

Theme: Godlessness leads to wickedness which will permeate every aspect of our life and culture. Without the rule of a faithful King over our hearts and lives we will follow a path to destruction; a path of our own making.

Background: Judges 17 and 18 gave us a picture of the godlessness of the people of Israel. Not a people with *no* god – but with a god of their own making. Godless because they would not worship the true God. We are about to see where godlessness leads.

I. The Setting

- A. Theological concern – not chronological
 - To make his point the writer will set forth the story of
 - Benjamin’s demise – Chapter 19
 - Benjamin’s destruction – Chapter 20
 - Benjamin’s deliverance – Chapter 21
- B. Early in the time of the judges
 - Within the first 100 years
 - Judges 20:28 – In the days of Phinehas, son of Eleazar

II. The Outline of Events

- A. Meet a Levite and his unfaithful concubine (?)
 - Godlessness included the religious establishment
- B. He wants her back (four months later)
 - Speaks kindly – as her husband (3)
 - Stays 5 days (abundant hospitality)
- C. Avoiding Jebus (Jerusalem) – not in Judah’s control
 - He won’t stay with pagans!
- D. Left in the open in Gibeah (15)
 - In the territory and town of the tribe of Benjamin
- E. An Ephraimite’s compassion (20)
- F. The return to Sodom! (22-26) (see Genesis 19)
- G. The Levite’s staggering indifference (28)
- H. The call for retribution

III. The Message

- A. Godlessness distorts/perverts relationships
 - 1. Objects – not image-bearers
 - Is the concubine his “wife” (3) or his “slave” (27)

III. The Message (cont.)

A. Godlessness distorts/perverts relationships (cont.)

2. Property – not person

- The man's daughter and the concubine are disposable

ASIDE: Some of the worst forms of sexual abuse are portrayed in these chapters. The scriptures show it as a terrible evil.

B. Godlessness distorts morality

1. A Levite with a concubine? (Genesis 2:24,25)

2. Gross immorality of the men of Gibeah (Romans 1:24-27)

3. A place most "inhospitable"

4. The unbearable coldness of the Levite (28)

C. Godlessness distorts reason

1. Become their own arbiters of truth, reason (29)

2. Trusting our own judgment, logic, reason (Romans 1:25)

IV. Is There Hope

A. There was no king in Israel

1. No *human* king

2. No *true* KING (1 Samuel 8:7)

B. There is a King to lead us

1. The KING has established his throne

- God has placed his King over his creation

2. Serve the King

- Or face the consequences of our godlessness and wickedness

C. Godliness rests in the King

1. Renewing relationships (Ephesians 2:13ff)

2. Restoring us in moral duties, consciousness, responsibilities (Colossians 3:12ff)

3. Renewing our minds (Romans 12:2; 1 Corinthians 10:5; Romans 8:29)