



Notes

If you have questions during the week, please drop us an e-mail at jim@calvaryroswell.com or phil@calvaryroswell.com



Thru the Scriptures 2006-08

A LEVITE AND HIS CONCUBINE (JUDGES 19-21)

Map labels: Shechem, HILL COUNTRY OF EPHRAIM, Lebonah, Shiloh, Ophrah, Rimmon, Bethel, Gathering of Israelites, Mizpah, Ramah, Gibeon, Gibeah, Geba, Gathering of Benjamites, B E N J A M I N, J E B U S, J U D A H, Bethlehem, Jordan River, Dead Sea. Legend: Israelite forces (black arrow), Flight of Benjamites (pink arrow). Scale: 0-8 km, 0-5 miles.

Judges 17-21
 August 24th – 30th, 2006

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Ti 3:16-17)

Contents

Daily Study Questions and Notes.....	2
Judges 17 Notes.....	16
Judges 18 Notes.....	20
Judges 19 Notes.....	23
Judges 20 Notes.....	27
Judges 21 Notes.....	27

Judges—Defeat Through Compromise

"The Book of Judges depicts the state of the heart which has not admitted the Kingship of our Savior. Where there is no recognition of this, and a man does as he likes, then the heart breeds all manner of uncleanness; and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." (FB Meyer, Our Daily Homily)

Other Helpful links

The Adam Clarke Commentary:

<http://www.studylight.org/com/acc/view.cgi?book=jud>

Matthew Henry's Commentary:

<http://www.studylight.org/com/mhc-com/view.cgi?book=jud>

David Guzik's Commentary:

<http://www.studylight.org/com/guz/view.cgi?book=jud>

Additional Commentary:

http://preceptaustin.org/judges_commentaries.htm

Chapter 17 Notes

- **“Mi'cah.** (*who is like God?*). The same name as Micaiah. *See Micaiah.* An Israelite, whose familiar story is preserved in the 17th and 18th chapters of Judges. Micah is evidently a devout believer in **Jehovah**, and yet, so completely ignorant is he of the law of **Jehovah** that the mode which he adopts of honoring him is to make a molten and graven image, **teraphim** or *images of domestic gods*, and to set up an unauthorized priesthood, first, in his own family, [Jdg 17:5](#), and then, in the person of a Levite, not of the priestly line. [Jdg 17:12](#). A body of 600 Danites break in upon and steal his idols from him.” (Smith's Bible Dictionary)
- **1100 pieces of silver** = (about 28 pounds): Compared with the annual wage of 10 shekels (v10), this amount of silver represents a fortune.
- **Shrine** - “A sanctuary or sacred place set apart for worship. The Israelites worshiped God first in the tabernacle and later in the Temple after its completion by Solomon. But they never spoke of worshiping God in a shrine. This word was always used to describe the temples or sacred places where pagan gods were worshiped (Jdg 17:1-5). The prophet Ezekiel spoke of adulterous and idolatrous Jerusalem erecting a pagan shrine at every road and building (Eze 16:24, 31).” (Nelson's Bible Dictionary)
- **Ephod** - “Something girt, a sacred vestment worn originally by the high priest ([Exo 28:4](#)), afterwards by the ordinary priest ([1Sa 22:18](#)), and characteristic of his office ([1Sa 2:18](#), [1Sa 2:28](#); [1Sa 14:3](#))... It was made of fine linen, and consisted of two pieces, which hung from the neck, and covered both the back and front, above the tunic and outer garment ([Exo 28:31](#))...” (Easton's Bible Dictionary)
- **Teraphim** - Givers of prosperity, idols in human shape, large or small, analogous to the images of ancestors which were revered by the Romans. In order to deceive the guards sent by Saul to seize David, Michal his wife prepared one of the household teraphim, putting on it the goat's, hair cap worn by sleepers and invalids, and laid it in a bed, covering it with a mantle. She pointed it out to the soldiers, and alleged that David was confined to his bed by a sudden illness ([1Sa 19:13-16](#))... It has been supposed by some (Cheyne's Hosea) that the “ephod” here mentioned, and also in [Jdg 8:24-27](#), was not the part of the sacerdotal dress so called ([Exo 28:6-14](#)), but an image of Jehovah overlaid with gold or silver (compare [Jdg 17:1-13](#), 18; [1Sa 21:9](#); [1Sa 23:6](#), [1Sa 23:9](#); [1Sa 30:7](#), [1Sa 30:8](#)), and is thus associated with the teraphim. (Easton's Bible Dictionary)

****SEE MORE JUDGES 17 NOTES ON PG. 16****

Chapter 18 Notes

Danites = “judge”

Zorah = “hornet”

Eshtaol = “entreaty”

Ephraim = “double ash-heap: I shall be doubly fruitful”

Micah or Micaiah or Michah = “who is like God”

Zidonians = “hunting”

Kirjath-jearim = “city of forests”

Mahaneh-dan = “camp of Dan”

Laish = “A city in the upper Jordan valley, apparently colonized by the Sidonians, which was captured by the Danites and called DAN (which see) (Jdg 18:7, etc.; Isa 10:30 the King James Version). In Jos 19:47 the name appears as ‘Leshem.’”(Fausset's Bible Dictionary)

Zidon = "Sidon" = “hunting”; ancient Phoenician city, on Mediterranean coast north of Tyre.

Beth-rehob = “house of the street”; a place in Dan on road to Hamath.

Shiloh = “place of rest”

****SEE MORE JUDGES 18 NOTES ON PG. 20****

Chapter 17-18 Notes

****Ten Shekels and a Shirt****

You may want to listen to the sermon 10 SHEKELS & A SHIRT (see links below) based on some of the events that take place in Judges 17. This sermon is from the heart of the Lord without doubt. Listen and Be Challenged! We also can print copies of the sermon upon request!

Audio Sermon Link - <http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=10180222445>

- **“Henrietta Mears** summarizes these last chapters noting that...
 - First, we find confusion in the religious life of the nation (Jdgs 17, 18).
 - Second, we find confusion in the moral life of the nation (Judges 19).
 - Third, we find confusion in the political life (Judges 21).The story of the **backsliding of individuals** is followed by the **backsliding of the nation**. The last chapter proves that the children of Israel had lost the way to God’s house, so low had they sunk. We find **faithlessness, failure and forfeiture!** But God loves His own.”
--http://preceptaustin.org/judges_17_commentary.htm
- “Judges 17-21 underscores the principle that when that foundation of a society based on God's principles begins to crumble, the society begins to fall apart. The psalmist testifies that...
If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? Psalm 11:3”
--http://preceptaustin.org/judges_17_commentary.htm
- How did the state of the chosen people who were to be a separate and holy people unto Jehovah get to be so bad? The answer echoes forth over and over (with some variation), on four separate occasions (Judges 17:6, 18:1, 19:1 and 21:25)...
"In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."
--http://preceptaustin.org/judges_17_commentary.htm
- After the death of Samson, the chronological sequence in Judges ends so that one cannot assign the events in the last five chapters to any specific time. Some therefore consider these chapters almost like an "appendix" which exemplifies the utter apostasy of Israel in their religious, civil, and moral life. These chapters picture the climax of the downward path of Israel resulting from departure from the Word of God.
--http://preceptaustin.org/judges_17_commentary.htm

Chapter 19 Notes

•**Levite** = see Levi “joined to”

•**Concubine** = “The difference between wife and concubine was less marked among the Hebrews than among us, owing to the absence of moral stigma. The difference probably lay in the absence of the right of the bill of divorce, without which, the wife could not be repudiated.” (Smith's Bible Dictionary)

•**Beth-lehem** = “house of bread (food)” **Judah** = “praised”

•**Helpful Cross-References:**

“If there is a man who commits adultery with another man's wife, one who commits adultery with his friend's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.” (Lev 20:10).

"A widow, or a divorced woman, or one who is profaned by harlotry, these he (the priest) may not take; but rather he is to marry a virgin of his own people." (Lev 21:14)

•**sustain yourself** = literally "sustain your heart."

•**Gibeah** = “hill”; Gibeah of Benjamin, first appears in the tragical story of the Levite and his concubine. [Jdg 19:20](#). It was then a "city," with the usual open street or square, [Jdg 19:15](#); [Jdg 19:17](#); [Jdg 19:20](#), and containing 700 "chosen men," [Jdg 20:15](#), probably the same whose skill as slingers is preserved in the next verse. (Smith's Bible Dictionary)

•**Ramah** = “hill”; a town in Benjamin on the border of Ephraim about 5 miles (8 kilometers) from Jerusalem and near to Gibeah

•**Belial** = worthlessness, good for nothing, unprofitable, base fellow
"CERTAIN WORTHLESS FELLOWS: The "wicked men" are literally "sons of Belial" worthless scoundrels bent on evil. They were active homosexuals engaging in practices plainly condemned in Scripture (Lv18:22; 20:13). Ps18:4,v5 clearly implies a relationship between Belial and Sheol; thus, the term was idiomatic for “sons of hell.”
"Belial" ="wicked" & may mean "without profit." Later, this word (Belial in Hebrew) was used as a name for Satan (2Co6:15), who is the personification of wickedness and lawlessness. Elsewhere the expression is associated with idolatry (Dt13:13), drunkenness (1Sa1:16) and rebellion (1Sa 2:12). Here the reference is to homosexuality." (preceptaustin.org, On Site Commentary, Judges 19)

****SEE MORE JUDGES 19 NOTES ON PG. 23****

Chapter 20 Notes

•**Mizpah** = “watchtower”

“Jephthah passed Mizpah on his way from Gilead to fight Ammon ([Jdg 10:16-17](#); [Jdg 11:29](#)). Here on the hallowed ground he "uttered all his words before Jehovah in the Mizpah." Thenceforth his home was there; and at Mizpah the sad meeting with his daughter took place ([Jdg 11:34](#)). Seemingly identical with Ramoth Gilead, or Ramath ("high place") Mizpeh ([Jos 13:26](#)); now *es Salt*, or else Mizpah is the Mount Jebel Osha, to the N.W. Here too Israel met, as being the ancient sanctuary, to determine what was to be done after the outrage perpetrated at Gibeah ([Jdg 20:1](#); [Jdg 20:3](#); [Jdg 21:1](#); [Jdg 21:5](#); [Jdg 21:8](#)).” (Fausset's Bible Dictionary)

•**Baal-tamar** = “lord of the palms”

•**Rimmon** = Rimmon, the Rock, a cliff or inaccessible natural fastness, in which the six hundred Benjamites, who escaped the slaughter of Gibeah took refuge. [Jdg 20:45](#); [Jdg 20:47](#); [Jdg 21:13](#). In the wild country which lies on the east of the central highlands of Benjamin, the name is still found attached to a village perched on the summit of a conical chalky hill, visible in all directions, and commanding the whole country. (Smith's Bible Dictionary)

•**Gidom** = “a cutting down”

****SEE MORE JUDGES 20 NOTES ON PG. 27****

Chapter 21 Notes

- **Jabesh** = “dry” **Gilead** = “rocky region”
- **Jabesh-Gilead** - “A town on the east of Jordan, on the top of one of the green hills of Gilead, within the limits of the half tribe of Manasseh, and in full view of Beth-shan. It is first mentioned in connection with the vengeance taken on its inhabitants because they had refused to come up to Mizpeh to take part with Israel against the tribe of Benjamin ([Jdg_21:8-14](#)). After the battles at Gibeah, that tribe was almost extinguished, only six hundred men remaining. An expedition went against Jabesh-Gilead, the whole of whose inhabitants were put to the sword, except four hundred maidens, whom they brought as prisoners and sent to “proclaim peace” to the Benjamites who had fled to the crag Rimmon. These captives were given to them as wives, that the tribe might be saved from extinction (Judg. 21).” (Easton's Bible Dictionary)
- **Shiloh** = “place of rest”
- **Bethel** = “house of God”
- **Shechem** = “back” or “shoulder”
- **Lebonah** = “frankincense”

****SEE MORE JUDGES 21 NOTES ON PG. 27****

Chapter 19-21 Notes

• "Chp17-18 relate the breakdown of religious life; chapters 19-21 show that the breakdown of religious life may bring further disastrous consequences, that the resulting immorality can threaten the very existence of a political unit. Society is a unity; its depravity cannot be contained within narrow, watertight compartments. Depravity and breakdown in one area of society, if uncorrected, will lead to deterioration and breakdown in other areas and, finally, even to the destruction of society itself. The writer of Judges maintains that these events occurred because there were no qualified leaders to effect God's purposes. Though the judges could engineer brief periods of peace, there was no established godly leadership capable of permanently halting the evils described in these chapters. "Israel had no king" expresses both the writer's diagnosis of the disease in Israel and his indication of the cure." (Evangelical Commentary)

• These closing chapters are actually very dark indeed. They show the depths to which even God's covenant people can sink when once they begin to disobey His instructions and trample His grace and mercy under their feet. They prove beyond all doubt the truth that God has not chosen us because we are costly, or impressive, or morally any better than anyone else, for we are not. The grace of God is that He chooses to have mercy on totally undeserving sinners, such as Israel and today's church. In the end, we cannot get further than that magnificent statement to Israel about God's covenant love and mercy, recorded in Deuteronomy 7:7-8.

"The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; but because the Lord loves you"

He loves us because He loves us! (Jackman, D., & Ogilvie, L. J. The Preacher's Commentary Series, Volume 7 : Judges, Ruth. Page 252. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc)

--http://preceptaustin.org/judges_17_commentary.htm

•.. Judges 17-21 represents the FRUIT of the ROOT OF WICKEDNESS and REBELLION TO GOD'S STANDARDS that Israel was now REAPING because they failed to TOTALLY ERADICATE the EVIL LEAVEN! What a lesson for modern day saints...let us be warned and return to the LORD and repent and amend our ways while we still live in the day of His mercy and grace." (preceptaustin.org, Judges 17, On Site Commentary)

Judges 17 Notes

Note v.2-3 = Micah here confessing to sin, but we must look at his motives for confession. A parental curse in those times carried huge weight just like the parental blessing did. It appears that Micah was not moved by the conviction of the Lord, but rather by fear of falling under his mother's curse on the thief of the silver. Another thing worth noting is the response of the mother to her son's confession. This would be the ultimate example of what not to do as a loving parent. Accountability is a must for instituting a moral foundation within a child. Here we have a great opportunity to point out that truly loving a child means that a parent loves them enough not to send them on with "blessings", at times when they need to be disciplined instead. God, in His love for us, does not by any means sacrifice His requirements of holiness in order to appease us or "make us feel better." And we, as parents are called by His word to raise up our children in the training and admonition of the Lord (Eph 6). This verse is very telling of the state of the nation and the spiritual condition of Micah's household in that Micah's mother gives no regard to holiness or discipline concerning her son's sinful breaking of one of the ten commandments:

"Neither shalt thou steal" (Deut. 5:19). Oh, how we slip so easily into compromising with sin in order to not upset someone else. How many times do we utter, "May you be blessed by the Lord..." when instead the hard truth is needed to be spoken in love. Godly love always gives what the object of His love needs as opposed to what makes the person comfortable. Sin is deadly! If we are to love our neighbor as ourselves, we have no choice but to love justly and righteously as God loves us. He gives what we need and what we need is not always what we want and praise Him for that!

Amen! Where do you find yourself today concerning such matters? Is there someone whom you need to speak truth to in love and instead you are tickling their ears with, "May the Lord bless you..."?

Note vs.3-4 = "Note that she dedicated only 200 of the 1100 which also brings even her motivation into question. In fact "MOTHER MICAH" proved also to be a THIEF, as well as an IDOLATER! And she eventually even leads her own son into this abominable practice of IDOLATRY! Why is there such perversion of God's order? The ROOT cause goes back to Judges 1 where Israel failed to DRIVE OUT THEIR ENEMIES but instead COMPROMISED WITH THEM and ultimately ADOPTED THEIR ABOMINABLE PAGAN PRACTICES.. Judges 17-21 represents the FRUIT of the

ROOT OF WICKEDNESS and REBELLION TO GOD'S STANDARDS that Israel was now REAPING because they failed to TOTALLY ERADICATE the EVIL LEAVEN! What a lesson for modern day saints...let us be warned and return to the LORD and repent and amend our ways while we still live in the day of His mercy and grace." (preceptaustin.org, Judges 17, On Site Commentary)

"A true image of God is not to be found in all the world and hence His glory is defiled, and His truth corrupted by the lie, whenever He is set before our eyes in visible form. Therefore to devise any image of God is itself impious, because by this corruption His majesty is adulterated and He is figured to be other than He is." (John Calvin) **Note v.7** = "How was he both a Levite and from family of Judah? Quite likely the Levite father had married a mother from the tribe of Judah. But we cannot be absolutely certain. This Levite was named Jonathan & was identified further as Moses' grandson (18:30). He compromised in departing from one of the 48 cities God gave for Levite service to Israel (Joshua 21). His compromise in this small point then led him to greater sin as he prostituted himself as priest for hire in Micah's private sanctuary of graven images and molten images, complete even with a priestly ephod for "discerning" the will of God. How blind we can be when we are deceived and begin to travel further and further from God's standard.

"... this [him being there] was a violation which probably set him up for restlessness. After all he had been given a great and glorious purpose for his life, having been set apart wholly unto God, and he undoubtedly had a specific city from the 48 proscribed Levitical cities. So as he began to seek his will & what was right in his own eyes, he began to become restless. And so he wandered even farther from the way, the truth and the life as the following verses illustrate.

"He also may have been in search of support as the context suggests. Israel's forsaking God began with forsaking the Levites, which therefore they are warned against, Deut 12:19, Moses recording...

"'Be careful that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land.'

"Since the Levites had no tribal allotment of land, they lived in towns among the tribes. The people were to provide for them. As a aside, it is a sign true religion will begin to decay when godly min-

isters are neglected and at a loss for a livelihood." (preceptaustin.org, Judges 17, On Site Commentary)

Note vs.10-11 = Here we find the Levite, this one "joined to" God and given to the service of God, being driven to earn money in the land in which he is supposed to be provided for. This is another telling sign of the sinful condition of the people Israel. Obviously they are not abiding by the statutes concerning tithing or laying aside the firstfruits of their produce for their priests and their poor. It is a tragedy that this man who is born into the tribe of Levi even considers becoming a professional priest in order to provide for himself. He is supposed to be a man fully reliant on the Lord for all and here we see him seeking to hire himself out to be consecrated for the worship of false gods and idols. We also see the breaking of another of the ten commands given to Moses which reads, "Thou shalt have none other gods before me. Thou shalt not make thee *any* graven image, *or* any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the waters beneath the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments. " (Deut. 5:7-10) The action, as vile as it appears, we must remember, is the bi-product of sin in the heart. And sin in the heart can only be quenched by the love that God so lavishly pours out on us in Christ Jesus. Amen!

Note Judges 17 = "Have you ever seen a family more spiritually and morally confused than this one? They managed to break almost all the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17) and yet not feel the least bit guilty before the Lord! In fact, they thought they were serving the Lord by the bizarre things they did!

"The man's mother broke the first two commandments by making an idol and encouraging her son to maintain a private "shrine" in his home. According to Deuteronomy 12:1-14, there was to be but one place of worship in Israel; and the people were not permitted to have their own private shrines. Furthermore, Micah's mother didn't really deal with her son's sins; his character certainly didn't improve by the way she handled the matter. But she was a corrupt person herself, so what else could he expect?" (preceptaustin.org, Judges 17, On Site Commentary)

A Summary of Micah's Actions

- “(1) He was either grossly ignorant (or blatantly rebellious to) of the most obvious of God's laws (Ex20:4-16).
- (2). We can see the clear influence of Canaanite practices on Micah. The Canaanites worshiped with the aid of images at local sanctuaries (shrines) called "high places".
- (3) Micah was living a life of religious syncretism, blending Canaanite practices and the traditional worship of Yahweh. Micah intended to worship Israel's God with his idols much as Aaron in (Ex32:4-5). God condemns the worship of the one true God by images." (preceptaustin.org, Judges 17, On Site Commentary)

Christian, Beware of Idols

“It is helpful not just to point out the more obvious materialistic idols of our culture, but to explore their Christian equivalents, which we so often justify and sanctify. Religious idols are the most dangerous of all. We may be liberated from idolatry to the toys of our society—the cars and boats, the airplanes and swimming pools, the exotic travel trips and even larger houses—but at the same time, in Christian circles, we can often substitute our own much more respectable and accepted idol shrines. After all, if lots of other people worship there too, that gives the idol greater credibility. An idol is anything that usurps the place of God, because I am looking to it to give me real life, to protect or to enrich me. It is anything that squeezes God into the margin of my life because that thing has now become worth more to me than He is. It could be our marriage or family life, the achievements of our kids, the success of our church, our position as a valued Christian leader or a growing disciple, our service for the Lord, our financial generosity, our biblical or doctrinal knowledge, our spiritual gifts. Once we fall in love with any of these good and potentially godly ingredients of life rather than with the Lord as the undisputed Number One in our experience, we are casting our idol, as surely as Micah did. For behind each of these good things when it usurps the central position of our affections and worship lies ourselves. I am really worshiping acceptable extensions of little me, while all the time fooling myself and my fellow Christians that it's all for the Lord. Only God can read our hearts, and we each have enough to do coping with our own depravity without trying to sit in judgment on one another, but we do need to take the closing injunction of John's first letter with deadly seriousness. 'Little children, keep yourselves from idols' (1 John

5:21). The Bible places the responsibility fairly and squarely with us." (Jackman, D., & Ogilvie, L. J. The Preacher's Commentary Series, Volume 7 : Judges, Ruth. Page 255. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc)

"Their home was a good deal like many homes today where money is the god the family worships, where children steal from their parents and lie about what they do, where family honor is unknown, and where the true God is unwanted. Television provides all the 'images' the family will ever want to 'worship,' and few worry about 'thus saith the Lord.'" (preceptaustin.org, Judges 17, On Site Commentary)

Judges 18 Notes

Note v.1 = "...unto that day *all their inheritance had not fallen unto them* among the tribes of Israel."

Does this imply that the Danites had not been aggressive in their possessing of the land they had been allotted? Or does it mean that they had not been allotted the land they were to take yet? Either way it does suggest an apprehension among the people of Dan toward going forward into all that God had for them. Christian, your inheritance has been allotted in eternity and it is yours for the taking. Do you find yourself waiting for God's best to "fall unto" you? Or are you at the feet of Jesus with Your eyes fixed on Him ready and seeking out His way of victory in your life? May we be found taking steps into the inheritance we have in Christ Jesus.

Note vs.5-6 = "And they said unto him, Ask counsel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our way which we go shall be prosperous. And the priest said unto them, Go in peace: before the LORD *is* your way wherein ye go."

“Jdg 18:5 - Ask counsel - of God - As the Danites use the word **אלהים**Elohim here for God, we are necessarily led to believe that they meant the true God; especially as the Levite answers, **Jdg 18:6**, Before the Lord (**יהוה**Yehovah) is your way. Though the former word may be sometimes applied to idols, whom their votaries clothed with the attributes of God; yet the latter is never applied but to the true God alone. As the Danites succeeded according to the oracle delivered by the Levite, it is a strong presumption that the worship established by Micah was not of an idolatrous kind. It is really begging the question to assert, as many commentators have done, that the answer was either a trick of the Levite, or suggested by the devil; and that the success of the Danites was merely accidental. This is taking the thing by the worst handle, to support an

hypothesis, and to serve a system.” (Adam Clarke's Commentary)
“Jdg 18:6 - And the priest said to them, go in peace,.... After he had consulted the oracle, or had asked counsel by the ephod and teraphim; either of his own head, or by a voice he had heard, which Satan might be permitted of God to deliver, he very roundly told them that they might proceed on in their journey with their minds quite easy, and with full assurance of success:

“before the Lord is your way wherein ye go; it is seen, observed, and taken notice of by him, and he approves of it; it is according to his will, and under his direction and protection, and success from him may be depended upon; though some observe that this answer is delivered in ambiguous terms, as generally the oracles of demons were, and might be taken in a good or bad sense, as the event should be; as that their way was before the Lord, and was seen by him either with pleasure or displeasure, with approbation or disapprobation, for their good, or for their harm: so that let it fall out as it might, the credit of the oracle was saved.”(John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible)

“Jdg 18:7 - After the manner of the Zidonians - Probably the people of Laish or Leshem were originally a colony of the Sidonians, who, it appears, were an opulent people; and, being in possession of a strong city, lived in a state of security, not being afraid of their neighbors. In this the Leshemites imitated them, though the sequel proves they had not the same reason for their confidence.
Note v.19-20 = The men of Dan tempt the priest from one false priesthood into another--only this priesthood accomodates more people in their worship of these man-made gods. Today, we sadly enough, witness in the church the same sinful heart attitude that we see here in the Levite man. There has become a focus on career and security and popularity and numbers in the church today and these man-made guages of success draw many pastors away from worshipping the Living God and into professional people service. Many pastors have become meer carreer men who preach the gospel for sordid gain and popularity. Christians, it is of grave importance that we, the body of Christ, do not tolerate teachers who merely tickle our ears and who are ambitiously drawn to where the big crowds are. We need men who preach the word faithfully, who lovingly wait upon the Lord, and who radically depend upon Him for every morsel and every spiritual blessing.

The gravest tragedy we see here in this story is that the Levite man traded God as his inheritance (Deuteronomy 18:1-2) for food, cloth-

ing and ten shekels a year . May it not be so among our ministers of the word of God. May we not encourage or entice God's called men to trade their eternal inheritance for temporal gain. (Nehemiah 13:10-11) Amen!

Note v.24 = What a horrible place we find Micah in here. This is not a foreign place to many of God's current followers who once made their own gods and consecrated their own priests. Praise God that He loves us enough to allow our gods to not only fail us but to be stripped away at a moment's notice. What gods have you been robbed of and what priests that you have set over yourself have you seen tuck tail and run to the next best thing? Sadly too many of us can empathize with Micah here. It is a sad picture indeed to see a man so desperate to hold onto what he has made and who he has consecrated. We find a similar picture of this in the rich young ruler and in Luke 18:23 where we have the blessing of climbing right into his sickened heart to see this same agony: "And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful; for he was very rich." He was sorrowful indeed and so are we when we are faced with the stripping away of every false "thing" we put our hope into that is outside of and paramount to Christ in our inner most parts. Where does this verse find you? Can you relate to Micah here? Have you had your "everything" stripped away? Or do you find yourself in a place where you are worshiping things made with your own hands and following men you have consecrated for yourself as a false priest? Ask the Living God to search your heart. Seek the Living God alone and see your gods and your priests replaced by One who gives life and not strife. He is your Creator and He alone can save. Will not he who loses his life for Christ's sake not surely find true abundant life? Deny yourself and all your self-made gods and see abundant life! Amen!

Note v.30-31 = Deut. 5:7 reads, "Thou shalt have none other gods before me" and here we see the Danites setting up Micah's graven image in the house of God in Shiloh "place of rest." How far the people had descended! The last five chapters in Judges bring to end the downward cycle of sin that Israel had blindly and numbly walked through time and again. Their error should be a confirmation to us today of the fact the we need the Lord Jesus Christ to be King over every aspect of our lives. He alone can make clean our monstrosity and vileness! He alone can save us from the wrath that is due for the wretched rebellion every man without Christ is a part of. Absolute surrender to Him is truly our only hope! Claim His

sacrifice and lean not on any other scheme of man for favor before the Living God of the universe. For it is true that Christ has said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Amen!

Judges 19 Notes

Note v.1 = "...in those days, when *there was* no king in Israel..."

Note vs. 2-9 = The concubine of the Levite played the harlot and went to her father's house. Her father seemed very happy to have his daughter back. No rebuke is recorded from the father to the daughter for leaving the Levite, but only mention of the fact that the concubine was away from the Levite for four months. We see further evidence of the father's contentedness to have his daughter at home in that he caused the Levite to tarry five days longer than he wished to stay. The woman was from Bethlehem-Judah which is where the wayward Levite mentioned in Judges 17-18 wandered from seeking better hire elsewhere. This passage is very telling of declining moral condition of Israel in that there is no rebuke for this girl who played the harlot. This can be a lesson to us today in our marriage relationships in that a cleaving from mother and father must occur in the marriage relationship. In this chapter, separation from the parents and joining to the husband had not taken place and oh the tribulation it leads to. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." (Gen. 2:24)

"THEY SAT DOWN IN THE OPEN SQUARE OF THE CITY: The city square was an open area just inside the city gate, and it was the logical place for visitors to wait. Since there were no "Holiday Inns" in the Middle East, travelers would come into the square and could generally expect an invitation to stay the night. But then these were the days of the Judges (lovers of self seems to describe these days 2Ti3:1,2). They would have had to spend the night there if no invitation was forthcoming. After the hospitality of Bethlehem, it must have seemed strange that no one offered them lodging. But it was too late to venture out onto the dark roads. God commanded hospitality among the people of God writing... 'When a stranger resides with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.' (Lv19:33-34)" (preceptaustin.org, On Site Commentary, Judges 19)

Note v.22 = This verse and its surrounding ones give a telling picture of the vile state that Israel had come to. What leads a group to such a state but the continual hardening of hearts toward the Lord's truths? Romans 1:24,26,28 all speak of the Lord giving people up or surrendering people "to uncleanness, in the lust of their hearts" (Romans 1:24); "to vile passions" (Romans 1:26); and "to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy..." (Romans 1:28-29). I ask again: what leads a group to such a state? Romans 1:21-22 states, "...although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened." This verse lets us know that not honoring God or giving Him thanks is the beginning of a violent sliding into this vileness that we witness here in Judges 19. Romans 1:21 also adds that not honoring or giving God thanks leads to becoming futile (vain or worldly) in one's thoughts. This describes the men we read about perfectly. The men of this city had definitely been given over to uncleanness and to the lust in their hearts. Christian, take to heart that the removal of God's grace for just a moment would throw any of us into a dangerous downward spiral of sin. Chances are, some of us might right now be under the strangle-hold of sin described for us in Romans 1. You might be asking: How do I get out of this? Romans 1:21 is a great place to start. Honor God! Humble yourself and ask to be delivered from your vile sin. He's the only One who can save you. Give Him thanks! Thank God for His mercy and grace that He so abundantly gives in Jesus Christ.

The Levite and His Concubine

The Levite and his girlfriend had already dismissed God's commandment against adultery, which reflects God's commitment in loving faithfulness to His people. That is not an arbitrary restriction, but an expression of the nature of true love, which is grounded in God's own character. Because human beings are made in God's image, we can only function properly and find true fulfillment and security when we obey His ground rules. Once these are set aside we become depersonalized and less than truly human. All our sin is a self-inflicted attack on our true humanness. It is, therefore, no surprise to find that in a society where God's moral law of love is rejected, the gift of sex—designed by Him to enrich and deepen the exclusive relationship of one man and one woman as an expression of their total self-giving to one another—is reduced to becoming an end in itself. Love then becomes equated with sex. The physical dominates everything, and human beings are reduced to pleasure machines. No wonder it is easy to walk away from one "machine" when its attractions begin to

pall, and go on to the next. But human beings are not infinitely plastic. God has not made us that way. No one can walk away from the deepest act of physical union between two people totally unchanged by it. That is why we see so many people, who drift in and out of relationships, who are ultimately unable to give themselves to any lasting relationship of trust and commitment at all. There is a price to pay for jettisoning God's laws—emotionally, psychologically, and physically.” (Jackman, D., & Ogilvie, L. J. Vol. 7: The Preacher's Commentary Series, Judges, Ruth. Page 276. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc)

Note vs.10-12 = Jebus, which at the time of this account was Jerusalem, was not inhabited by the children of Israel. This was the case because the children of Israel could not drive out the Jebusites from the city and even more so, the Jebusites drove the Israelites away from the city and into the hills surrounding it. We know the importance of this city. God would later cause His presence to dwell there in the temple of Solomon and the city would then become a picture of Christ in that it would be the central place of worship for the people. Christ, being pictured by the city, is the only way to the Father. It is crucial to understand that this place could not be taken by Israel during their campaign under Joshua because the Jebusites were a rugged bunch of warriors and because Jerusalem was a naturally fortified city having deep valleys on three sides. We must ponder on the possibility that the reason they could not overthrow the city at the time of their conquest was because God didn't want them to just yet. Maybe this city, being the center of worship for the Jews would be a city that God saw as one that would require a great amount of faith to overtake. Under David, the city was eventually taken and this fact adds to the picture for us of faith being the only way to truly worship the Lord. David is definitely a picture of Christ and Christ died in order to conquer death and to bring each one of us into righteous worship of the Father in heaven. Christ overtook the gates of hell so that by faith we might also be victors over death and be joint-heirs with Christ in heaven. It is a splendid thing that today, we must fight to worship the Lord. All kinds of rugged warriors of the spiritual type stand in our path as we press forward in faith into true worship of our King. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 10:3-6: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled." Amen.

Jebus = The Jebusite city, a former name of Jerusalem ([Jos 18:16](#); [Jos 18:28](#); [Jdg 19:10-11](#); [1Ch 11:4-5](#)). Jebus in Hebrew means a trodden place, as a threshing floor, namely, the dry rock, the S.W. hill, the modern, "Zion," not mount Moriah, the city of Solomon, in the center of which was a perennial spring. But the name is probably older than Hebrew times. In haughty self security the Jebusites fancied that "the blind and lame" would suffice to defend their fortress, so strong was its position, shut in by deep valleys on three sides. The Judaeans and Benjamites occupying the N. side, which was lower ground, ever since the death of Joshua ([Jos 15:8](#); [Jos 15:63](#); [Jdg 1:8](#); [Jdg 1:21](#)), had been heretofore unable to gain the Jebusite citadel, such is the characteristic bravery of mountaineers. (Fausset's Bible Dictionary)

A Society Where God is Not

"A society that reduces love to lust will not long have any residual respect for human life. Other people become mere objects. Human life is expendable and cheap, so a baby in the womb becomes "the fetus"; "it," not he or she. And a woman has a right to choose to do away with it if it is inconvenient. If old people increase in number and become a drain on the state, then let the state's medically approved agents "put them out of their misery." Abortions and euthanasia "on demand" are symptoms of the same disease that surfaces in rape, crimes of violence, and the mental cruelty, petty tyrannies, and personal violence that characterize so many homes. We must not be surprised to find child abuse, incest, robbery with violence, and murders increasing. "If God is dead," said Nietzsche, "then everything is permitted." It's all perfectly logical. So the Christian response which simply wrings its hands in despair, or washes them in resignation, is unworthy of followers of Christ. We have grown far too sentimental about evil in our cozy Christian ghettos. Cushioned from its effects through the Christian heritage and capital on which the church in the West has lived for decades, we have somehow imagined ourselves and our churches to be immune from sin's ravages. We have believed the liberal humanists, who tell us that man is getting better and kinder, without reminding us that all such advances have had Christian foundations and impetus. We often seem surprised, if not overwhelmed, when we encounter evil head-on, because we do not really believe the Bible's teaching about human depravity and about our own hearts." (Jackman, D., & Ogilvie, L. J. Vol. 7: The Preacher's Commentary Series, Judges, Ruth. Formerly The Communicator's Commentary. Page 277. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc)

Judges 20 Notes

Note v.1 = "Then all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, with the land of Gilead, unto the LORD in Mizpeh." In this chapter, we find a good example of the Lord's people coming together in one accord under the Kingship of the Lord to be guided not by human wisdom but God's wisdom. (See also verse 11--"...knit together as one man.")

Note v.15-16 = Gibeah inhabited 700 chosen men; left-handed; every one could sling stones at a hair's breadth, and not miss. These men were the "special forces" of the Benjamites. As we see, they were an elite force to be reckoned with.

Note v.18 = "... 'and said which of us shall go up first to the battle against the children of Benjamin?' There being no supreme magistrate, judge, or general, to lead them; they did not ask whether they should go to war or no with their brethren; they made no doubt of that, taking it for granted they had sufficient reason for so doing, and that it was according to the will of God; nor did they inquire whether they should be victorious or not, they made no doubt of being victorious, both from their superior numbers, and the justness of their cause; they only inquire who should lead them on, having no general; and this they might do, to prevent any contentions among them about being precedence." (John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible)

Note vs. 20,22,30 = "put themselves in array" = "formed a line of battle again facing their enemy, inviting to another battle, and bidding defiance" (John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible)

Note v.48 = There is a severe thoroughness in the manner in which the children of Israel deal with their sinful brethren, the Benjamites. We can learn from this concerning dealing with sin in our own lives today. It is a must that sin be dealt with finally and severely when the Lord makes it known to us of its existence and then gives us direction in dealing with it!

Judges 21 Notes

Note v.2-5 = "[T]he people came to the house of God, . . . and lifted up their voices, and wept sore." The characteristic fickleness of the Israelites was not long in being displayed; for scarcely had they cooled from the fierceness of their sanguinary vengeance, than they began to relent and rushed to the opposite extreme of self-accusation and grief at the desolation which their impetuous zeal had produced. Their victory saddened and humbled them. Their feelings on the occasion were expressed

by a public and solemn service of expiation at the house of God. And yet this extraordinary observance, though it enabled them to find vent for their painful emotions, did not afford them full relief, for they were fettered by the obligation of a religious vow, heightened by the addition of a solemn anathema on every violator of the oath. There is no previous record of this oath; but the purport of it was, that they would treat the perpetrators of this Gibeah atrocity in the same way as the Canaanites, who were doomed to destruction; and the entering into this solemn league was of a piece with the rest of their inconsiderate conduct in this whole affair." (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary)

Note v.10 = "Go and smite: As they had sworn to destroy those who would not assist in the war ([Jdg 21:5](#)), they determined to destroy the men of Jabesh, and to leave none except the virgins; and to give these to the 600; Benjamites who had escaped to the rock of Rimmon. The whole account is dreadful. The crime of the men of Gibeah was of the deepest dye; the punishment involving both the guilty and innocent, was extended to the most criminal excess, and their mode of remedying the evil they had occasioned was equally abominable. [Jdg 21:5](#), [Jdg 5:23](#); [Deu 13:15](#); [Jos 7:24](#); [1Sa 11:7](#), [1Sa 15:3](#)" (Treasury of Scripture Knowledge)

Note v.21 = "And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances ...' As they used to do at this festival, not along with men, but by themselves; and so might the more easily be taken and carried off; and though only males were obliged to appear from all parts at this feast, yet females might come if they would; and, no doubt, from neighbouring places, at least many did; however, the daughters of Shiloh, who dwelt where the tabernacle was, these always attended the feast with demonstrations of joy, and among the rest with dancing, and that as expressive of spiritual and religious joy, as in the case of Miriam, and the Israelitish women, [Exo 15:20](#) and as in latter times the most religious men used to express their joy at this feast; now the two hundred men in the vineyards, which lay near the field where these virgins used to dance at this time, were to watch and observe when they came out of the city thither, and were engaged in such an exercise: 'then come ye out of the yards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin;' they are directed to rush out at once upon them, as they were dancing, secure, as they thought, from molestation and danger; and they were to take everyone one, not more, and go off directly with them to their own tribe." (John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible)