

Judges 20: When Society Defends Evil

Getting started: Society is in trouble when morality stoops to defend those who do evil. Give a present-day example.

Read 20:1-17**Israel Gathers**

1. Why had the children of Israel all gathered together at Mizpah? How many in Israel were able to fight (draw sword)? How did the Levite argue the need for decisive action against the men of Gibeah? (vv. 1-6)
2. What was the response of the tribes after hearing the report of the Levite? (vv. 7-10) What did Israel ask Benjamin to do before fighting? What did the men of Benjamin do instead? What was unique about the 700 chosen men from Gibeah? (vv. 11-17).

Read 20:18-26**Israel Fails**

3. Where did Israel go first before facing in battle? What did they ask God for? (v. 18)
4. Based on the odds (vv. 15-17), who did you expect to win the battle the first day? Who secured the victory? How can we reconcile Gibeah's guilt with Israel's loss in battle? (vv. 19-21)
5. What did Israel do after her stunning defeat? What was the Lord's reply to their second inquiry? (vv. 22-23)

6. On the second day of battle, what happened? What did Israel do after her second defeat? (vv. 24-26) In what ways can believers today profit from fasting? (Matt. 6:17-18)

Read 20:27-48**Israel Prevails**

7. After inquiring of the Lord again, what did the Lord promise them? What battle strategy did Israel employ on the 3rd day? What 'drew out' the Benjamites from the city? (vv. 27-32)
8. What did the Benjamites not know while they were fighting? How many Benjamites fell on the 3rd day of battle (vv. 26-27) What signal indicated that the city had been taken? (vv. 33-40)
9. How many Benjamites escaped from the battle? (vv. 41-47) What happened to all the rest of the Benjamites? (v. 48) What Bible principle does the small number of survivors reveal? (c.f. Ezra 9:8)

Going Deeper

10. Israel gathered to challenge the wickedness done to the Levite, but the Benjamites would not turn the wicked men over. The result was a battle that cost the Israelites 40,000 men. What does this tell us about the price of standing against evil and for biblical morality? Name some things we should expect when we confront moral wickedness in our day. (Gather some ideas from 2 Tim. 3:1-13)