

JUDGES

Lesson 9

Judges Chapter 19

In this lesson, we begin to conclude our study of the book of Judges by looking at one example of the moral degradation that highlights how low the sin in Israel reached throughout the time of Judges. With a cycle of sin, punishment, and restoration repeating throughout this period in Israel's history, we are given a glimpse of one of those periods of sin, and the war that resulted with the Benjamites.

Our scripture text for the lesson is Judges Chapter 19, which is centered around an atrocity against the concubine of a Levite. In our final Judges lesson (Lesson 10), we will look at Israel's response to that atrocity, as well the tribe of Benjamin and how it was saved from total annihilation.

Read Judges Chapter 19 and consider the following:

1. What story is recounted in Judges 19:1-15?
2. Why did the Levite decide to press on in order to stay at Gibeah, rather than stopping at Jebus? (Judges 19:12-13)
3. How were the Levite and his concubine welcomed when they arrived at the city square in Gibeah? (Judges 19:15)
4. Judges 19:16-21 indicates that a man then offered hospitality to the Levite and his party. Do we note any possible reasons why the man was so kind to the Levite? (Compare Judges 19:16 with Judges 19:18. Where had the old man come from, and where was the Levite going?)
5. Compare the old man's admonition about staying the night in the city square with Genesis 19 and the story of Lot and Sodom. In particular, look at Genesis 19:1-11, then list the similarities between those verses and Judges 19:16-26:
6. On the other hand, in this story, we see one dramatic difference between the story of Lot and the destruction of Sodom vs. this sad story at Gibeah. What happened, as recounted in Judges 19:25-26? Remembering that these are God's chosen people from the tribe of Benjamin, what do we observe them doing?

7. What did the Levite do when he awoke in the morning? How do we assess his behavior as well? (Judges 19:27-29)
8. Did the Levite accomplish his purpose, i.e., spreading the word regarding the abhorrent behavior demonstrated by the Benjamites at Gibeah? (Judges 19:30)

As we consider this lesson, it is hard to imagine the inhumane things mankind—even those chosen by God—can do to each other. It is equally important that we do not react in kind when such atrocities occur. In the next lesson, we see that God will lead the Israelites in bringing judgment to the Benjamites. However, He does this in an orderly and just way—just as God judges us and the world around us today. We must always be in prayer that we will never repay evil for evil, even when it might seem like the right thing to do at the time.

Have a blessing-filled week everyone!

In Christ,

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