

Calvary Chapel Cajon

Women's Bible Studies

Judges 17-21

Lesson 7

The events described in chapters 17-21 took place earlier in the period of the Judges. The writer of Judges departed from historical chronology and put these events together as an "appendix" to the book to show how wicked the people had become. In these chapters we have the key repeated phrase (two times) *In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.* Although you may not be able to relate to the sins of Israel, you may relate to their thinking. May the result of this study cause you to seek God to be your *King*, rather than fall prey to your own thinking and reasoning.

DAY ONE: Judges 17

1. The key word *Micah* (and the words related to him) has been marked on your **Chapter 17 Observation Worksheet** as ***Micah***
 - a. Scan through the references to *Micah* and make a list of 4 things the text reveals about *Micah*.

2. There is no mention of *Levites* in the book of Judges until chapter 17. *Levites* were not priests. Rather, their principle responsibilities were to assist the priests, maintain the tabernacle, and teach the law. The key word *Levite* (and all words that relate to him) has been marked as **LEVITE**.
 - a. Make a list of 4 things the text reveals about the *Levite*.

3. Another key character in chapter 17 is *Micah's mother*. List what Judges 17:2-4 reveal about her.

4. Consider the implications of verse 6 as you print each word below:

- a. From your observations, what did each person do that was *right in their own eyes*?

Micah:

Levite:

Mother:

5. What is wrong with doing *what is right in your own eyes*?

- a. What does Proverbs 16:25 teach about this?

6. How have your choices been different since Jesus has been *King* in your life?

DAY TWO: Judges 18

1. The story of *Micah* and the *Levite* continues in Judges 18. Both key words have been marked as they were in chapter 17.

- a. Make a list of 4 things the text reveals about *Micah*.

- b. Make a list of 4 things the text reveals about the *Levite*.

3. The tribe of Dan failed to drive the enemy from the land allotted to them. The land that remained was not sufficient for them (in their eyes). What does Judges 18:2 say they did?

- a. The references to the tribe of *Dan*, the *five spies* they sent out, and the words related to them are underlined on your Chapter 18 **Observation Worksheet**.

- 1.) Make a list of 4 things the text reveals about the tribe of Dan (*Danites*).

4. Upon arriving at *Micah's* house, they discovered his "priest", the *Levite*. Verse 5 tells us that the men from *Dan* asked him to *inquire of God, that we may know whether the journey on which we go will be prosperous*. According to verse 6, what did the *Levite* tell them?

5. The *Danites* decided to invade *Laish*. There were *no rulers in the land* (to protect the people) and *the land was very good* (Judges 18:7,9). The *five spies* who had talked with the *Levite* told the other *Danites* about *Micah's ephod, idols, carved image and molded image*. The *five spies* returned to *Micah's* house and took all of them (verse 17). Initially, the *Levite* seemed to object (verse 18). What did they offer him that changed his mind (verse 19)?

6. Judges 18:22-26 records *Micah's* futile attempt to regain his idols and "priest". Judges 18:27-30 records the *Danites'* victory over the people of *Laish*, verse 28 noting that the people of *Laish* *had no deliverer*. The chapter closes with some important words. Record the words of verse 31.
 - a. The *tabernacle* was in *Shiloh*. Using Deuteronomy 12:5,6,13 and 14, record the strict command regarding *offerings*.

7. Review chapter 18 and record just some of the ways, the people *did what was right in their own eyes*.

DAY THREE: Judges 19

1. Judges 19-21 records a different atrocious incident committed during the times of the *Judges*. Chapter 19 records the story of a *Levite* whose *concubine had played the harlot against him and went away from him to her father's house in Bethlehem*. After four months, he went after her with the intention of bringing her home with him. Her father detained him, first for three days, then convincing him to stay yet another three days. On the journey home, they considered staying in *Jebus*, a city of *foreigners*. Because the *Jubusites* were *not of the children of Israel*, they decided to go to *Gibeah*, a city of *Benjamin*. They sat in the open square of the city, waiting for someone (as was the custom) to invite them to lodge with them. A man from *Ephraim*, who was staying in *Gibeah*, invited them to stay with him (verses 1-21). Read Judges 19:22-26 and summarize the abominable actions of the men of the city.

2. According to verse 22, what was their original intent?
 - a. Record God's view of homosexuality using both the Old and New Testaments:
Leviticus 18:22

Romans 1:27

1.) What would you tell someone who viewed homosexuality as an individual right?
3. Of course, God also views the gang-rape of a woman as an abomination. Using Judges 19:27-30, summarize her *master's* (her husband, the *Levite*) response.
4. List just a few of the ways the people *did what was right in their own eyes* in chapter 19.

DAY FOUR: Judges 20

1. All of Israel responded to the *Levite's* call, *400,000 foot soldiers who drew the sword*. After the *Levite* recounted what had happened, the men of *Israel* made an oath. What was it? verses 8-10
2. How did the children of *Benjamin* respond to the other tribes' demand to *deliver up the perverted men*? verse 14
3. The first two days of battle were victorious for the tribe of *Benjamin*. List what the children of *Israel* did next. verses 26-28.
 - a. The Lord's response was *Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand* verse 28. How many *Benjamites* survived? verse 47

Challenge: Using a separate sheet of paper, describe the battle between the tribes of *Israel* and *Benjamin*. verses 29-48

4. Although much of Israel was doing what was *right in their own eyes*, chapter 20 reveals they still knew that they had a *King*. What did they do that proves this?
 - a. What does this chapter reveal about the character of *God*?

DAY FIVE: Judges 21

1. The children of Israel realized that, in killing all but 600 Benjamites, they had created a problem. What was the problem? verse 6,7 (see also verses 17-18)
2. Judges 21:1-5 reflects two *oaths* the children of Israel made. One had caused a dilemma; the other they saw as their solution. What were the two *oaths*?
3. The men of Jabesh Gilead had not come to the assembly for battle. Israel went to Jabesh Gilead and *utterly destroyed every male, and every woman who had known a man intimately*. They gave the 400 virgins that remained to the 600 men of Benjamin who survived, leaving a shortage of 200 women. Record their solution. verses 19-25
 - a. Read the last part of verse 23 and record the result of Benjamin's actions.
 - 1.) Do you think this was of the Lord? Why or why not?
4. List just a few of the ways the people *did what was right in their own eyes* in chapter 21.

DAY SIX: Review Judges 17-21

1. Micah was delighted to have his own priest. *Now I know that the LORD will be good to me, since I have a Levite as priest.* (Judges 17:13) What appears to be Micah's goal in having his own priest?
 - a. Why is this motive wrong?

2. What do you understand to be the ambition of the *Levite* in chapters 17 and 18?

3. What lessons can be learned from the way Israel approached:
the battle with the tribe of Benjamin

the restoration of the tribe of Benjamin

4. Although the sins of Judges 17-21 are deplorable, this was the result of living without God as king and *doing what is right in their own eyes*. Although our choices may not be quite as deplorable, what lessons can we learn from these chapters?

*So the children of Israel departed from there at that time,
every man to his tribe and family;
they went out from there, every man to his inheritance.
In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.
- Judges 21:24,25*

Chapter Seventeen

¹Now there was a *man* from the mountains of Ephraim, whose name was *Mikah*. ²And *he* said to *his* mother, "The eleven hundred *shekels* of silver that were taken from you, and on which you put a curse, even saying it in *my* ears--here is the silver with *me*, I took it." And *his* mother said, "May *you* be blessed by the LORD, my *son*!" ³So when *he* had returned the eleven hundred *shekels* of silver to *his* mother, *his* mother said, "I had wholly dedicated the silver from my hand to the LORD for my *son* to make a carved image and a molded image; now therefore, I will return it to *you*." ⁴Thus *he* returned the silver to *his* mother. Then *his* mother took two hundred *shekels* of silver and gave them to the silversmith, and he made it into a carved image and a molded image; and they were in the house of *Mikah*. ⁵The *man* *Mikah* had a shrine, and made an ephod and household idols; and *he* consecrated one of *his* sons, who became *his* priest. ⁶In those days *there was* no king in Israel; everyone did *what was* right in his own eyes. ⁷Now there was a young **MAN** from Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah; **HE** was a **LEVITE**, and was staying there. ⁸The **MAN** departed from the city of Bethlehem in Judah to stay wherever **HE** could find a *place*. Then **HE** came to the mountains of Ephraim, to the house of *Mikah* as **HE** journeyed. ⁹And *Mikah* said to **HIM**, "Where do **YOU** come from?" So **HE** said to *him*, "I am a **LEVITE** from Bethlehem in Judah, and I am on **MY** way to find a *place* to stay." ¹⁰*Mikah* said to **HIM**, "Dwell with *me*, and be a **FATHER** and a **PRIEST** to *me*, and I will give **YOU** ten *shekels* of silver per year, a suit of clothes, and **YOUR** sustenance." So the **LEVITE** went in. ¹¹Then the **LEVITE** was content to dwell with the *man* and the young **MAN** became like one of *his* sons to *him*. ¹²So *Mikah* consecrated the **LEVITE**, and the **YOUNG MAN** became *his* **PRIEST**, and lived in the house of *Mikah*. ¹³Then *Mikah* said, "Now I know that the LORD will be good to *me*, since I have a **LEVITE** as **PRIEST**!"

Chapter Eighteen

¹In those days *there was* no king in Israel. And in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance for itself to dwell in; for until that day their inheritance among the tribes of Israel had not fallen to them. ²So the children of Dan sent five men of their family from their territory, men of valor from Zorah and Eshtaol, to spy out the land and search it. They said to them, "Go, search the land." So they went to the mountains of Ephraim, to the house of *Mikah*, and lodged there. ³While they were at the house of *Mikah* they recognized the voice of the young **LEVITE**. They turned aside and said to **HIM**, "Who brought **YOU** here? What are **YOU** doing in this *place*? What do **YOU** have here?" ⁴**HE** said to them, "Thus and so *Mikah* did for **ME**. *He* has hired **ME**, and I have become *his* **PRIEST**." ⁵So they said to **HIM**, "Please inquire of God, that we may know whether the journey on which we go will be prosperous." ⁶And the

PRIEST said to them, "Go in peace. The presence of the LORD *be* with you on your way." ⁷So the five men departed and went to Laish. They saw the people who *were* there, how they dwelt safely, in the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure. *There were* no rulers in the land who might put *them* to shame for anything. *They were* far from the Sidonians, and they had no ties with anyone. ⁸Then *the spies* came back to their brethren at Zorah and Eshtaol, and their brethren said to them, "What is your report?" ⁹So they said, "Arise, let us go up against them. For we have seen the land, and indeed it *is* very good. *Would you do* nothing? Do not hesitate to go, *and* enter to possess the land. ¹⁰When you go, you will come to a secure people and a large land. For God has given it into your hands, a place where *there is* no lack of anything that *is* on the earth." ¹¹And six hundred men of the family of the Danites went from there, from Zorah and Eshtaol, armed with weapons of war. ¹²Then they went up and encamped in Kirjath Jearim in Judah. (Therefore they call that place Mahaneh Dan to this day. *There it is*, west of Kirjath Jearim.) ¹³And they passed from there to the mountains of Ephraim, and came to the house of **Mikah** ¹⁴Then the five men who had gone to spy out the country of Laish answered and said to their brethren, "Do you know that there are in these houses an ephod, household idols, a carved image, and a molded image? Now therefore, consider what you should do." ¹⁵So they turned aside there, and came to the house of the young **LEVITE MAN**--to the house of **Mikah**--and greeted **HIM**. ¹⁶The six hundred men armed with their weapons of war, who were of the children of Dan, stood by the entrance of the gate. ¹⁷Then the five men who had gone to spy out the land went up. Entering there, they took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image. The **PRIEST** stood at the entrance of the gate with the six hundred men *who were* armed with weapons of war. ¹⁸When these went into **Mikah's** house and took the carved image, the ephod, the household idols, and the molded image, the **PRIEST** said to them, "What are you doing?" ¹⁹And they said to **HIM**, "Be quiet, put **YOUR** hand over **YOUR** mouth, and come with us; be a **FATHER** and a **PRIEST** to us. *Is it better for YOU* to be a **PRIEST** to the household of one *man* or that **YOU** be a **PRIEST** to a tribe and a family in Israel?" ²⁰So the **PRIEST'S** heart was glad; and **HE** took the ephod, the household idols, and the carved image, and took **HIS** place among the people. ²¹Then they turned and departed, and put the little ones, the livestock, and the goods in front of them. ²²When they were a good way from the house of **Mikah** the men who *were* in the houses near **Mikah's** house gathered together and overtook the children of Dan. ²³And they called out to the children of Dan. So they turned around and said to **Mikah** "What ails *you*, that *you* have gathered such a company?" ²⁴So *he* said, "You have taken away *my* gods which *I* made, and the **PRIEST**, and you have gone away. Now what more do *I* have? How can you say to *me*, 'What ails *you*?' " ²⁵And the children of Dan said to *him*, "Do not let *your* voice be heard among us, lest angry men fall upon *you*, and *you* lose *your* life, with the lives of *your* household!" ²⁶Then the children of Dan went their way. And when **Mikah** saw that they were too strong for *him*, *he* turned and went back to *his* house. ²⁷So they took *the things* **Mikah** had made, and the **PRIEST WHO** had belonged to *him*, and went to

Laish, to a people quiet and secure; and they struck them with the edge of the sword and burned the city with fire. ²⁸*There was* no deliverer, because it *was* far from Sidon, and they had no ties with anyone. It was in the valley that belongs to Beth Rehob. So they rebuilt the city and dwelt there. ²⁹And they called the name of the city Dan, after the name of Dan their father, who was born to Israel. However, the name of the city formerly *was* Laish. ³⁰Then the children of Dan set up for themselves the carved image; and Jonathan the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land. ³¹So they set up for themselves ~~Michah's~~ carved image which ~~he~~ made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh.

Chapter Nineteen

¹And 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. ²But 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. ³Then 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. ⁴Now 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. ⁵Then 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." ⁶So 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." ⁷And when the man stood to depart, his father-in-law urged him; so he lodged there again. ⁸Then 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. ⁹And 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." ¹⁰However, the man was not willing to spend that night; so he rose and departed, and came to opposite Jebus (that *is*, Jerusalem). With him were the two saddled donkeys; his concubine *was* also with him. ¹¹They *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." ¹²But 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." ¹³So he said to his servant, "Come, let us draw near to one of these places, and spend the night in Gibeah or in Ramah." ¹⁴And they passed by and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin. ¹⁵They 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. ¹⁶Just 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. ¹⁷And 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?" ¹⁸So 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, ¹⁹although 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." ²⁰And 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." ²¹So he brought him into his house, and gave fodder to the donkeys. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank. ²²As 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!*" ²³But 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. ²⁴Look, *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!" ²⁵But 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. ²⁶Then 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. ²⁷When 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. ²⁸And 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. ²⁹When 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. ³⁰And 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!"

Chapter Twenty

¹So 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. ²And 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?" ⁴So 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. ⁵And 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. ⁶So 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. ⁷Look! All of you *are* children of Israel; give your advice and counsel here and now!" ⁸So all the people arose as one man, saying, "None *of us* will go to his tent, nor will any turn back to his house; ⁹but now this *is* the thing which we will do to Gibeah: *We will go up* against it by lot. ¹⁰We

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." ¹¹So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, united together as one man. ¹²Then the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What *is* this wickedness that has occurred among you? ¹³Now 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. ¹⁴Instead, the children of Benjamin gathered together from their cities to Gibeah, to go to battle against the children of Israel. ¹⁵And 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. ¹⁶Among 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. ¹⁷Now besides Benjamin, the men of Israel numbered four hundred thousand men who drew the sword; all of these *were* men of war. ¹⁸Then 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!" ¹⁹So the children of Israel rose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah. ²⁰And 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. ²¹Then the children of Benjamin came out of Gibeah, and on that day cut down to the ground twenty-two thousand men of the Israelites. ²²And 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. ²³Then 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." ²⁴So the children of Israel approached the children of Benjamin on the second day. ²⁵And 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. ²⁶Then 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. ²⁷So the children of Israel inquired of the LORD (the ark of the covenant of God *was* there in those days, ²⁸and 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." ²⁹Then Israel set men in ambush all around Gibeah. ³⁰And 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. ³¹So 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. ³²And 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." ³³So 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.

³⁴And 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. ³⁵The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel. And the children of Israel destroyed that day twenty-five thousand one hundred Benjamites; all these drew the sword. ³⁶So 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. ³⁷And 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. ³⁸Now 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, ³⁹whereupon 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." ⁴⁰But 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. ⁴¹And when the men of Israel turned back, the men of Benjamin panicked, for they saw that disaster had come upon them. ⁴²Therefore 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. ⁴³They surrounded the Benjamites, chased them, *and* easily trampled them down as far as the front of Gibeah toward the east. ⁴⁴And eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell; all these *were* men of valor. ⁴⁵Then 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. ⁴⁶So all who fell of Benjamin that day were twenty-five thousand men who drew the sword; all these *were* men of valor. ⁴⁷But 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. ⁴⁸And 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.

Chapter Twenty One

¹Now the men of Israel had sworn an oath at Mizpah, saying, "None of us shall give his daughter to Benjamin as a wife." ²Then the people came to the house of God, and remained there before God till evening. They lifted up their voices and wept bitterly, ³and said, "O LORD God of Israel, why has this come to pass in Israel, that today there should be one tribe *missing* in Israel?" ⁴So it was, on the next morning, that the people rose early and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. ⁵The children of Israel said, "Who *is there* among all the tribes of Israel who did not come up with the assembly to the LORD?" For they had made a great oath concerning anyone who had not come up to the LORD at Mizpah, saying, "He shall surely be put to death." ⁶And the children of Israel grieved for Benjamin their brother, and said, "One tribe is cut off from Israel today. ⁷What shall we do for wives for those who remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them our daughters as wives?" ⁸And they said, "What one *is there* from the tribes of Israel who did not come up to Mizpah to the LORD?" And, in fact, no one had come to the camp from Jabesh Gilead to the assembly. ⁹For when the people were counted, indeed, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead *was* there. ¹⁰So the congregation sent out there twelve thousand of their most valiant men, and commanded them, saying, "Go and strike the

inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, including the women and children. ¹¹And this *is* the thing that you shall do: You shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman who has known a man intimately." ¹²So they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead four hundred young virgins who had not known a man intimately; and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. ¹³Then the whole congregation sent *word* to the children of Benjamin who *were* at the rock of Rimmon, and announced peace to them. ¹⁴So Benjamin came back at that time, and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh Gilead; and yet they had not found enough for them. ¹⁵And the people grieved for Benjamin, because the LORD had made a void in the tribes of Israel. ¹⁶Then the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for wives for those who remain, since the women of Benjamin have been destroyed?" ¹⁷And they said, "*There must be* an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe may not be destroyed from Israel. ¹⁸However, we cannot give them wives from our daughters, for the children of Israel have sworn an oath, saying, 'Cursed *be* the one who gives a wife to Benjamin.' " ¹⁹Then they said, "In fact, *there is* a yearly feast of the LORD in Shiloh, which *is* north of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah." ²⁰Therefore they instructed the children of Benjamin, saying, "Go, lie in wait in the vineyards, ²¹and watch; and just when the daughters of Shiloh come out to perform their dances, then come out from the vineyards, and every man catch a wife for himself from the daughters of Shiloh; then go to the land of Benjamin. ²²Then it shall be, when their fathers or their brothers come to us to complain, that we will say to them, 'Be kind to them for our sakes, because we did not take a wife for any of them in the war; for *it is* not *as though* you have given the *women* to them at this time, making yourselves guilty of your oath.' " ²³And the children of Benjamin did so; they took enough wives for their number from those who danced, whom they caught. Then they went and returned to their inheritance, and they rebuilt the cities and dwelt in them. ²⁴So the children of Israel departed from there at that time, every man to his tribe and family; they went out from there, every man to his inheritance. ²⁵In those days *there was* no king in Israel; everyone did *what was* right in his own eyes.