

**“How did we end up here?”**

**Judges 19-20**

**Scripture Ref: Jud 21:25; Joshua 7-8; Ps 2:1-8**

- 1. Civil war is a terrible thing – in our countries past, approx 620,000 men died in our conflict**
  - a. Wars are spawned by some wrong that needs to be righted, and war seems the only conclusion**
  - b. Here we come to an account of a civil war that claims 55,000 lives, because of a brutal rape & murder that went unpunished.**
  - c. (happened early, Phineas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron was priest.)**
- 2. Key verse -**

***Judg 21:25** In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

**The Levite's Concubine**

19:1 And it came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite staying in the remote mountains of Ephraim. He took for himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. 2 But his concubine played the harlot against him, and went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there four whole months. 3 Then her husband arose and went after her, to speak kindly to her and bring her back, having his servant and a couple of donkeys with him. So she brought him into her father's house; and when the father of the young woman saw him, he was glad to meet him. 4 Now his father-in-law, the young woman's father, detained him; and he stayed with him three days. So they ate and drank and lodged there.

5 Then it came to pass on the fourth day that they arose early in the morning, and he stood to depart; but the young woman's father said to his son-in-law, "Refresh your heart with a morsel of bread, and afterward go your way."

6 So they sat down, and the two of them ate and drank together. Then the young woman's father said to the man, "Please be content to stay all night, and let your heart be merry." 7 And when the man stood to depart, his father-in-law urged him; so he lodged there again. 8 Then he arose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart, but the young woman's father said, "Please refresh your heart." So they delayed until afternoon; and both of them ate.

9 And when the man stood to depart -- he and his concubine and his servant -- his father-in-law, the young woman's father, said to him, "Look, the day is now drawing toward evening; please spend the night. See, the day is coming to an end; lodge here, that your heart may be merry. Tomorrow go your way early, so that you may get home."

**Spending the Night in Gibeah**

10 However, the man was not willing to spend that night; so he rose and departed, and came opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). With him were the two saddled donkeys; his concubine was also with him. 11 They were near Jebus, and the day was far spent; and the servant said to his master, "Come, please, and let us turn aside into this city of the Jebusites and lodge in it."

12 But his master said to him, "We will not turn aside here into a city of foreigners, who are not of the children of Israel; we will go on to Gibeah." 13 So he said to his servant, "Come, let us draw near to one of these places, and spend the night in Gibeah or in Ramah." 14 And they passed by and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin. 15 They turned aside there to go in to lodge in Gibeah. And when he went in, he sat down in the open square of the city, for no one would take them into his house to spend the night.

16 Just then an old man came in from his work in the field at evening, who also was from the mountains of Ephraim; he was staying in Gibeah, whereas the men of the place were Benjamites. 17 And when he raised his eyes, he saw the traveler in the open square of the city; and the old man said, "Where are you going, and where do you come from?"

18 So he said to him, "We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah toward the remote mountains of Ephraim; I am from there. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; now I am going to the house of the LORD. But there is no one who will take me into his house, 19 although we have both straw and fodder for our donkeys, and bread and wine for myself, for your female servant, and for the young man who is with your servant; there is no lack of anything."

20 And the old man said, "Peace be with you! However, let all your needs be my responsibility; only do not spend the night in the open square." 21 So he brought him into his house, and gave fodder to the donkeys. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank.

### **The Benjamite Sodomites**

22 As they were enjoying themselves, suddenly certain men of the city, perverted men, surrounded the house and beat on the door. They spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying, "Bring out the man who came to your house, that we may know him carnally!"

23 But the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brethren! I beg you, do not act so wickedly! Seeing this man has come into my house, do not commit this outrage. 24 Look, here is my virgin daughter and the man's concubine; let me bring them out now. Humble them, and do with them as you please; but to this man do not do such a vile thing!" 25 But the men would not heed him. So the man took his concubine and brought her out to them. And they knew her and abused her all night until morning; and when the day began to break, they let her go.

26 Then the woman came as the day was dawning, and fell down at the door of the man's house where her master was, till it was light.

27 When her master arose in the morning, and opened the doors of the house and went out to go his way, there was his concubine, fallen at the door of the

house with her hands on the threshold. 28 And he said to her, "Get up and let us be going." But there was no answer. So the man lifted her onto the donkey; and the man got up and went to his place.

29 When he entered his house he took a knife, laid hold of his concubine, and divided her into twelve pieces, limb by limb, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. 30 And so it was that all who saw it said, "No such deed has been done or seen from the day that the children of Israel came up from the land of Egypt until this day. Consider it, confer, and speak up!"

- 3. No way to filter this – this was a heinous act, committed on a defenseless girl by immoral men.**

### **The Levite**

- 4. Why does this man have this woman as a concubine, and not his wife?**
- a. While many men in the bible had concubines (servant), not once does God direct or allow a man to be in a sexual relationship with any woman but his wife.**
  - b. So why is this woman not his wife?**
  - c. I wonder had she been his wife – would he have been more protective of her?**
- 5. The fact that these two men would be willing to push a teenage girl and his ‘servant-girl-live-in-lover’ out to these sodomites, just to save his own skin, tells me something about their character.**
- a. And when he goes to leave, it seems that he has a cavalier attitude about his servant-girl.. “get up, let’s go”**
  - b. now he is all upset that it happened, so upset that he chops her up into twelve pieces and sends her body parts all through the land...**
  - c. “Look at what they did!”**
- 6. I think it’s relative today, as we have a financial calamity on our hands,**
- a. And both political parties are pointing the finger at one another “look at what they did! Vote for me and I’ll fix it!”**
  - b. Never mind that they are the ones who got us into this mess in the first place!**

### **Israel's War with the Benjamites**

20:1 So all the children of Israel came out, from Dan to Beersheba, as well as from the land of Gilead, and the congregation gathered together as one man before the LORD at Mizpah. 2 And the leaders of all the people, all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand foot soldiers who drew the sword. 3(Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.)

Then the children of Israel said, "Tell us, how did this wicked deed happen?"

4 So the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, "My concubine and I went into Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, to spend the night. 5 And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and surrounded the house at night because of me. They intended to kill me, but instead they ravished my concubine so that she died. 6 So I took hold of my concubine, cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the territory of the inheritance of Israel, because they committed lewdness and outrage in Israel. 7 Look! All of you are children of Israel; give your advice and counsel here and now!"

8 So all the people arose as one man, saying, "None of us will go to his tent, nor will any turn back to his house; 9 but now this is the thing which we will do to Gibeah: We will go up against it by lot. 10 We will take ten men out of every hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, a hundred out of every thousand, and a thousand out of every ten thousand, to make provisions for the people, that when they come to Gibeah in Benjamin, they may repay all the vileness that they have done in Israel." 11 So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, united together as one man.

12 Then the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What is this wickedness that has occurred among you? 13 Now therefore, deliver up the men, the perverted men who are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and remove the evil from Israel!" But the children of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brethren, the children of Israel. 14 Instead, the children of Benjamin gathered together from their cities to Gibeah, to go to battle against the children of Israel. 15 And from their cities at that time the children of Benjamin numbered twenty-six thousand men who drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who numbered seven hundred select men. 16 Among all this people were seven hundred select men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair's breadth and not miss. 17 Now besides Benjamin, the men of Israel numbered four hundred thousand men who drew the sword; all of these were men of war.

### **The Role of a King**

- 7. The last statement in this book tells us: "*In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes*"**
  - a. Was the problem a political one? Perhaps if Israel chose a king, things would be better?**
  - b. So let's look at the historical record: From the appointment of Saul, there were 43 Kings,**
  - c. only eight were called "good", David and Solomon could be put into the "good" column – 10 out our 43... not a good track record for the Monarchy model!**
- 8. So it would seem to indicate that just having a king does not bring about a healthy and moral society –**

- a. What was common with the “good kings?” That they ruled “in the Lord”: A King “after God’s heart”
9. This is especially relevant today, as our country has come to a place where we have some significant problems, and we are looking to the government to solve those problems
  - a. And apparently our nation has come to believe that government programs, intervention, stimulus, etc, will help us out of these problems
  - b. They will bring us to a new place of growth and prosperity and “a better life”
10. What this fails to take into consideration is the fact that every decision, every program, every action is affected by the character and intentions of the people who offer and oversee it.
  - a. And imbedded into each party are people and groups who each have their own world-view, their own vision of what the world should be, and how we should get there.
  - b. And the direction is driven by the personal goals and ambitions of the ones who happen hold the reigns at any given time.
  - c. IOW: the whole thing is corrupted by man.
11. Wrote James Madison to Thomas Jefferson in 1788: *“Whenever there is an interest and power to do wrong,” “wrong will generally be done, and not less readily by a powerful and interested party than by a powerful and interested prince.”*
12. Our country is where Israel was 3000 years ago: “Look at the terrible things happening around us! We have to do something!”
  - a. And no thought is given to the root of the problem – how did we get here in the first place?
  - b. Is it the Democrats faulty? Republicans? Bush? Aliens from outer space?
  - c. NO! The problem is that we have removed ourselves as a country from walking with the Lord!
  - d. We have moved to a place of “relative morality” – whatever seems right to you, that’s OK.
  - e. We are more concerned with our “rights” than what is “right”
  - f. The rights of sodomites – rights to kill our babies – rights to be immoral.
13. And when the line between “right and wrong” gets blurred, then people cannot tell when they are acting wrong
  - a. And whatever I have to do at the moment to reach my goal, that is OK.
  - b. And when things fall apart, no one says “man, as a country we have fallen away from God, we need to repent”

- c. **Instead we say “It’s \_\_\_\_\_ fault! (fill in the blank). We need new leadership!”**

**14. And we get to see our first glimpse of partisanship – the men of Benjamin chose to support the sodomites within their tribe, instead of doing what was right**

**15. To their credit, the Israelites did inquire of the Lord...**

**Inquire of the Lord**

18 Then the children of Israel arose and went up to the house of God to inquire of God. They said, "Which of us shall go up first to battle against the children of Benjamin?"

The LORD said, "Judah first!"

19 So the children of Israel rose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah.

20 And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin, and the men of Israel put themselves in battle array to fight against them at Gibeah. 21 Then the children of Benjamin came out of Gibeah, and on that day cut down to the ground twenty-two thousand men of the Israelites. 22 And the people, that is, the men of Israel, encouraged themselves and again formed the battle line at the place where they had put themselves in array on the first day. 23 Then the children of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until evening, and asked counsel of the LORD, saying, "Shall I again draw near for battle against the children of my brother Benjamin?"

And the LORD said, "Go up against him."

24 So the children of Israel approached the children of Benjamin on the second day. 25 And Benjamin went out against them from Gibeah on the second day, and cut down to the ground eighteen thousand more of the children of Israel; all these drew the sword.

**16. So if they asked the Lord, why did they lose?**

- a. **Notice – they made up their minds what they were going to do...**  
b. **Then they asked the Lord “who should we send first?”**

**Fasting and Prayer**

26 Then all the children of Israel, that is, all the people, went up and came to the house of God and wept. They sat there before the LORD and fasted that day until evening; and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. 27 So the children of Israel inquired of the LORD (the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, 28 and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days), saying, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease?"

And the LORD said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand."

**Finally, a Victory**

29 Then Israel set men in ambush all around Gibeah. 30 And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in battle array against Gibeah as at the other times. 31 So the children of Benjamin went out against the people, and were drawn away from the city. They began to strike down and kill some of the people, as at the other times, in the highways(one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah) and in the field, about thirty men of Israel. 32 And the children of Benjamin said, "They are defeated before us, as at first."

But the children of Israel said, "Let us flee and draw them away from the city to the highways." 33 So all the men of Israel rose from their place and put themselves in battle array at Baal Tamar. Then Israel's men in ambush burst forth from their position in the plain of Geba. 34 And ten thousand select men from all Israel came against Gibeah, and the battle was fierce. But the Benjamites did not know that disaster was upon them. 35 The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel. And the children of Israel destroyed that day twenty-five thousand one hundred Benjamites; all these drew the sword.

36 So the children of Benjamin saw that they were defeated. The men of Israel had given ground to the Benjamites, because they relied on the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah. 37 And the men in ambush quickly rushed upon Gibeah; the men in ambush spread out and struck the whole city with the edge of the sword. 38 Now the appointed signal between the men of Israel and the men in ambush was that they would make a great cloud of smoke rise up from the city, 39 whereupon the men of Israel would turn in battle. Now Benjamin had begun to strike and kill about thirty of the men of Israel. For they said, "Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle." 40 But when the cloud began to rise from the city in a column of smoke, the Benjamites looked behind them, and there was the whole city going up in smoke to heaven. 41 And when the men of Israel turned back, the men of Benjamin panicked, for they saw that disaster had come upon them. 42 Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them, and whoever came out of the cities they destroyed in their midst. 43 They surrounded the Benjamites, chased them, and easily trampled them down as far as the front of Gibeah toward the east. 44 And eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell; all these were men of valor. 45 Then they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon; and they cut down five thousand of them on the highways. Then they pursued them relentlessly up to Gidom, and killed two thousand of them. 46 So all who fell of Benjamin that day were twenty-five thousand men who drew the sword; all these were men of valor.

**17. At this point the victory must have felt hollow – 55K men have died, because one tribe would not allow justice to be served.**

**a. But is that the whole story?**

18. There are some who feel that after they fasted and prayed, perhaps they went back to God's word, and looked at Joshua's record of the battle for Ai (Joshua 7-8)
- a. And they took a play from that book!
  - b. But – had they paid a little closer attention to the word of God in their everyday lives, would they even be in this situation?
19. Apply this to our current situation: Is the problem the Dems? Reps? Clinton? Bush? Some secret society of powerful men who run the world?
- a. How did we get here? Who do we blame? What do we do now?
  - b. For the next several years experts will be wringing their hands and scratching their heads, trying to figure out how can avoid something like this in the future...
  - c. There will be programs, and regulatory adjustments, changes in leadership, promises peace and safety
  - d. But the one thing that will be lacking from any candidate is this: "Let us fall on our face before God and return to Him as a nation"
  - e. Therefore, until the Lord returns, history will repeat itself (I read recently that this is the sixth housing/landing crisis since the depression)
20. What do we do? Give up? No!
- a. We are to be salt and light – live like no one else
  - b. Vote? Sure! Sometimes it's the lesser of two evils!
  - c. Let our voice be heard? Yes! Speak righteousness and truth and love – Paul did before Festus and then Caesar!
  - d. I personally say we should vote every one of them out of office, and demand term limits for the new ones!

**Preamble – Declaration of Independence**

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. **2.2** That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. **2.3** Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. **2.4** But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under

absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

**21. But the bottom line is if we will live our lives for the Lord, we will prevail, for His kingdom is coming!**

**Ps 2:1-8**

*Why do the nations rage,  
And the people plot a vain thing?  
2 The kings of the earth set themselves,  
And the rulers take counsel together,  
Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,  
3 "Let us break Their bonds in pieces  
And cast away Their cords from us."  
4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh;  
The LORD shall hold them in derision.  
5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath,  
And distress them in His deep displeasure:  
6 "Yet I have set My King  
On My holy hill of Zion."  
7 "I will declare the decree:  
The LORD has said to Me,  
'You are My Son,  
Today I have begotten You.  
8 Ask of Me, and I will give You  
The nations for Your inheritance,  
And the ends of the earth for Your possession.*

**Six Hundred Survive**

47 But six hundred men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, and they stayed at the rock of Rimmon for four months. 48 And the men of Israel turned back against the children of Benjamin, and struck them down with the edge of the sword -- from every city, men and beasts, all who were found. They also set fire to all the cities they came to.

**22. Next week, how to solve a gender imbalance!**

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