

The Levite's Concubine

Introduction

I. Opening Thoughts

- A. When you think of some of the most evil cities that have ever existed, which ones top the list?
 1. Las Vegas, New Orleans, Berlin (WWII), Nineveh, **Sodom and Gomorrah**
 2. Why do we remember Sodom and Gomorrah as being such evil cities?
 3. What about Gibeah?

II. Context

A. The Period of the Judges Begins

1. Much of the land is conquered and all is going very well until Joshua and that generation passes away
 - a) Judges 2:7–10 - [7] And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the LORD had done for Israel. [8] And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110 years. [9] And they buried him within the boundaries of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of Gaash. [10] And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. **And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.** (ESV)
2. What does it look like to have a generation that does not know the Lord or the work that he had done?
3. Judges 19-21 tells us a story that occurred right after Joshua and all that generation were gathered to their fathers. Eleazar, Aaron's son, himself dies in Joshua 24:33.
 - a) Judges 20:27–28 - [27] And the people of Israel inquired of the LORD (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, [28] and **Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, ministered before it in those days**), saying, "Shall we go out once more to battle against our brothers, the people of Benjamin, or shall we cease?" And the LORD said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will give them into your hand." (ESV)
4. The story documented in these chapters tells you just how quickly sin can take over and how very far it can take you away from where you once were.

III. Purpose

- A. I want us to study a story of one of the most heinous crimes you can imagine. I want us to see these peoples' reactions too, and associated consequences of, their sin. This isn't a warning to all the nations of the world, but rather to God's own people, for the crimes committed herein are not from the heathen world but rather from brothers in Gibeah!

Lesson

I. Where Can Sin Be Found?

A. The Text - Judges 19:1-26

1. When a generation arose that did not know the Lord, or the work that he had done for Israel, there was a Levite whose concubine was unfaithful to him and she fled to her father's house in Bethlehem
2. After some time had passed, the Levite decided that all was to be forgiven and he went to the father-in-law's home and spent several days there but finally begins his return journey back to the place that he was sojourning. Along the way, evening approaches and they must find a place to rest...
 - a) Judges 19:11 - [11] When they were near Jebus, the day was nearly over, and the servant said to his master, "Come now, let us turn aside to this city of the Jebusites and spend the night in it." (ESV)

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- b) Judges 19:12 - [12] And his master said to him, "We will not turn aside into the city of foreigners, who do not belong to the people of Israel, but we will pass on to Gibeah." (ESV)
- c) Judges 19:14–15 - [14] So they passed on and went their way. And the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, [15] and they turned aside there, to go in and spend the night at Gibeah. And he went in and sat down in the open square of the city, for no one took them into his house to spend the night. (ESV)
- 3. That evening, an old man is coming in from work and he sees the Levite and his concubine in the square and warmly invites them to come and lodge with him for the evening
 - a) Judges 19:20–21 - [20] And the old man said, "Peace be to you; I will care for all your wants. Only, do not spend the night in the square." [21] So he brought him into his house and gave the donkeys feed. And they washed their feet, and ate and drank. (ESV)
- 4. This story that had started off with the unfaithfulness of the Levites concubine has turned into a pleasant story of reunion and we find these people eating, drinking and making their hearts merry. As night closes in the story continues.
 - a) Judges 19:22 - [22] As they were making their hearts merry, behold, the men of the city, worthless fellows, surrounded the house, beating on the door. And they said to the old man, the master of the house, "Bring out the man who came into your house, that we may know him." (ESV)
 - b) Judges 19:23–26 - [23] And the man, the master of the house, went out to them and said to them, "No, my brothers, do not act so wickedly; since this man has come into my house, do not do this vile thing. [24] Behold, here are my virgin daughter and his concubine. Let me bring them out now. Violate them and do with them what seems good to you, but against this man do not do this outrageous thing." [25] But the men would not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine and made her go out to them. And they knew her and abused her all night until the morning. And as the dawn began to break, they let her go. [26] And as morning appeared, the woman came and fell down at the door of the man's house where her master was, until it was light. (ESV)

B. Application and Question

- 1. Why would the Levite not spend the night in Jerusalem? They are foreigners, they are not our brothers, they are wicked. We think we are safe in a town of our brothers?
- 2. Do you see the sin in the world but don't see it in your own life? So often when we make application we preface it with, "The world" this or that. **How about we start by examining ourselves and apply things to our own lives and not worry about applying everything to the worlds lives.** It's easy to point out sins in the lives of the world but do you even look to ensure you don't have sins yourself?
- 3. Where are you and what are you surrounded by? Do you we a false sense of security because we are surrounded by all of these great "brothers" as this Levite was?
- 4. **Where can sin be found?** Anywhere that gives Satan an opportunity.
 - a) Genesis 4:7 - [7] If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it." (ESV)
 - b) 2 Corinthians 13:5–6 - [5] Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test! [6] I hope you will find out that we have not failed the test. (ESV)

II. Do You Hate Sin? Not Just That Of Others But Your Sin?

A. The Text - Judges 19:27 - 20:11

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1. After that terrible night, it seems like this Levite was able to get some rest and gets up to continue on his journey like nothing ever happened
 - a) Judges 19:27–28 - [27] And her master rose up in the morning, and when he opened the doors of the house and went out to go on his way, behold, there was his concubine lying at the door of the house, with her hands on the threshold. [28] He said to her, “Get up, let us be going.” But there was no answer. Then he put her on the donkey, and the man rose up and went away to his home. (ESV)
 - b) Judges 19:30 - [30] And all who saw it said, “Such a thing has never happened or been seen from the day that the people of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt until this day; consider it, take counsel, and speak.” (ESV)
2. The deeds that were done in Gibeah were despicable and all of Israel, from the north to the south, comes out to hear of the meaning of this woman's brutal death. 400,000 men of war assemble to hear of the evil that had taken place.
 - a) Judges 20:4–6 - [4] And the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, “I came to Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night. [5] And the leaders of Gibeah rose against me and surrounded the house against me by night. They meant to kill me, and they violated my concubine, and she is dead. [6] So I took hold of my concubine and cut her in pieces and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel, for they have committed abomination and outrage in Israel. (ESV)
3. The Levite paints himself in a rather good light here, but after hearing of the brutal violation of this Levite's concubine, the 400,000 men of war vow to repay Gibeah of Benjamin for all of the outrage that they had committed

B. Application and Question

1. Do you hate sin? The disdain that the Levite has for the actions of these men of Gibeah is admirable. Look at how he views the sins that these men committed in 19:30 and how he describes it in 20:6.
2. He hates this sin so much that he opening rebukes these brothers in front of 400,000 men of war. He has called his brothers together because sin like this cannot be overlooked in Israel.
3. He hates his brothers sin, but what about his own? Not the sins of the world and the terrible atrocities the world commits, but the terrible sins that you commit? Do you hate your sin?
4. Look at how this Levite on the morning after these sins were committed gets up and seems to have forgotten that anything had even happened. He seems to have written her off as dead in his mind and look at the harsh words he speaks to a raped and murdered woman that he was responsible for, “Get up, let us be going.” Look at how he paints himself in the retelling of this story to the men of war.
5. The things that once would have haunted you, do you now forget about over night and wake up to live just like it was any other day. **Do you hate sin, not just that of others but your sin?**
 - a) Jude 23 - [23] save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh. (ESV)
 - b) Matthew 7:3 - [3] Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? (ESV)
6. There is very clearly a speck in the eyes of the men of Gibeah of Benjamin. This speck needs to be removed and this Levite very aptly acts to remove this speck for them, but do we see any notion that he ever addresses the log in his own eye? He easily judges Jerusalem as an evil city not worthy of him to lodge in and now he prepares for retribution to be poured out upon his evil brothers, but does he see the evil that sin is within his own life? Do you?

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III. What Will You Do When Your Sin Is Exposed?

A. The Text - Judges 20:12-17

1. All of Israel stands united against these sins and demands justice.
 - a) Judges 20:12–13 - [12] And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, “What evil is this that has taken place among you? [13] Now therefore give up the men, the worthless fellows in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and purge evil from Israel.” But the Benjaminites would not listen to the voice of their brothers, the people of Israel. (ESV)
2. Instead of admitting wrong doing and turning over the violators to the army of Israel, the tribe of Benjamin decide to muster their own forces and go to war to protect their brothers that had violated and murdered the Levite's concubine
3. They mustered 26,000 men of war to fight against their brothers of Israel's force of 400,000

B. Application and Question

1. **What will you do when your sin is exposed?** Why would Benjamin refuse to give up these worthless men? Do we sometimes overlook the glaring sin in the lives of those closest to us? Do we sometimes overlook the sins that we may even be a part of because if we turn them in then we are condemning ourselves. **So what do we do?**
2. We fight against do the right thing tooth and nail. We muster our forces, but our strength is negligible when compared to the forces of doing the right thing, 26,000 v 400,000. **Will you deny or confess?**
 - a) 1 John 1:8–9 - [8] If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. [9] If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (ESV)
3. What is more important that purging the evil that is among you and within you? Relationships, pride, worldly gain? No matter how imperfect a messenger may be, when sin is exposed in your life, how will you respond?

IV. What Are The Consequences Of Sin?

A. The Text - Judges 20:18-48

1. The battle is set and early one morning, Israel went out against Benjamin to Destroy them. However, on that day, 22,000 of Israel fell by the sword and Benjamin was victorious. The next day, Israel is once again defeated with 18,000 men being killed by Benjamin.
2. The armies of Israel cry out to the Lord and he tells them to once again go up against Benjamin for they will be victorious the third day. Israel and Benjamin waged war on one another, but the armies of Israel overcame those of Benjamin.
 - a) Judges 20:35–36 - [35] And the LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel, and the people of Israel destroyed 25,100 men of Benjamin that day. All these were men who drew the sword. [36] So the people of Benjamin saw that they were defeated..(ESV)
3. The men of Benjamin, seeing that defeat was upon them, tried to flee, but they were pursued, overtaken, and slew by the sword.
 - a) Judges 20:47–48 - [47] But 600 men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon and remained at the rock of Rimmon four months. [48] And the men of Israel turned back against the people of Benjamin and struck them with the edge of the sword, the city, men and beasts and all that they found. And all the towns that they found they set on fire. (ESV)

B. Application and Question

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1. What are the consequences of sin? Death and destruction awaits. Who did God bring judgement upon in these verses? Why do you think that God allowed Benjamin to win 2 days?
2. What is the cycle of the judges? Israel themselves were acting as a Judge to themselves. Both groups were in the wrong; Israel, Benjamin, the Levite. So God judges Israel and 40,000 die but finally God brings judgement upon Benjamin for their sins as well.
 - a) Psalm 14:1-3 - [1] The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds; there is none who does good. [2] The LORD looks down from heaven on the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. [3] They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one. (ESV)
 - b) Psalm 14:7 - [7] Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad. (ESV)
3. Death awaits for all who do not repent and turn from their evil deeds, but salvation awaits for those that confess and seek after God.

Conclusion

- I. Are you ready for the judgement of the Lord?
 - A. We must learn that sin is knocking at the door ready to destroy us. We must hate sin, and not that of the others only but rather our own sins. We must confess and repent of our sins when they are exposed. Only then can you escape the devastating consequences of sin.
 - a) Judges 21:25 - [25] In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. (ESV)