

DAN, THE SHIPOWNER!

by REINHARD BONNKE

„Why did Dan remain in ships?“ Judg. 5:17

The Danites were merchants, running a kind of mercantile marine service for Israel. They bought in goods from the far corners of the earth. Then, moored in a harbor, the ships became shops, selling directly from the importer to the public. Now here is how I picture it. Dan himself is at the till of his shop. The day has been great, and profits are good. He is reckoning everything up with satisfaction. Then, a sudden disturbance on the harbor side distracts him. A messenger arrives, exhausted from the urgent run, carrying a letter to Dan. It reads:

Dear Dan,

Jabin, the King of Canaan, has sent Sisera and is harrying Israel. We are fighting with everything at our disposal, but we need help. The tribes must all unite to repel the enemy. Come and help - now. Your fellow Israelites are bleeding and dying. Please respond. Come at once!
Greetings, DEBORAH (Judge of Israel)

Dan, the businessman, was deeply moved. He jumped up and looked inland, where he thought hostilities might be in progress. He possibly heard the clash of arms and the cries of his dying brothers. But then, just as suddenly, he was moved by other thoughts. Awfully worrying questions troubled him. Could he just leave his money, uncounted? If he went and fought, what would happen to his ships and shops? Wouldn't he be risking his flourishing enterprise? And there was something else. Canaanites were his customers. He must not upset them. Shouldn't he remain neutral? What if his ships sank while he neglected them while enlisting in the army?

Hurriedly, he stuffed a bundle of money into the messenger's pockets and said, *'I certainly want to help. Regretfully, I can't come myself, but here's my contribution. Tell Deborah I'm with her in spirit.'*

Wonderful man to let the women do the fighting! So Dan went on counting his cash while his brethren rallied round the standard of Deborah and Barak. Let others die for Israel, but Dan had a business to attend to. There was Dan in his ship – the ship of self-interest self-love and greed.

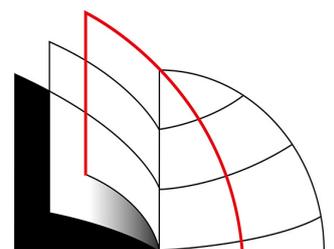
Who does Dan represent today? It is for each one of us to ask ourselves. Dan is the Christian who belongs to the family of God, knows what the claims of God upon him are, hears the call of God, but does not respond to it. He remains in his ship shop when God wants him to 'seek first the kingdom of God'. The music of the tinkling till, the applause of the unconverted or the opinion of family and friends deafen him to the call of the living God. In church he sings about the sweet bye and bye on the golden shore, but will his ship reach it, or just flounder in the sea of life? If you think such situation could not be, just look around. See the wreckage of lives where people have chosen the wrong priorities. Some of the saddest people have been those with an eye to the main chance, who didn't keep their eyes on God. They lost the vision. Things went terribly wrong in the end. Success turned to ashes, popularity went sour. They chose the Danite opportunities of the ship shop. They let others follow Christ to His harvest field, or battlefield, or maybe mission field, and at the last saw their joy and contentment, realizing their own tragedy.

"Summer is ended, harvest is over and we are not saved"
Jer. 8:20

World-Wide Evangelism

Postfach 500929
60397 Frankfurt am Main
Tel. 06186 9143727
info@wwevangel.org
www.wwevangel.org

Evangelische Bank
IBAN: DE85 5206 0410 0004 0039 93
BIC: GENODEF1EK1



WWE
WORLD-WIDE
EVANGELISM