

## Judges 20

February 2, 2012

*"Man does not know himself truly except as he knows himself in confronted by God. Only in that confrontation does he become aware of his full stature and freedom and of the evil in him."* – Reinhold Niebuhr

1 Corinthians 11:31 (confronting our own sin)

1 Corinthians 5 (confronting sin in the camp)

Galatians 6:1-2 (confronting sin with a right heart)

Related passages: (Matthew 7:1-5; John 7:24; 1 Cor. 5:12; Romans 14:4)

Continuing from the previous chapter:

### **20:1-7**

The core of the question is, "what should be done about the sin, within?"

Another question might be, "how have we drifted so far from God?"

We studied in the previous chapter, the lack of hospitality, in Gibeah of Benjamin, the blatant homosexuality, the so-called leader, the Levite, who did not love his concubine, he instead gave her to be gang-raped, and murdered; he did not honor her in life, nor did he honor her in death, he dismembered her body, sent different parts to the different tribes of Israel – and here we see it took this hideous activity, to finally bring the children of Israel together in unity, to ask what should we do about the sin, within?

### **20:8-11**

They were united – **against** – their brother, that's one thing we see.

We don't really see Israel asking the LORD to lead, they assume that Benjamin is in sin, so they simply come **against** them.

### **20:12-17**

Now, the wise approach would have been to confront the sinful situation with tact and wisdom.

Now I'm not saying the tribe of Benjamin is excused in the way they reacted to the confrontation, but I am saying that if you know your brother is in sin, 9 times out of 10 you're better off approaching them humbly, loving, and gently.

Consider Galatians 6:1-2 "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who *are* spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

Unfortunately Israel was not mature enough to approach in humility, and Benjamin was not mature enough to respond in humility...and bad combination that led to civil war.

## **20:18-25**

You're like, "wait a minute, what's going on here?" The children of Israel are in the right...right? Then why are they losing the fight? 22,000 men die on day one? 18,000 men die on day two?

They even asked the LORD who should go first, there in v. 18. God said "Judah."

And after their defeat they then asked the LORD if they should even go against their brother in v. 23. God said, "go."

So why did 40,000 men of Israel, the "good guys," die?

Well, for one, there are no "good guys." These guys that were confronting the sin, were themselves not guiltless. You see, the sinner needs to be judged, and the judges need to be judged, and one of the reasons for their dual defeat is that their hearts were not right.

Confronting sin is **holy**

Another real reason is that confronting sin is **costly** – be ready to pay the price.

We need to be wise, to be ready to pay both before and after:

## **20:26-28**

God wanted them to confront the sin; but God wanted them to confront the sin, **His** way in utter humility and not arrogantly.

This time they wept, and they fasted; they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. They consecrated themselves, they fellowshiped with God. They even brought out the Ark of the Covenant, inquiring of the LORD – open to **whatever** He wanted.

This time, the LORD promised victory.

## 20:29-48

The children of Israel drew the men of Benjamin out of the city, pretending to be defeated as at other times.

When the men were drawn out of the city, the Israelite men in ambush entered the city, killing the women and children and setting fire to the city.

So the men of Benjamin panicked, they knew disaster was upon them, and v. 35 tells us that more than 25,000 men of Benjamin died, leaving only 600 men hiding at the rock of Rimmon.

Does the strategy sound familiar?

If you've read the book of Joshua, you'll notice that it was the same strategy used by Israel, in a strangely similar situation.

It was after the defeat at Ai; after the sin of Achan.

We **must** deal with the sin, the persistent, insistent, resistant.

Proverbs 27:6, "Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend, But the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful."

Revelation 3:19, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent."

*"When sin isn't exposed, confessed and punished, it pollutes society and defiles the land."* - Weirsbe

What happens when we don't deal with sin? (We live blindly)

What happens when we don't deal with the sin in my brother's life, with a right heart? (We live self-righteously)

What happens when we don't deal with sin the sin in my brother's life obediently graciously? (We deal excessively – they almost wiped out the entire tribe of Benjamin)

May God give us wisdom to hate the sin and love the sinner.