

Judges 18:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man the Levite, even unto the house of Micah, and saluted him.

Analysis

And they turned thitherward, and came to the house of the young man the Levite, even unto the house of Micah, and saluted him. The phrase "turned thitherward" (vayasuru shamah, וַיַּעֲשֵׂר שָׁמָה) indicates deliberate diversion from their route—they turned aside specifically to approach the Levite. "Came to the house of the young man the Levite, even unto the house of Micah" clarifies that the Levite lived in Micah's household as his hired priest. The greeting "saluted him" (vayish'alu-lo leshalom, וַיִּשְׁאַלְוּ לָוּ לְשָׁלוֹם, literally "asked him for peace/well-being") appears courteous but was actually tactical—engaging him in conversation while others stole the religious objects (verses 17-18).

This verse reveals calculated deception. The Danites appeared friendly, greeting the Levite respectfully, while planning to rob his employer and recruit him for their own purposes. From a Reformed perspective, this illustrates how sin often employs deception and manipulation. The Danites didn't violently attack; they used social conventions (greetings, religious inquiry) to mask theft and coercion. This warns that evil doesn't always appear obviously wicked—it often wears respectable, even religious, masks.

Historical Context

The social customs of greeting and hospitality in ancient Israel made the Danites' approach seem appropriate and non-threatening. Asking after someone's shalom

(peace/well-being) was standard courtesy (Genesis 43:27, 1 Samuel 25:5). The Levite, having previously blessed their mission (verse 6), likely welcomed these familiar faces. He had no reason to suspect their true intentions. This abuse of hospitality customs illustrates the moral chaos of the judges period, where even social bonds and religious roles provided no protection against exploitation.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does sin sometimes disguise itself with social pleasantries and religious vocabulary?
2. What does this passage teach about the importance of discernment—not judging merely by outward appearances or courteous words?
3. In what ways might you be using religious or social conventions to mask motivations or actions that don't honor God?

Interlinear Text

בְּ יִתְּ	אֶל	וְיִשְׁרָאֵל	שָׁמָה	וְיָבֹא	וְיִשְׁרָאֵל	בְּ יִתְּ
And they turned	H8033	thitherward and came	H935			even unto the house
	H5493					H1004
לְזִיתָר	מִיכָּה	וְיִשְׁאָלָה	עָרָה	בְּ יִתְּ	בְּלֹא	וְיִתְּ
of the young man	H5288	the Levite	H3881	even unto the house	H1004	of Micah and saluted
						H4318 H7592
לְשִׁלּוּם:						
	H7965					

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 43:27 (Parallel theme): And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?

From KJV Study • kjvstudy.org