

Episode #545 Judges 19 Part 1 – The Levite’s Concubine

I. In the book of Judges, we have a brief record of the early history (the first centuries) of the history of the land of Israel. We see the leaders God chose, judges, who ruled under Jehovah, the King. Through the lives and work of these judges, we can learn about God’s works and ways.

II. Having completed our study of the religious decline of Israel in the idolatry of Micah and the tribe of Dan, we now starting in Judges 19 start to consider the moral decline of Israel. This is again early in the Judges period long before Samson’s judgeship as we had it in Judges 16. Phinehas, Aaron’s grandson, is still alive and the high priest (20:28). This takes place in the days of Micah and his idolatry, and shows us that Israel was not only copying the worship of the Canaanites, but their terrible moral depravity as well.

III. The Levite’s concubine. Judges 19:1-10.

- A. Judges 19:1. Note again: no King in Israel. But there ought to have been: the LORD! We will see how little they cared what He thought. Another Levite in the remote hills of Ephraim. He takes a concubine (slave-wife) from Bethlehem in Judah. Note: no provision for slave-wives in the law. Abraham and family had concubines, but they are NEVER mentioned in Exodus to Deuteronomy! The LORD speaks of wives, period. This was a common practice at the time, but hardly a Godly one. Particularly for treating a fellow Israelite woman this way! A wife with no privileges, a slave.
- B. Verse 2. She cheats on him (adultery, like a harlot), then flees back to her father. She is there four months (“days, four months.” Might mean a year and four months.)
- C. Verse 3. Her man acts to go after her to win her back. “Kindly” = to speak to her heart. He takes a young retainer and a pair of donkeys. She accepts him into her father’s house. Her father is happy to meet him. Does this mean he had not met him before, just sold her sight unseen? Sadly a woman with a bad father often ends up with a bad husband, even when marriages are not arranged.
- D. Verse 4. His father-in-law convince him to stay, and throws a party for him three days, eating and drinking.
- E. Verse 5. The fourth day he gets up early to leave, but her father wants him to stay longer. He urges him to eat before he leaves.
- F. Verse 6. After they eat and drink, he urges him then to stay all night.
- G. Verse 7. He had been planning to leave, but his father-in-law convinces him and he stays.
- H. Verse 8. The fifth day early he plans to leave, but his father-in-law urges him to stay and eat again. He lets himself be convinced and stays until afternoon.
- I. Verse 9. That afternoon he gets ready to leave with his concubine and his boy servant. His father-in-law urges him again, seeing that it is near evening, to stay overnight, and get going early the next day. We do not learn the father-in-law’s motivations in all this. Maybe he likes this young man? Or wants to smooth the relationship?
- J. Verse 10. This time, he is unwilling to stay, so gets a late start. Because of this, he arrives near Jebus, that is Jerusalem, by nightfall. Note: Jerusalem still in the hands of the Jebusites, in spite of Judges 1:8, according to Judges 1:21.

IV. The wicked city of Gibeah. Judges 19:11-30.

- A. Judges 19:11. His servant wants to stay the night in Jebus with the Jebusites.
- B. Verse 12. The Levite refuses to stay in a city of foreigners. wants to stay in an Israelite town, suggests Gibeah (Hill) of Benjamin.

C. Verse 13. He suggests Gibeah or Ramah (High Place), both in Benjamin.

D. Verse 14. They arrive at sunset at Gibeah of Benjamin.

V. Judges 19 shows us the moral decline of Israel. We see concubinage (slave wives) openly practiced. We see the lack of morality of this slave wife and of her husband. We too live in a society rapidly giving in to corruption. Will we too fall or allow our children to fall into this? Only clinging to the Word of God can keep us above the moral corruption of our day!