

## **Judges Session 11**

### **The Slide into Anarchy, Anticipation of Monarchy 21:1-25**

The Book of Judges presents us with so many challenges in terms of how God's people function in the fallen world. It must be remembered that in those times the guiding Spirit of God was a temporary and specific enabling power. The strength to overcome, the wisdom to judge wrong from right and the insight to stay close to God's will was not freely available to all His people. The Judges experienced a little glimpse of what can happen when they let God do the heavy lifting.

The Israelites came to understand that when they took their eyes off the One True God, things didn't go well for them. Outside of God's grace and provision, mankind's tendency is downward and tragic.

We look at these accounts of broken folk doing the best they can, and we wonder if there is ever any hope for mankind. One thing is made plain in these closing verses. When God's people really stop and take stock of the damage they have done – even in good faith – and when they come to God with broken hearts, He will provide a way forward even within our fallen state.

- A. CAN BENJAMIN RECOVER? 21:1-23
1. The people of Israel collectively regret that Benjamin faces extinction 21:1-3
  2. A plan starts to take shape around a series of oaths 21:4-7
    - a. Oath: "We will never give our daughters to Benjamin!"
    - b. Oath: "Destroy anyone who doesn't join the fight against Gibeah!"
    - c. Law: "Herem" allows us to spare virgins from destruction (Num 31:13-18)
  3. Jabesh-Gilead (in East Manasseh) didn't show up for the fight 21:8-9
  4. Jabesh-Gilead is destroyed, their young women are given to Benjamin 21:10-15
  5. A second plan is needed because 200 Benjaminites still lack wives 21:16-23
    - a. Law: There's an annual festival at Shiloh. Tabernacles? (Exodus 23:16; Leviticus 23:39)
    - b. Young girls dance in the vineyards at the festival
    - c. Let Benjamin lie in wait and abduct 200 young girls from the festival
- B. EPILOGUE – DOMESTIC ANARCHY PREVAILS 21:24-25

**Questions: As the Book of Judges closes, what are your final emotions?**

**What are you newly aware of?**

**What are you hoping for?**

**What difference does it make in the way you live out your faith today?**