

Bible Study on Judges
JUDGES 19-21: MORAL CHAOS IN ISRAEL

Summary: “After God saves Israel out of Egypt and gives them the wonderful Promised Land, they stay faithful to him for only one brief generation [*Judges 2:7*]. Then they collapse completely, embracing the idolatry and degenerate behavior of the Canaanites. . . . Israel sinks to a new low and becomes just like the Canaanites they were supposed to drive out of the land” (*Baker Illustrated*, 141)

I. Israel’s Failure to Complete the Conquest (1:1 – 2:10)

- A. After Joshua died, Israel failed to occupy all the land the LORD had given them.
- B. *Judges 2:10*: “another generation arose after them who did not know the LORD.”

II. Covenant Disobedience and Judgment (2:11 – 16:31)

- A. The Cycle of Disobedience (2:11–3:6)
- B. The Cycle Illustrated: A History of the Judges (3:7–16:31): Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah/Barak, Gideon, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson.

III. The Collapse of Society (17–21)

- A. Micah’s idols and his hired Levite priest (17-18)
- B. The rape-murder of a Levite’s concubine leads to civil war and loss of a tribe (19–21)

Judges 19. The rape-murder of a Levite’s concubine

Judges 20. Israel goes to war against Benjamin and nearly exterminates the tribe of Benjamin

Judges 21. Israel finds wives for the remaining 600 Benjamite men

APPLICATION

- “Once people abandon worshipping God they usually quickly embrace the corrupt morals of their surrounding culture and spiral down morally and theologically until they hit bottom” (*Baker Illustrated*, 155).
- “We too are defenseless and unruly apart from Christ’s rule over us individually and as the people of God” (Glodo, 199).
- “The book of Judges challenges us to think about the degree to which we are serving our King, Jesus Christ. It forces us to ask if we are doing what is right in our own eyes and thus creating our own version of Christianity or if we are relying on Scripture to know what is pleasing to Him” (Godfrey).
- Sexual abuse happens in the church and we need to be prepared to act with compassion and justice.