

JUDGES 20 vs 1

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The author of this book is uncertain, some suggest Samuel, the high priest. It was written around 1050-1000bc. The events in the book cover the stormy period of the history of Israel between their return from Egypt until the time a monarchy was set in place. The judges were military and civil leaders during the confederacy of the 12 tribes plus Ephraim and Manasseh who occupied the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The Book of Judges



The Benjamite war vs all Israel,

¹ Then all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, from Dan even to Beersheba, with the land of Gilead, to the LORD in Mizpa.

² And the leaders of all the people, even of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, 400,000 footmen who drew their sword.

³ (Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel went up to Mizpa.) Then said the children of Israel, Tell us, how did this wickedness happen?

⁴ And the Levite, the husband of the woman who was slain, answered and said, I came with my concubine to lodge in Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin.

⁵ And the men of Gibeah rose up against me, and surrounded the house at night because of me. They thought to kill me: and my concubine they raped, so she died.

⁶ And I took my concubine, and cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the land of the inheritance of Israel: for they committed lewd and disgraceful conduct in Israel.

⁷ Behold, all you sons of Israel; give your advice and counsel here.

⁸ And all the people arose as one man, saying, Not one of us will go to his tent, nor will any of us return to his house.

⁹ But now this is what we will do to Gibeah; we will go up against it by lot;

¹⁰ and we will take 10 men out of 100 throughout all the tribes of Israel, and 100 out of 1000, and 1000 from 10,000, to get food supplies for the people, that when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, they may do to them according to all the evil they have done in Israel.

¹¹ Thus all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, united as one man.

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12 And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, What is this wickedness that was done among you?

13 Now therefore deliver up the men, the worthless fellows of Belial, who are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and remove the evil from Israel. But the sons of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brothers, the sons of Israel.

14 But the sons of Benjamin gathered together from the cities to Gibeah, to go out to battle against the sons of Israel.

15 And from the cities at that time the sons of Benjamin were numbered, 26,000 men who drew their sword, beside the inhabitants of Gibeah, who numbered 700 chosen men.

16 Among all these people were 700 chosen men who were lefthanded; each one could sling a stones at a hair, and not miss.

17 Then the men of Israel, beside Benjamin, were numbered 400,000 men who drew their sword: all these were men of war.

18 Now the sons of Israel arose, and went up to Bethel / the house of God, and asked counsel of God, and said, Who will go up first to the battle against the sons of Benjamin? And the LORD said, Judah will go up first.

19 So the sons of Israel arose in the morning, and camped against Gibeah.

20 And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin; and the men of Israel arrayed themselves to fight against them at Gibeah.

21 Then the sons of Benjamin went out from Gibeah, and felled to the ground that day 22,000 men of Israel.

22 But the people, the men of Israel encouraged themselves, and arrayed for battle again in the same place where they arrayed themselves the first day.

23 (And the sons of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until evening, and asked counsel of the LORD, saying, Will we again go up to battle against the sons of my brother Benjamin? And the LORD said, Go up against him.)

24 Then the sons of Israel came against the sons of Benjamin the second day.

25 And Benjamin went out against them from Gibeah the second day, and 18,000 of the sons of Israel felled to the ground; all these drew the sword.

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26 Then all the sons of Israel, and all the people, went and came to Bethel / the house of God, and wept. Thus they remained there before the LORD, and fasted that day until evening. And they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD.

27 And the sons of Israel inquired of the LORD, (for the Ark of the Covenant of God was there in those days,

28 and Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days,) saying, Will I yet again go out to battle against the sons of Benjamin my brother, or will I cease? And the LORD said, Go up, fight; for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand.

29 So Israel set men in ambush around Gibeah.

30 And the sons of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and arrayed themselves against Gibeah, as at other times.

31 And the sons of Benjamin went out against the people, and were drawn away from the city; and they began to strike and kill the people, as at other times, on the highways, one that goes up to Bethel / the house of God, and the other to Gibeah, and in the field, about thirty men of Israel.

32 And the sons of Benjamin said, They are struck down before us, as at the first. But the sons of Israel said, Let us flee, and draw them away from their city to the highways.

33 Then all the men of Israel arose from their place, and arrayed themselves at Baal-tamar: and the men of Israel in ambush came from their places, even from the marshes of Gibeah.

34 When 10,000 chosen men from all Israel came against Gibeah, the battle became fierce: but Benjamin did not know that disaster was approaching.

35 And the LORD struck Benjamin in front of Israel: so that the sons of Israel destroyed 25,100 men of Benjamin that day: all these drew the sword.

36 So the sons of Benjamin saw they were defeated, when the men of Israel gave ground to Benjamin, because they trusted the men in ambush whom they set against Gibeah,

37 and the men in ambush hurried, and rushed against Gibeah; they deployed their surprise attack, and defeated all the city striking it with the edge of the sword.

38 Now the appointed sign between the men of Israel and men in ambush, was that they should make a cloud of smoke arise from the city.

39 Then the men of Israel turned in the battle, and Benjamin began to strike and kill about thirty men of Israel: for they said, Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle.

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⁴⁰ But when the cloud began to rise from the city in a column of smoke, Benjamin looked behind, and behold, and saw the whole city was going up in smoke to heaven.

⁴¹ Then the men of Israel turned again, and the men of Benjamin were terrified: for they saw that disaster was near them.

⁴² Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel toward the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them; and those who came from the cities destroyed them.

⁴³ They surrounded Benjamin, and chased them without rest, and trod them down against Gibeah toward the east.

⁴⁴ Thus 18,000 men of Benjamin fell; all these were valiant warriors.

⁴⁵ And the rest turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon: but they caught 5,000 of them on the highways; and pursued hard after them to Gidom, and killed 2,000 of them.

⁴⁶ So all of Benjamin who fell that day were 25,000 men who pulled out their sword; all these were valiant warriors.

⁴⁷ But 600 men turned and fled to the wilderness to the rock Rimmon, and remained at the rock Rimmon four months.

⁴⁸ Then the men of Israel turned again against the sons of Benjamin, and defeated them with the edge of the sword, the entire city with the cattle, and all that they found: also they set on fire all the cities that they came to.

We are grateful to God that the Saudi govt has preserved the Mountain of Moses.

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