

**Judges 19:1** In those days, when there was no king in Israel, a certain Levite, residing in the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, took to himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah. <sup>2</sup> But his concubine became angry with<sup>1</sup> him, and she went away from him to her father's house at Bethlehem in Judah, and was there some four months. <sup>3</sup> Then her husband set out after her, to speak tenderly to her and bring her back. He had with him his servant and a couple of donkeys. When he reached<sup>1</sup> her father's house, the girl's father saw him and came with joy to meet him. <sup>4</sup> His father-in-law, the girl's father, made him stay, and he remained with him three days; so they ate and drank, and he<sup>1</sup> stayed there. <sup>5</sup> On the fourth day they got up early in the morning, and he prepared to go; but the girl's father said to his son-in-law, "Fortify yourself with a bit of food, and after that you may go." <sup>6</sup> So the two men sat and ate and drank together; and the girl's father said to the man, "Why not spend the night and enjoy yourself?" <sup>7</sup> When the man got up to go, his father-in-law kept urging him until he spent the night there again. <sup>8</sup> On the fifth day he got up early in the morning to leave; and the girl's father said, "Fortify yourself." So they lingered<sup>1</sup> until the day declined, and the two of them ate and drank.<sup>2</sup> <sup>9</sup> When the man with his concubine and his servant got up to leave, his father-in-law, the girl's father, said to him, "Look, the day has worn on until it is almost evening. Spend the night. See, the day has drawn to a close. Spend the night here and enjoy yourself. Tomorrow you can get up early in the morning for your journey, and go home." <sup>10</sup> But the man would not spend the night; he got up and departed, and arrived opposite Jebus (that is, Jerusalem). He had with him a couple of saddled donkeys, and his concubine was with him. <sup>11</sup> When they were near Jebus, the day was far spent, 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." <sup>12</sup> But his master said to him, "We will not turn aside into a city of foreigners, who do not belong to the people of Israel; but we will continue on to Gibeah." <sup>13</sup> Then he said to his servant, "Come, let us try to reach one of these places, and spend the night at Gibeah or at Ramah." <sup>14</sup> So they passed on and went their way; and the sun went down on them near Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin. <sup>15</sup> They turned aside there, to go in and spend the night at Gibeah. He went in and sat down in the open square of the city, but no one took them in to spend the night. <sup>16</sup> Then at evening there was an old man coming from his work in the field. The man was from the hill country of Ephraim, and he was residing in Gibeah. (The people of the place were Benjaminites.) <sup>17</sup> When the old man looked up and saw the wayfarer in the open square of the city, he said, "Where are you going and where do you come from?" <sup>18</sup> He answered him, "We are passing from Bethlehem in Judah to the remote parts of the hill country of Ephraim, from which I come. I went to Bethlehem in Judah; and I am going to my home.<sup>1</sup> Nobody has offered to take me in. <sup>19</sup> We your servants have straw and fodder for our donkeys, with bread and wine for me and the woman and the young man along with us. We need nothing more." <sup>20</sup> The old man said, "Peace be to you. I will care for all your wants; only do not spend the night in the square." <sup>21</sup> So he brought him into his house, and fed the donkeys; they washed their feet, and ate and drank. <sup>22</sup> While they were enjoying themselves, the men of the city, a perverse lot, surrounded the house, and started pounding on the door. They said to the old man, the master of the house, "Bring out the man who came into your house, so that we may have intercourse with him." <sup>23</sup> 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 is my guest, do not do this vile thing. <sup>24</sup> Here are my virgin daughter and his concubine; let me bring them out now. Ravish them and do whatever you want to them; but against this man do not do such a vile thing." <sup>25</sup> But the men would not listen to him. So the man seized his concubine, and put her out to them. They wantonly raped her, and abused her all through the night until the morning. And as the dawn began to break, they let her go. <sup>26</sup> 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. <sup>27</sup> In the morning her master got up, opened the doors of the house, and when he went out to go on his way, there was his concubine lying at the door of the house, with her hands on the threshold. <sup>28</sup> "Get up," he said to her, "we are going." But there was no answer. Then he put her on the donkey; and the man set out for his home. <sup>29</sup> When he had entered his house, he took a knife, and grasping his concubine he cut her into twelve pieces, limb by limb, and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. <sup>30</sup> Then he commanded the men whom he sent, saying, "Thus shall you say to all the Israelites, 'Has such a thing ever happened<sup>1</sup> since the day that the Israelites came up from the land of Egypt until this day? Consider it, take counsel, and speak out.'"

**Judges 20:1** Then all the Israelites came out, from Dan to Beer-sheba, including the land of Gilead, and the congregation assembled in one body before the LORD at Mizpah. <sup>2</sup> The chiefs of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand foot-soldiers bearing arms. <sup>3</sup> (Now the Benjaminites heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.) And the Israelites said, "Tell us, how did this criminal act come about?" <sup>4</sup> The Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered, "I came to Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night. <sup>5</sup> The lords of Gibeah rose up against me, and surrounded the house at night. They intended to kill me, and they raped my concubine until she died. <sup>6</sup> Then I took my concubine and cut her into pieces, and sent her throughout the whole extent of Israel's territory; for they have committed a vile outrage in Israel. <sup>7</sup> So now, you Israelites, all of you, give your advice and counsel here." <sup>8</sup> All the people got up as one, saying, "We will not any of us go to our tents, nor will any of us return to our houses. <sup>9</sup> But now this is what we will do to Gibeah: we will go up<sup>1</sup> against it by lot. <sup>10</sup> We will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand of ten thousand, to bring provisions for the troops, who are going to repay<sup>1</sup> Gibeah of Benjamin for all the disgrace that they have done in Israel." <sup>11</sup> So all the men of Israel gathered against the city, united as one. <sup>12</sup> The tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What crime is this that has been committed among you? <sup>13</sup> Now then, hand over those scoundrels in Gibeah, so that we may put them to death, and purge the evil from Israel." But the Benjaminites would not listen to their kinsfolk, the Israelites. <sup>14</sup> The Benjaminites came together out of the towns to Gibeah, to go out to battle against the Israelites. <sup>15</sup> On that day the Benjaminites mustered twenty-six thousand armed men from their towns, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah. <sup>16</sup> Of all this force, there were seven hundred picked men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair, and not miss. <sup>17</sup> And the Israelites, apart from Benjamin, mustered four hundred thousand armed men, all of them warriors. <sup>18</sup> The Israelites proceeded to go up to Bethel, where they inquired of God, "Which of us shall go up first to battle against the Benjaminites?" And the LORD answered, "Judah shall go up first." <sup>19</sup> Then the Israelites got up in the morning, and encamped against Gibeah. <sup>20</sup> The Israelites went out to battle against Benjamin; and the Israelites drew up the battle line against them at Gibeah. <sup>21</sup> The Benjaminites came out of Gibeah, and struck down on that day twenty-two thousand of the Israelites. <sup>22</sup> The Israelites took courage, and again formed the battle line in the same place where they had formed it on the first day. <sup>23</sup> The Israelites went up and wept before the LORD until the evening; and they inquired of the LORD, "Shall we again draw near to battle against our kinsfolk the Benjaminites?" And the LORD said, "Go up against them." <sup>24</sup> So the Israelites advanced against the Benjaminites the second day. <sup>25</sup> Benjamin moved out against them from Gibeah the second

day, and struck down eighteen thousand of the Israelites, all of them armed men. <sup>26</sup> Then all the Israelites, the whole army, went back to Bethel and wept, sitting there before the LORD; they fasted that day until evening. Then they offered burnt offerings and sacrifices of well-being before the LORD. <sup>27</sup> And the Israelites inquired of the LORD (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, <sup>28</sup> and Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, ministered before it in those days), saying, "Shall we go out once more to battle against our kinsfolk the Benjaminites, or shall we desist?" The LORD answered, "Go up, for tomorrow I will give them into your hand." <sup>29</sup> So Israel stationed men in ambush around Gibeah. <sup>30</sup> Then the Israelites went up against the Benjaminites on the third day, and set themselves in array against Gibeah, as before. <sup>31</sup> When the Benjaminites went out against the army, they were drawn away from the city. As before they began to inflict casualties on the troops, along the main roads, one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah, as well as in the open country, killing about thirty men of Israel. <sup>32</sup> The Benjaminites thought, "They are being routed before us, as previously." But the Israelites said, "Let us retreat and draw them away from the city toward the roads." <sup>33</sup> The main body of the Israelites drew back its battle line to Baal-tamar, while those Israelites who were in ambush rushed out of their place west<sup>1</sup> of Geba. <sup>34</sup> There came against Gibeah ten thousand picked men out of all Israel, and the battle was fierce. But the Benjaminites did not realize that disaster was close upon them. <sup>35</sup> The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel; and the Israelites destroyed twenty-five thousand one hundred men of Benjamin that day, all of them armed. <sup>36</sup> Then the Benjaminites saw that they were defeated. <sup>1</sup> The Israelites gave ground to Benjamin, because they trusted to the troops in ambush that they had stationed against Gibeah. <sup>37</sup> The troops in ambush rushed quickly upon Gibeah. Then they put the whole city to the sword. <sup>38</sup> Now the agreement between the main body of Israel and the men in ambush was that when they sent up a cloud of smoke out of the city <sup>39</sup> the main body of Israel should turn in battle. But Benjamin had begun to inflict casualties on the Israelites, killing about thirty of them; so they thought, "Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle." <sup>40</sup> But when the cloud, a column of smoke, began to rise out of the city, the Benjaminites looked behind them -- and there was the whole city going up in smoke toward the sky! <sup>41</sup> Then the main body of Israel turned, and the Benjaminites were dismayed, for they saw that disaster was close upon them. <sup>42</sup> Therefore they turned away from the Israelites in the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them, and those who came out of the city<sup>1</sup> were slaughtering them in between. <sup>2</sup> <sup>43</sup> Cutting down<sup>1</sup> the Benjaminites, they pursued them from Nohah<sup>2</sup> and trod them down as far as a place east of Gibeah. <sup>44</sup> Eighteen thousand Benjaminites fell, all of them courageous fighters. <sup>45</sup> When they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, five thousand of them were cut down on the main roads, and they were pursued as far as Gidom, and two thousand of them were slain. <sup>46</sup> So all who fell that day of Benjamin were twenty-five thousand arms-bearing men, all of them courageous fighters. <sup>47</sup> But six hundred turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, and remained at the rock of Rimmon for four months. <sup>48</sup> Meanwhile, the Israelites turned back against the Benjaminites, and put them to the sword -- the city, the people, the animals, and all that remained. Also the remaining towns they set on fire.

**Judges 21:1** Now the Israelites had sworn at Mizpah, "No one of us shall give his daughter in marriage to Benjamin." <sup>2</sup> And the people came to Bethel, and sat there until evening before God, and they lifted up their voices and wept bitterly. <sup>3</sup> They said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, why has it come to pass that today there should be one tribe lacking in Israel?" <sup>4</sup> On the next day, the people got up early, and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and sacrifices of well-

being. <sup>5</sup> Then the Israelites said, "Which of all the tribes of Israel did not come up in the assembly to the LORD?" For a solemn oath had been taken concerning whoever did not come up to the LORD to Mizpah, saying, "That one shall be put to death." <sup>6</sup> But the Israelites had compassion for Benjamin their kin, and said, "One tribe is cut off from Israel this day. <sup>7</sup> What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them any of our daughters as wives?" <sup>8</sup> Then they said, "Is there anyone from the tribes of Israel who did not come up to the LORD to Mizpah?" It turned out that no one from Jabesh-gilead had come to the camp, to the assembly. <sup>9</sup> For when the roll was called among the people, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead was there. <sup>10</sup> So the congregation sent twelve thousand soldiers there and commanded them, "Go, put the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead to the sword, including the women and the little ones. <sup>11</sup> This is what you shall do; every male and every woman that has lain with a male you shall devote to destruction." <sup>12</sup> And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins who had never slept with a man and brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. <sup>13</sup> Then the whole congregation sent word to the Benjaminites who were at the rock of Rimmon, and proclaimed peace to them. <sup>14</sup> Benjamin returned at that time; and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead; but they did not suffice for them. <sup>15</sup> The people had compassion on Benjamin because the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel. <sup>16</sup> So the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for wives for those who are left, since there are no women left in Benjamin?" <sup>17</sup> And they said, "There must be heirs for the survivors of Benjamin, in order that a tribe may not be blotted out from Israel. <sup>18</sup> Yet we cannot give any of our daughters to them as wives." For the Israelites had sworn, "Cursed be anyone who gives a wife to Benjamin." <sup>19</sup> So they said, "Look, the yearly festival of the LORD is taking place at Shiloh, which is north of Bethel, on the east of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah." <sup>20</sup> And they instructed the Benjaminites, saying, "Go and lie in wait in the vineyards, <sup>21</sup> and watch; when the young women of Shiloh come out to dance in the dances, then come out of the vineyards and each of you carry off a wife for himself from the young women of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. <sup>22</sup> Then if their fathers or their brothers come to complain to us, we will say to them, 'Be generous and allow us to have them; because we did not capture in battle a wife for each man. But neither did you incur guilt by giving your daughters to them.'" <sup>23</sup> The Benjaminites did so; they took wives for each of them from the dancers whom they abducted. Then they went and returned to their territory, and rebuilt the towns, and lived in them. <sup>24</sup> So the Israelites departed from there at that time by tribes and families, and they went out from there to their own territories. <sup>25</sup> In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes.