

# JUDGES CHAPTER 21

## JUDGES FEATURED IN THIS CHAPTER

OTHNIEL

ABIMELECH

ELON

EHUD

TOLA

ABDON

SHAMGAR

JAIR

SAMSON

DEBORAH

JEPHTHAH

ELI

GIDEON

IBZAN

SAMUEL

## WHEN

- Most scholars place the period of the Judges between 1450 B.C. and 1000 B.C.
- The story recorded in Judges 21 happened within that period, but we aren't given specific dates for the events.
- We do know the events of Judges 21 followed shortly after those of Judges 20.

## WHERE

- The Israelites swore an oath at Mizpah before going to war with the people of Gibeah (20:1).
- The Benjaminites kidnapped wives for themselves at Shiloh.



## CHARACTERS

- **The Elders of Israel** – They devised a plan to save the tribe of Benjamin from extinction.
- **The People of Benjamin** – There were very few people left from the tribe of Benjamin after the war described in Judges 20. There were so few women that the men couldn't find wives.

## OUTLINE

- THE MEN OF BENJAMIN NEED WIVES (21:1-15):
  - + Before the Israelites went and fought against the Benjaminites (Judges 20), they made a pact that they would not give their daughters as wives to the men of Benjamin.
  - + After nearly exterminating the tribe of Benjamin in war, they realized their pact may have been a mistake.
  - + The remaining Benjaminite men didn't have any women to marry.
  - + To remedy the problem, the Israelites decided to kill all the people in the town of Jabesh-gilead, because they failed to show up at the meeting at Mizpah (20:1).
  - + After Israel massacred Jabesh-gilead, the only individuals left alive were 400 young virgins preserved for the Benjaminites.
  - + But the 400 virgins weren't enough, so the Israelites devised a new plan.
- KIDNAPPING WIVES (21:16-25):
  - + The leaders of Israel told the Benjaminites to go to Shiloh, where an annual feast to the Lord was held, and lie in wait until the young women of the village began their dancing.
  - + When the dancing began, each man was to kidnap a wife for himself and carry her back to the territory of Benjamin.
  - + The leaders of Israel promised to make amends with the fathers of the girls who were kidnapped.
  - + Using this method, the tribe of Benjamin was preserved, and the Israelites kept their vow not to willingly give their daughters to the Benjaminites (kidnap isn't consent).
  - + The book of Judges ends with the following statement, "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

## APPLICATION

- What happened to the nation of Israel when they "did what was right in their own eyes"?
- Answer: their nation started falling apart from the inside.
- What do you think will happen to our nation, our communities, our families, when everyone does what suits them best?
- Answer: things will start to fall apart.
- God's laws and moral guidance protect against the corrupting power of sin and the ignorance of short-sighted human beings.

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