sup>Micah said to him, "From where do you come?" He replied, "I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah<sup>1</sup> called Cecil, and I am going to my grandma's house in the forest with this big basket of goodies" <sup>10</sup>Then Micah said to him, "Stay with me." But Cecil the Levite suspected Micah to be a big, bad wolf in disguise and said, "I think that you are a big, bad wolf in disguise."

"No, no, no," said Micah, "I'm not a big, bad wolf in disguise; no! you are thinking of the story of Little Red Riding Hood. This is the Bible. I'm just one of your run of the mill Biblical egotistical, money-pinching twits!"

<sup>1</sup> Older documents say "*I am going to live wherever I can find a place.*" And Micah said, "Have you tried the Council Housing Office?"

"Ah, that's alright then," said the Levite quite relieved. Then Micah said to him again, "Stay with me and be to me a father and a priest (he seriously needed counselling), and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year which I'll probably nick off my Mum, a set of clothes, a set of golf clubs, a set of crockery, a set of foxes and your living."

"Well noticed," said the Levite.

"What?" inquired Micah.

"You said, 'and you're living.'"

"Yeah?!"

"Well I am."

"Blasphemer!"

"What?!" said the Levite.

"You just said, 'I Am' and that's God's name!"

"Aw! Forget it!"

<sup>11</sup>After a three hour negotiation with ACAS, the Levite agreed to stay with the man; and the young man became to him like one of his sons - which on the whole was okay, apart from having to wear shorts in the winter, but he did get as much Lego<sup>®</sup> as he could eat! <sup>12</sup>So Micah installed the Levite, between the dishwasher and his real son, and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah. <sup>13</sup>Then Micah said, "Now I know that the LORD will prosper me, because the Levite has become my priest."

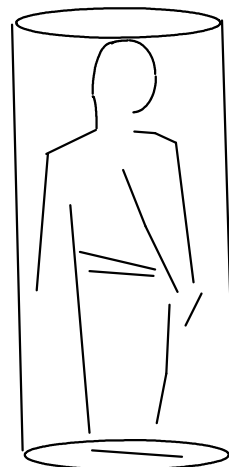
### *The Migration of Dan*

**18** And now for the main headlines again. In those days there was no king in Israel. And in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking for itself a territory to live in (it should actually say '...in which to live,' but we'll let it pass); for until then no territory among the tribes of Israel had been allotted to them, even though they had made a formal complaint to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. <sup>2</sup>So the Danites sent five valiant men - read thugs - from the whole number of their clan, from Zorah (the Scottish cousin of Zorro) and

from Eshtaol, to spy out the land and to explore it; and they said to them, "Go, explore the land." When they came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, they stayed there. Micah had branched out into the B&B industry, with a small gift shop selling knitted images of himself, as well as a great line in small tartan Micah's in plastic tubes. <sup>3</sup>While they were at Micah's house, they recognised the voice of the young Levite, Cecil - you notice that they didn't recognise his face or anything just his voice - why?:

1. was it really dark?
2. were they blind folded?
3. was Cecil wearing a false nose, false moustache and false glasses?
4. or is it simply the boring commentator's answer that they simply recognised his distinctive Geordie accent?

You can decide: ring 0898 777 777 and leave your answer after the tone;<sup>2</sup> so they went over and asked him, "Who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What is your business here?" <sup>4</sup>He said to them, "Blimey, one question at a time please lads - you wouldn't make good chat show hosts would you! Look here's the story, Micah did such and such for me, and he hired



a great line in tartan Micah's in plastic tubes... v.2b

me, and I have become his priest." He said that 'Micah did *such and such*, because even he realised that although it was one of the few stories featuring himself in the canon of the Old Testament, not even he could admit that it was the most riveting of stories, and certainly not being only two chapters after the story of Samson and Delilah. Who was he kidding? How could you follow that peach of a tale? It had all the classic signs of a great narrative: one man standing up for his God in a pagan land, pitting his strength - while bald - against the mighty Philistine temple; and all with that tension-building jealous girlfriend element. How could poor Cecil follow that? All he had was a dreary yarn about some bloke who stole money from his Mum, then gave it back and she made an effigy of him out of some old fifty pence pieces, and hired some sad, deranged, nomadic Red-Riding Hood wannabe. <sup>5</sup>Then they said to him, "Inquire of God that we may know whether the mission we are undertaking will succeed." <sup>6</sup>The priest replied, "What is your mission?"

The men replied, "We must write a 1,500 word essay for OT1 on your terribly exciting story<sup>3</sup>."

The priest replied, "You must have the wrong passage you're probably thinking of the really exciting story of Samson and Delilah a couple of pages back. Go in peace..." Well it sounded something like that, he said something about "Peace...", and then there was something muffled and the distinctive Hebrew word for "off."

to

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continued....