

Judges 20:1-48 **War between Israel & Benjamin for homosexual offense**

Israel responded to message regarding the molesting murder of the concubine of the Levite

¹ So all the children of Israel came out, from Dan to Beersheba, as well as from the land of Gilead, and the congregation gathered together as one man before the LORD at Mizpah. ² And the leaders of all the people, all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, four hundred thousand foot soldiers who drew the sword.

Benjamin heard of Israel's response

³ (Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.)

Inquiry into the facts of the case

Then the children of Israel said, "Tell us, how did this wicked deed happen?" ⁴ So the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, "My concubine and I went into Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, to spend the night. ⁵ And the men of Gibeah rose against me, and surrounded the house at night because of me. They intended to kill me, but instead they ravished my concubine so that she died. ⁶ So I took hold of my concubine, cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the territory of the inheritance of Israel, because they committed lewdness and outrage in Israel. ⁷ Look! All of you are children of Israel; give your advice and counsel here and now!"

Decision to go to war against Gibeah the city of the homosexuals

⁸ So all the people arose as one man, saying, "None of us will go to his tent, nor will any turn back to his house; ⁹ but now this is the thing which we will do to Gibeah: We will go up against it by lot. ¹⁰ We will take ten men out of every hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, a hundred out of every thousand, and a thousand out of every ten thousand, to make provisions for the people, that when they come to Gibeah in Benjamin, they may repay all the vileness that they have done in Israel."

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

¹² Then the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "What is this wickedness that has occurred among you? ¹³ Now therefore, deliver up the men, the perverted men who are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and remove the evil from Israel!"

The tribe of Benjamin defended their homosexuals

But the children of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brethren, the children of Israel. ¹⁴ Instead, the children of Benjamin gathered together from their cities to Gibeah, to go to battle against the children of Israel. ¹⁵ And from their cities at that time the children of Benjamin numbered twenty-six thousand men who drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who numbered seven hundred select men. ¹⁶ Among all this people were seven hundred select men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair's breadth and not miss.

War between the tribe of Benjamin and Israel

¹⁷ Now besides Benjamin, the men of Israel numbered four hundred thousand men who drew the sword; all of these were men of war. ¹⁸ Then the children of Israel arose and went up to the house of God to inquire of God. They said, "Which of us shall go up first to battle against the children of Benjamin?" The LORD said, "Judah first!"

19 So the children of Israel rose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah. 20 And the men of Israel went out to battle against Benjamin, and the men of Israel put themselves in battle array to fight against them at Gibeah.

21 Then the children of Benjamin came out of Gibeah, and on that day cut down to the ground twenty-two thousand men of the Israelites.

22 And the people, that is, the men of Israel, encouraged themselves and again formed the battle line at the place where they had put themselves in array on the first day. 23 Then the children of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until evening, and asked counsel of the LORD, saying, "Shall I again draw near for battle against the children of my brother Benjamin?" And the LORD said, "Go up against him."

24 So the children of Israel approached the children of Benjamin on the second day. 25 And Benjamin went out against them from Gibeah on the second day, and cut down to the ground eighteen thousand more of the children of Israel; all these drew the sword.

26 Then all the children of Israel, that is, all the people, went up and came to the house of God and wept. They sat there before the LORD and fasted that day until evening; and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. 27 So the children of Israel inquired of the LORD (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, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease?" And the LORD said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand."

29 Then Israel set men in ambush all around Gibeah. 30 And the children of Israel went up against the children of Benjamin on the third day, and put themselves in battle array against Gibeah as at the other times. 31 So the children of Benjamin went out against the people, and were drawn away from the city. They began to strike down and kill some of the people, as at the other times, in the highways (one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah) and in the field, about thirty men of Israel. 32 And the children of Benjamin said, "They are struck down before us, as at first." But the children of Israel said, "Let us flee and draw them away from the city to the highways."

33 So all the men of Israel rose from their place and put themselves in battle array at Baal Tamar. Then Israel's men in ambush burst forth from their position in the plain of Geba. 34 And ten thousand select men from all Israel came against Gibeah, and the battle was fierce. But the Benjamites did not know that disaster was upon them. 35 The LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel. And the children of Israel destroyed that day twenty-five thousand one hundred Benjamites; all these drew the sword.

36 So the children of Benjamin saw that they were defeated. The men of Israel had given ground to the Benjamites, because they relied on the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah. 37 And the men in ambush quickly rushed upon Gibeah; the men in ambush spread out and struck the whole city with the edge of the sword. 38 Now the appointed signal between the men of Israel and the men in ambush was that they would make a great cloud of smoke rise up from the city, 39 whereupon the men of Israel would turn in battle.

Now Benjamin had begun to strike and kill about thirty of the men of Israel. For they said, "Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle." ⁴⁰ But when the cloud began to rise from the city in a column of smoke, the Benjamites looked behind them, and there was the whole city going up in smoke to heaven. ⁴¹ And when the men of Israel turned back, the men of Benjamin panicked, for they saw that disaster had come upon them. ⁴² Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness; but the battle overtook them, and whoever came out of the cities they destroyed in their midst. ⁴³ They surrounded the Benjamites, chased them, and easily trampled them down as far as the front of Gibeah toward the east ⁴⁴ And eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell; all these were men of valor.

⁴⁵ Then they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon; and they cut down five thousand of them on the highways. Then they pursued them relentlessly up to Gidom, and killed two thousand of them. ⁴⁶ So all who fell of Benjamin that day were twenty-five thousand men who drew the sword; all these were men of valor. ⁴⁷ But six hundred men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon, and they stayed at the rock of Rimmon for four months.

⁴⁸ And the men of Israel turned back against the children of Benjamin, and struck them down with the edge of the sword--from every city, men and beasts, all who were found. They also set fire to all the cities they came to. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

Israel responded to message regarding the molesting murder of the concubine of the Levite [Judges 20:1-2]

- ✧ All the tribes of Israel, except the tribe of Benjamin, both east and west of the Jordan River came together at Mizpah in response to the evidence sent out by the Levite regarding the abusive murder of his concubine by the homosexuals of Gibeah in the tribe of Benjamin.
- ✧ The army gathered numbered 400,000 foot soldiers.

Benjamin heard of Israel's response [Judges 20:3]

- ✧ (Now the children of Benjamin heard that the children of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.)

Inquiry into the facts of the case [Judges 20:3-7]

- ✧ The leaders of the tribes inquired how the wickedness had happened.
- ✧ The Levites described the events that had transpired the night his concubine had been murdered, and asked them to give their advice and counsel.

Decision to go to war against Gibeah the city of the homosexuals [Judges 20:8-10]

- ✧ The decision made was to attack Gibeah and repay the wickedness on their own heads for the vileness they had done in Israel.

Negotiations with Gibeah [Judges 20:11-13]

- ✧ The military force of Israel sent a message to the tribe of Benjamin to turn over the offenders for trial and judgment.

The tribe of Benjamin defended their homosexuals [Judges 20:14-16]

- ✧ Benjamin refused and came out of all their cities to defend Gibeah.
- ✧ Their military force of Benjamin numbered 26,000 foot soldiers.
- ✧ Gibeah provided 700 select men who were left handed and could sling a stone at a hair's breadth and not miss.

War between the tribe of Benjamin and Israel [Judges 20:17-48]

- ✧ Before the war began the men of Israel inquired of Yehowah to guide them and decide the tribe to go first into the battle.
- ✧ The answer was Judah first.

- ✧ The battle was joined and the tribe of Benjamin killed 2,000 of the men of Israel. [\[Judges 20:21\]](#)
- ✧ At this point we all say, "Why were those defending the vile persons of Gibeah able to defeat such a large force so decisively?"
- ✧ The answer can be found in Scripture:
 - There are none without sin, no not one. [\[Psalm 14:1-3, 53:1-3, Romans 3:10-18\]](#)
 - Each man died for his own sins. [\[Numbers 27:3, 2 Chronicles 25:4, Ezekiel 18:4, 20\]](#)
 - The fact that they all did not die was clearly by the grace and mercy of God.

As the Scripture said:

Judges 2:19

And it came to pass, **when the judge was dead, that they reverted and behaved more corruptly than their fathers, by following other gods, to serve them and bow down to them. They did not cease from their own doings nor from their stubborn way.**

NKJV

- ✧ God does allow vile persons to kill the more righteous persons to demonstrate their level of vileness, and to fully justify their punishment.
- ✧ The second day the Children of Israel went up to battle against Gibeah, and were defeated again losing another 18,000 for a total of 20,000 lost on the two days of battle. [\[Judges 20:22-25\]](#)
- ✧ Israel had felt their cause was just and Yehowah had said Judah was to go up first, so with the loss of 20,000 men, the Children of Israel came to the house of Elohiym and wept. [\[Judges 20:26-28\]](#)
 - ✧ They sat and fasted until evening, offering burnt offerings and peace offerings.
 - ✧ The soul searching and doubt of one's cause comes to mind when one has suffered such resounding defeat in a cause one feels is just.
 - ✧ It is time to inquire of Yehowah if it is indeed His will to continue.
- ✧ The Ark of the Covenant of Elohiym and Phinehas the Priest the direct descendant of Aaron were there at that time.
- ✧ The Children of Israel inquired of Yehowah, "Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin, or shall I cease?"
 - ✧ Humbleness has now set in that touched the heart of God.
- ✧ Yehowah said, **"Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand."**
 - ✧ The day of judgment does come and Yehowah does bring His justice to bear, even at great cost, and this time it nearly eliminated an entire tribe of Israel.
 - ✧ So now we understand why the cost to Israel was so great.
- ✧ The third attempt at the battle, Israel set men in ambush all around Gibeah and repeated their original frontal approach to draw the Benjamin army out of Gibeah. [\[Judges 20:29-48\]](#)
- ✧ This time the children of Benjamin were careless and arrogant because of their earlier victories against the armies of Israel, and they struck down 30 men of Israel until the men in ambush had set fire to Gibeah.
- ✧ When they saw the smoke of the city the men of Benjamin lost heart and the men of Israel turned back and attacked the men of Benjamin from all sides killing all but 600 men of Benjamin including those who fled to the rock of Rimmon.
- ✧ The 600 men of Benjamin remained at the Rock of Rimmon four months while the armies of Israel destroyed all the rest of the people and animals of Benjamin and burned their cities.
 - ✧ Justice was accomplished, and the price of homosexuality and its violence was great, as was the price of defending the wickedness and vileness that accompanied it.

- ✧ Remember Sodom and Gomorrah where all the cities of the plain were cremated by God Most High for the same offense. [[Genesis 19:23-28](#)]
- ✧ Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap. [[Galatians 6:7](#)]