

Judges

- ((JUDGES)) Political/Moral Introduction & Epilog

JDG 2:1 Now the angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal to Bochim. And he said, "I brought you up out of Egypt and led you into the land which I have sworn to your fathers; and I said, 'I will never break My covenant with you, 2 and as for you, you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars.' But you have not obeyed Me; what is this you have done? 3 "Therefore I also said, 'I will not drive them out before you; but they shall become as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you.'" 4 And it came about when the angel of the Lord spoke these words to all the sons of Israel, that the people lifted up their voices and wept. 5 So they named that place Bochim; and there they sacrificed to the Lord.

Epilog #2 – A sad chapter for Israel

- We're finishing up the epilog #2: CH. 19, 20, 21
- We're reading about the next generation after Joshua
- Each one did what was right in his own eyes
 - Levite chooses where he will live
 - Wife chooses another to sleep with
 - Father-in-law chooses to delay them
 - Men of Gibeah choose sex with a stranger
 - Levite chooses to give them his wife whom he chooses to treat as a female slave
 - Tribes choose to punish Gibeah
 - Benjamin chooses to not hand over the guilty parties
 - Sons of Israel finally ask God to choose who will lead the attack
 - Question already asked / answered 1:1
 - Probably because no one wants the job
 - 400,000 choose to punish 26,700 (16:1)
 - Consequences of their choices were...

Tribes remove sin of another 20:19-48

- Day 1 & 2 bring terrible loss (40:1)
- Day 3 brings great victory
- What changed?
 - Change in conversation with LORD
 - Change in confidence in numbers (40:1 cured 16:1)
 - Change in strategy / target
 - Method, words, smoke as in Ai
 - Vs. 48 – 100,000+ women & children

JDG 20:48 The men of Israel then turned back against the sons of Benjamin and struck them with the edge of the sword, both the entire city with the cattle and all that they found; they also set on fire all the cities which they found.

- Now let's look at the aftermath...

JDG 21:1 Now the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpah, saying, "None of us shall give his daughter to Benjamin in marriage." 2 So the people came to Bethel and sat there before God until evening, and lifted up their voices and wept bitterly. 3 And they said, "Why, O Lord, God of Israel, has this come about in Israel, so that one tribe should be missing today in Israel?" 4 And it came about the next day that the people arose early and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. 5 Then the sons of Israel said, "Who is there among all the tribes of Israel who did not come up in the assembly to the Lord?" For they had taken a great oath concerning him who did not come up to the Lord at Mizpah, saying, "He shall surely be put to death." 6 And the sons of Israel were sorry for their brother Benjamin and said, "One tribe is cut off from Israel today. 7 "What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since we have sworn by the Lord not to give them any of our daughters in marriage?" 8 And they said, "What one is there of the tribes of Israel who did not come up to the Lord at Mizpah?" And behold, no one had come to the camp from Jabesh-gilead to the assembly. 9 For when the people were numbered, behold, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead was there. 10 And the congregation sent 12,000 of the valiant warriors there, and commanded them, saying, "Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the little ones. 11 "And this is the thing that you shall do: you shall utterly destroy every man and every woman who has lain with a man." 12 And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead 400 young virgins who had not known a man by lying with him; and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. 13 Then the whole congregation sent word and spoke to the sons of Benjamin who were at the rock of Rimmon, and proclaimed peace to them.

JDG 21:14 And Benjamin returned at that time, and they gave them the women whom they had kept alive from the women of Jabesh-gilead; yet they were not enough for them. 15 And the people were sorry for Benjamin because the Lord had made a breach in the tribes of Israel. 16 ¶ Then the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since the women are destroyed out of Benjamin?" 17 And they said, "There must be an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe may not be blotted out from Israel. 18 "But we cannot give them wives of our daughters." For the sons of Israel had sworn, saying, "Cursed is he who gives a wife to Benjamin." 19 So they said, "Behold, there is a feast of the Lord from year to year in Shiloh, which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south side of Lebonah." 20 And they commanded the sons of Benjamin, saying, "Go and lie in wait in the vineyards, 21 and watch; and behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to take part in the dances, then you shall come out of the vineyards and each of you shall catch his wife from the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. 22 "And it shall come about, when their fathers or their brothers come to complain to us, that we shall say to them, 'Give them to us voluntarily, because we did not take for each man of Benjamin a wife in battle, nor did you give them to them, else you would now be guilty.'" 23 And the sons of Benjamin did so, and took wives according to their number from those who danced, whom they carried away. And they went and returned to their inheritance, and rebuilt the cities and lived in them. 24 And the sons of Israel departed from there at that time, every man to his tribe and family, and each one of them went out from there to his inheritance. 25 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Aftermath of civil war JDG 21

- Observations/questions/comments?
- Have we seen this generation weep before the Lord?
 - Note parallel between 2:4-5 & 21:2-4
- Why are the tears now bitter?
- What is the answer to 21:3? (Age-old question, asked by many a person)
- 3 And they said, "**Why, O Lord**, God of Israel, has this come about in Israel, so that one tribe should be missing today in Israel?"
 - They recognize their own guilt V4
 - Remember Cody...
- What problems have they created with their covenants & curses?
- What has happened to the prized, influential woman of Chapter 1?
 - Wives killed, daughters taken/kidnapped for Benjamin

Aftermath of civil war JDG 21

- Death brings guilt & regret (If only...)
 - both are legitimate in this case
- What would be some of their “If only’s”?
- When you do what’s right in your own eye there’s a lot of “if only’s...”
 - If only they had approached God differently before the battle;
 - If only they had fought the battle differently; If only Benjamin had not defended Gibeah;
 - If only Gibeah had not fallen into this awful sin;
 - If only Benjamin had driven out the Jebusites and torn down the altars at Baal-Tamar and Marreh-geba
 - If only they hadn't sworn to not give their daughters to Benjamin,
 - If only they hadn't cursed anyone who did give their daughters to Benjamin

PRO 14:12 There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

Aftermath of civil war JDG 21

- JDG 21:25 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.
- Why is this a fitting close?
 - Great struggles with sin, great sorrow, bitter regret were the results

It is fitting that this book close with this powerful statement. The great struggles with sin and resulting consequences came from a people who governed themselves based upon what seemed right. They saw no authority greater than themselves and they behaved in a manner governed by their own opinions. The resulting immorality, the change in women from an influential prize to a commodity of sex/reproduction, the disunity among the nation, the great loss of life, the tremendous guilt, the strange legalistic agreements, the pervasive sorrow and weeping at the loss of sons and daughters came from everyone doing what seemed right in their own mind. They had lost the absolute of what was right in God's eyes. They had not been careful to do what God had said. They had ignored Moses and Joshua's warnings to be careful to walk according to God's word. There was no human king, and the people were ignoring what God, The King had told them.

- How is this like America today?

Aftermath of civil war JDG 21

- So what are we to do about it??

JOS 23:6 "Be very firm, then, to keep and do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses.

JUD 1:3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

2PE 3:1-2 This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, 2 that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.

2TI 4:1 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths. 5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.