

## The New Sodom and Gomorrah and Gibeah

Welcome to Bible Study. Tammuz is the fourth month counting from Nisan (Jeremiah 39:2). The time between the **seventeenth** of Tammuz and the **ninth** of Av is referred to as *bein ha-metzarim*—“time within the straits” based on **Lamentations 1:3** which states: “All of her pursuers overtook her *within the straits*.” “*Within the straits*” refers to the days of calamity (affliction) that occurred to the Jewish people throughout the generations in the period between the seventeenth of Tammuz and the ninth of Av which began two days ago. It is a time of great historical importance in Israel and to the Jews in particular, because of all of the calamities that have occurred during these days as Israel came out of Egypt.

The following disastrous events have occurred on the seventeenth of Tamuz. The first tablets were broken when Moses descended from the mountain and saw the Israelites worshipping and dancing around a golden calf, so they were punished (**Exodus 32:19-36**). Moses sent twelve men (the head of each tribe) into Canaan to scout out the “Promised Land”. After searching the land, the men returned forty days later bringing back some of the outstanding fruits of the land with them and reported the land indeed flowed with milk and honey. But ten of the men brought up an *evil report of the land* they had searched saying: “it is a land that eats up the inhabitants in it and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature and sons of giants (sons of Anak) and we were in our own sight like grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight. We will not be able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we are.”

The entire congregation raised their voices and wept aloud that night. All the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron. Moses and Aaron fell facedown before all the assembly of the congregation. Joshua and Caleb, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes and they spoke to all the congregation of Israel, saying: “The land that we passed through is exceedingly good land. If the Lord is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land flowing with milk and honey and will give it to us. Do not rebel against the Lord, or be afraid of the people. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us.” Moses interceded with God to pardon Israel according to the greatness of His mercy. The Lord pardoned Israel. However, “because all those men which have seen My glory and My miracles in Egypt and in the wilderness but have put me to the test these ten times and have not heeded (listened to) my voice, they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nether shall any of those who provoked me (contempt) see it. But my servant Caleb and Joshua who have another spirit with them and have followed me fully, will I bring them into the land where they went and their seed (children) shall possess it.”

God told Moses, “I have heard those who have murmured (complained) against Me, and all those twenty years and upward shall not enter the Promised Land. But your little ones which you said will be a prey, I will bring in, and they shall know the land that you despised. You and your children shall wander 40 years in the wilderness. Your sons shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years, and bear the brunt of your infidelity until your carcasses are consumed in the wilderness. For forty years—one year for each of the forty days you explored the land—you will suffer for your sins and know My rejection.” “Those ten men who brought an evil report about the land they had explored died by the plague before the Lord. Of the twelve men who went to explore the land, only Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh remained alive.”

Just because the sun is shining, the crops are growing and we are alive, remember that trouble is brewing all around us in the world and storm clouds are gathering darkness. According to the word of God, great tribulation lies ahead of us and great persecution of Christians around the world including America.

Please remember the following people who have requested prayer this week. The following letter is from the wife of John King in New York. (1) On May 2, John had a fall at work and injured his left shoulder and back. He has lost the use of his left arm which is numb and is experiencing much pain down his left leg. An MRI and x-ray revealed no explanation. He has been approved for acupuncture which he starts tomorrow. He prefers to rely on prayer, and not to rely on pain medication which can be highly addictive. Thank you brethren for your prayers for God's intervention for John so that he may be able to return to the work which he loves to do. (2) Update on Walter Preston . Thank you, every one of you, for your prayers. This Friday, July 5, Walter must return for a post surgical follow-up on the removal of a deep skin tissue growth removed from the left groin area. The biopsy report necessitates a follow-up surgery in Spokane, Washington, August 5 to assure his continued recovery. Please keep both of them in your prayers for strength, wisdom and comfort. (3) Wally Masters in Kansas fell four days ago and broke her left elbow on the same arm which also has a totally worn out rotator- cuff. At present a splint is holding the elbow in place, and she is to see the orthopedic specialist on Tuesday regarding surgery and pinning of the elbow joint. The cuff replacement depends on passing the cardiologist stress test (risk) report done this week. She requests your prayers for the much needed successful repair needed of that left arm, control of the pain, and wise decisions. She cares 24/7 for her husband, Don, who had a stroke several years ago and needs total assist in activities of daily living and is wheelchair-bound and a total lift. Please pray that affordable 24 hour care can be found for Don's care pre and post Wally's surgery, treatment and recovery. Thanks to all the brethren who keep us in your prayers.

In my hand is a picture of a darling little Chihuahua dog with expressive eyes, looking straight at me with a caption: "I am not saying you are stupid, I'm just saying you've got bad luck when it comes to thinking!" I feel that way about many people in a lot of "churches today". I don't call them stupid, but I do think that they have bad luck when it comes to thinking (blindly) and can't see the difference between truth and error—between the clean and unclean. They are following men—"hirelings", and because of that they are deceived. The devil was the first great deceiver and the *father of the lie* and he is the prince of the power of the air and we live in a "lying generation" of mass deception. This includes religious lies. A lot of people are not willing to step out and study scriptures for themselves in faith and believe the word of God, but *believe men instead*. How sad it is that people are so easily deceived.

*News-* Works of men will not last. A good example of this was recently emailed to me. The pictures were of the demolition of three beautiful mid-century honeycombed buildings – the Fine Arts, the matching adjacent Science Hall and the Hall of Administration at Ambassador College designed by Peter J. Holdstock and built in 1996. The Ambassador College was run by the Worldwide Church of God from 1947 through 1990. This beautiful architecture is no more on the corner of South Orange Grove, Pasadena, California. There were plans to redevelop the whole campus, but they sort of petered out in the recession; In 2010, OC developer City Ventures revived plans to build condos and senior housing. Sarah Gilbert of The LA Conservancy's Modern Committee (ModCom) stated by email that Pasadena was asked to reconsider the demolitions when it extended approvals in January 2012, but no dice. Goodbye and Gone!

I was a four year A.C. graduate and also attended graduate school classes in theology, science, astronomy, ect. The time I spent there is not begrudged, because I applied myself – completing the courses required for a doctorate degree in theological journalism and prepared my dissertation. At that time the college was aggressively seeking accreditation and was advised that it would not look good on their application résumé if they had handed out doctorates, so to avoid this they offered to pay all my tuition expenditures,

if I would forgo the doctorate degree. That was fine with me, because I took the classes not for the *doctorate*, but for the knowledge to improve my mind in serving God and using that knowledge to write articles. Apostasy took over in the organization and now the whole campus is being destroyed.

Learn to focus on the works of God, not the works of men which are vanity and vexation of spirit. Solomon said, He that fears God will come forth of them all. **Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**—“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it is good, or whether it is evil.” Learning this focus now will help us keep our eyes on Christ and the Father in the days of apostasy and tribulation that lie ahead of us.

*News*—Fox News, “The O’Reilly Factor” with host Megan Kelly yesterday was discussing the State of Florida court case of second degree murder charges against 28 year old Neighborhood Watch volunteer, George Zimmerman resulting in the death of 17 year old Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Florida. There is only one eye witness for the prosecution to the altercation between the two fellows. [Readability.com](#) (6.27.13) article states that *social media Twitter* has “observed an alarming trend—an explosion of people taking to the internet with death threats against Zimmerman and random white people if the defendant is found not guilty.” Much of the language expressed is full of marked profanity and dirty language. This is lighting up the “Twitter universe”.

It reminds me of the 1992 South Central Los Angeles riots. A resident, George Holliday, took a video from his nearby balcony of police beating the driver, Rodney King, into submission after a “high speed car chase”. Blood test levels revealed alcohol intoxication and marijuana levels. Holliday notified the police of his video two day later and then took it to KTLA which broadcast the footage in its entirety numerous times. It became an instant media sensation. After the trial jury acquittal of mostly white police officers on trial regarding the incident, the whole black community erupted (not just in Watts) in the greater L.A. area on April 29 and spread out over a six-day period within the LA metropolitan area in California affecting even where we lived in Pasadena. There were race riots widespread looting, assault, arson, and murder that occurred with estimates of property damage which topped one billion dollars. The situation was not in control (L.A. Law and order no longer existed) until after soldiers from the California Army National Guard along with the U.S. Marines from Camp Pendleton were called in to stop the rioting after the local police could not handle the situation. The media picture released of Trayvon Martin is one taken five years ago as a 12 year old before he turned his present age of 17 years old. He is well-known for the raising and selling of marijuana, accompanied with a recent history sheet of questionable activities that have not been exposed to public testimony.

Why do I mention this? This Zimmerman trial in Florida is laying the groundwork for more race riots and civil war in America. With the way our government is going this can happen. Grievances among the Egyptian protestors were focused on legal and political issues including police brutality, state of emergency laws, lack of free elections and freedom of speech, corruption, and economic issues including high unemployment, food price inflation and low wages. Strikes by labor unions added to the pressure on government officials. The people began to communicate with each other on Face Book and Twitter causing a social uproar, and it started demonstrations in Egypt beginning on January 2011. It was a diverse movement of demonstrations, marches, plaza occupations, riots, non-violent civil resistance, acts of civil disobedience and labor strikes. Millions of protestors from a variety of socio-economic and religious backgrounds demanded the overthrow of the regime of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. There were also important nationalist, anti-capitalist, Islamic, and feminist currents of the revolution. Violent clashes between security forces and protestors resulted in 846 deaths, 6,000 injured and the burning upwards of 90 police stations and took place in Cairo, Alexandria, and in other cities in Egypt,

following the Tunisian revolution that resulted in the overthrow of the long-time Tunisian president. The capital city of Cairo was described as “a war zone” and the port city of Suez saw frequent violent clashes. Watch groups were organized by civilians to protect neighborhoods. On 11 February 2011 Mubarak stepped down and turned power over to the *Supreme Council of the Armed Forces* (SCAF) and resigned. He was sentenced by the court to life imprisonment, but upon appeal he was acquitted of all charges. On June 19, 2012, protestors took to the streets of Cairo’s Tahrir Square, many belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood who were angry at the acquittal of Mubarak and others tried with Mubarak, including his two sons. They accused the SCAR of taking some of the powers that had formerly belonged to the President and accused the SCAR of launching a coup. On 24 June 2012 the State Election commission announced that Islamist Mohammed Morsi (belonging to the Muslim Brotherhood) had won the presidential election and was inaugurated as the 5<sup>th</sup> President of Egypt on 6/30/12. Such was the “*Arab spring*”. Now it is civil war in Syria. The Middle East has become a very volatile and dangerous situation.

**Matthew 24:12**—“Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax (grow) cold.” In this chapter Christ tells his disciples about the coming “end of the Age” and the signs of his coming (return to earth). Language of the world today has become openly coarse and filthy as heard in conversations, TV programs, movies and printed matter. **Luke 6:45**—“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.” To top off the decadence happening, on Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> of June the U. S. Supreme Court ruled the Defense of Marriage Act was unconstitutional. The Court also dismissed the appeal calling for the reinstatement of California’s Proposition 8 banning gay marriage; same-sex marriage will now be legal in that state ([Newsmax.com](http://www.newsmax.com)).

Same sex marriage is the law of the land in certain states and now involves the entire United States. Cutting Edge Ministries says: “The Supreme Court of America recreated Sodom and Gomorrah yesterday as the justices threw God officially out of the country with a god made by men. The Supreme Court strongly reiterated same sex-marriage.” USA magazine (6/26/13) said: “the judges gave a double boost to same sex marriage from Maine to California by acting boldly in one case and backing off in another. Precisely a decade after it struck down all remaining state laws banning sodomy, the court declared a key section of the federal Defense of Marriage Act unconstitutional on equal protection grounds. ...the justices took no stand on the merits of California’s ban on same-sex marriage, leaving a lower court’s decision that overturned Proposition 8 as the last word.” We are legally now Sodom and Gomorrah and same sex marriage has been made legal by the Supreme Court. State laws in non compliance will have to deal with it.

*CuttingEdge*—Gay and lesbian couples throughout this formerly great nation rejoiced at the new reality that America now view same-sex relationships in precisely the same manner in which Sodom and Gomorrah viewed them. Gay / lesbian relationships are now legally identical to God’s ordained heterosexuality. These activities were most assuredly considered normal in Sodom and were regularly practiced. These kinds of activities were undoubtedly contributing to the “crying and shrieking” which God heard before he decided to physically annihilate those two cities. Listen to the Biblical account in **Genesis 18:20-21(KJV)**—“*And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.*”

The Parallel Bible gives the Amplified Bible rendering: “*And the Lord said, Because the shriek of the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin is exceedingly grievous, I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether as vilely and wickedly as is the cry of it which has come to Me; and if not, I will know.*” “Do the sexual practices of homosexuality produce screaming and shrieking? The

normal practice of anal intercourse produces such shrieking, for the tissue in those body parts were never meant for intercourse. Additionally, some other practices homosexuals regularly perform produce extreme pain which causes such a crying out.” A few years ago, I read a well written book by a well-known woman MD in San Francisco who documented some of the violent and perverted practices of homosexuals and the exposure to STD, HIV virus and AIDS which contaminate the blood and destroy the colon. Homosexual men would regularly line-up to donate their blood to get money for it, but because their blood was contaminated, donating their blood was banned. *Note*: there is a strong movement in progress today to get this ban lifted.

Cutting Edge Ministries—“Was there man-boy lovemaking in Sodom?” **Genesis 19:4-5**, Parallel Bible, KJV/Amplified Bible Commentary) —“Before they lay down (the angels that visited Sodom), *the men of the city of Sodom, both young and old, all the men from every quarter, surrounded the house. And they called to Lot and said, ‘Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us, that we may know (be intimate with) them’*. The men of Sodom – both young and old —surrounded Lot’s house to demand that the angels come outside for public sex. One pro-gay writer noted that our cultural “bias” against homosexual acts stemmed from the pervasive influence of Judeo-Christianity.”

The world today is becoming anti-Christian. The Gay Movement is extremely hostile toward Christianity because it condemns their wicked practices. **Leviticus 20:13**—“If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination (done what is detestable). They shall surely be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads. Verse 15—“If a man mates with an animal he shall surely be put to death and you shall kill the animal. If a woman approaches an animal to have sexual relations with it kill both the woman and the animal. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.” This shows what God thinks about sexual immorality and condemns it. **Leviticus 18:22**—God says, “You shall not lie with mankind as with womankind: it is an abomination. Neither shall you lie with any beast to defile yourself with it. Neither shall any woman stand before a beast to mate with it: it is perversion.”

**Verses 24-26 (NIV)**—“Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, because this is how the nations that I am going to drive out before you became defiled. So I punished the land, and the land itself vomited out her inhabitants. You shall therefore keep my statutes and judgments. The native born and the aliens living among you must not do any of these detestable things. For all these things were done by the people who lived in the land before you and the land became defiled. And if you defile the land, it will vomit you out as it vomited out the nations that were before you.” **Leviticus 18:29-30**—“For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit them shall be cut off (put to death) from among their people. Therefore you shall keep My ordinances, so that you do not commit any of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I AM the Lord your God’.” Homosexuality was one of the leading detestable practices of those nations. Our country has endorsed perversion and wickedness (iniquity) —the U.S. Supreme Court has legally endorsed same sex marriages and President Obama has endorsed the month of June as Gay Pride month (it was “June Brides and weddings). **Leviticus 19:1**—The Lord said to Moses: Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: “You shall be holy for I the Lord your God am holy. Every one of you shall respect (fear) his mother and his father and keep my Sabbaths. You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. Do not turn to idols, nor make for yourselves idols (molded gods): I AM the Lord your God (YHVH)!”

*What happened after Israel entered the Promised Land?* After the death of Samson, chronological sequence in Judges ends. It is not possible to assign the events in the last five chapters to any particular period. They may, however, be considered an appendix which shows the utter apostasy of Israel in their religious, civil, and moral life. These chapters picture the climax of the downward path of Israel resulting

from departure from the Word of God. The horrible story of chapter 19, issuing in civil war and practical destruction of Benjamin in chapter 20, pictures Israel at its lowest moral state in the entire Old Testament. The account of the honest facts, characteristic of biblical history, reveals **the moral degradation of Israel caused by departure from the law**. However, a godly remnant existed during this period as seen in the Book of Ruth.

**Judges 19**—The following account took place not long after Israel entered the Holy Land within a generation or so. “It came to pass in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite sojourning on the side of mount Ephraim, who took to him a concubine out of Bethlehem-judah.” A concubine was a secondary wife status, but her children had no inheritance – just the children by the first wife were heirs. It was a custom generally recognized in those days of a man having more than one wife. In the beginning God created male and female, Adam and then Eve (one man and one woman to become as one) and commanded that they not be put asunder (split apart). The man was to cleave to his wife. One woman is enough if he is really going to love her, get to know her and take care of her. If you have more than one wife your attention is going to be divided and somewhat negligent.

His concubine had left him and went to her father’s house in Bethlehem-judah and was there for four whole months. The term “*played the harlot*” used here in verse 2 (KJV) does not mean literally that she fooled around with other men. Josephus, Jewish historian and the *Tanak* say she grew tired of the way the Levite acted toward her—of his all of his jealousy, ranting and railings, fighting and accusing—so she returned home to her Dad’s house. **Verse 3**—Then her husband took his servant and an extra donkey and went after her to speak kindly to her and persuade her to come back. He apologized and spoke to her heart and the two of them reconciled. After spending five days of warm hospitality—food, drink, and a merry heart at her father’s house—the Levite was not willing to stay longer. The Levite refused to spend the night in a foreign city where there were no Israelites even though it was getting late in the day. At sunset, they came to Gibeah a town in the land of Benjamin. They stopped and rested in the town square, but no one took them in for the night. The people of Gibeah were not hospitable and ignored the travelers.

That evening an old man from the hill country of Ephraim came in from his work in the field, who was also from the mountains of Ephraim; he was staying in Gibeah, whereas the men of the place were Benjaminites. When he looked up, he saw a wayfaring man in the open square of the city. He asked, “Where are you going and where do you come from?” “We are on our way from Bethlehem in Judah to a remote area in the hill country of Ephraim where I live. I have been to Bethlehem in Judah and now I am going to the house of the Lord. No one has taken me into his house although we have straw and fodder for our donkeys and bread and wine for myself, for your female servant, and the young man with us. There is no lack of anything.” “Peace be with you (you are welcome at my house)! However, let all your needs be my responsibility; only do not spend the night in the open square.”

“So he brought them into the house and gave fodder to the donkeys. And they washed their feet, and did eat and drink. As they were enjoying themselves, suddenly certain men of the city, perverted men surrounded the house and beat on the door. They spoke to the master of the house, the old man saying. “Bring out the man who came to your house, that we may know him (have sex with him). But the man, master (owner) of the house went out to them and said: “No, my brethren! I beg you, do not act so wickedly! Since this man is my guest, don’t do this disgraceful thing. Look here is my virgin daughter and his concubine. I will bring them out to you now, and you can use them as you please. But to this man, do not do such a vile thing.” The men would not listen to him. So he sent his concubine outside to them and they raped her and abused her all night until the morning. At daybreak they let her go and she fell down at the door of the house where her master was and lay there until daylight.

Rather than calling on God and standing up for the virgin daughter and concubine as well, they came up with an alternative solution. When her master arose in the morning and opened the doors of the house and went out to go his way, there was his concubine, fallen at the door of the house with her hands on the threshold. He said, “Get up! Let’s go!” But there was no answer. Then the man put her on his donkey and set out for home. When he entered his house, he took a knife and laid hold of his concubine and divided her into twelve pieces together with her bones and sent her throughout all the territory of Israel. Everyone who saw it said: “Such a thing has never been seen or done from the day that the children of Israel came up from the land of Egypt until this day. *Consider it, confer, and speak up!*” “What we are going to do about this?”

What he did was not right in defiling the body of a dead person. Apparently, he was so outraged and angry at this total lack of morality and detestable action which resulted in the death of his concubine in Gibeah (a “trusted Israelite town” chosen over the “foreigners”) – that he did this shocking thing as a wake-up call to all Israel to illustrate the severity and moral degradation of Israel caused by departure from God’s law. Everyone was doing what was right in their own eyes. **Judges 20**—“Then all the leaders of the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba and from the land of Gilead came out as one and assembled before the Lord in Mizpah, four hundred thousand foot soldiers (armed) who drew the sword. Then said the children of Israel, “Tell us, how did this wicked deed happen?” (Word soon reached the land of Benjamin that the other tribes had gone up to Mizpah).

“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. And the men of Gibeah rose against me (came after 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. So I took hold of my concubine, cut her in pieces, and sent her throughout all the territory of the inheritance of Israel: for they have committed lewdness and outrage in Israel. Behold, you are all children of Israel; give your advice and counsel here and now!’ All the people rose as one man, saying, ‘None of us will go to his tent, nor will any turn back to his house. We will go up against Gibeah by lot. One tenth of the men from each tribe will be chosen to supply the warriors with food, and the rest of us will take revenge on Gibeah for this vile thing that they have done.’ All the men of Israel were gathered against the city, united together as one man.”

**Judges 20:12-18**—“Then the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying “**What is this wickedness that has occurred among you? Now therefore deliver us the men, the children of Belial, which are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and put away evil from Israel.**” But the children of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brethren, the children of Israel. Instead, the children of Benjamin at once mobilized twenty-six thousand swordsmen from their town, in addition to seven hundred chosen men from those living in Gibeah, to go to battle against the children of Israel. Among all these soldiers there were seven hundred chosen men who were left-handed, each of whom could sling a stone at a hair’s breadth and not miss. Israel had 400,000 warriors armed with swords not counting Benjamin. Before the battle the children of Israel went up to the house of God to inquire of God and asked God “Which of us shall go up first to battle against the children of Benjamin?” The Lord said, “Judah first!”

**Judges 20:18-48.** Verse 18 is the first mention of the children of Israel inquiring of the Lord regarding what action to take. Up to this point the Levite and the children of Israel had acted on their own—“war with Benjamin”. The Israelites left early the next morning and camped near Gibeah. Then they advanced toward Gibeah to attack the men of Benjamin. But Benjamin’s warriors, who were defending the town, came out and killed twenty-two thousand Israelites in the field that day. They went up to Bethel and *wept in the presence of the Lord* until evening and *asked counsel of the Lord*, saying “Shall I go up again to

battle against the children of Benjamin my brother?" The Lord said, "Go up against him." This time they inquired of the Lord.

So they went out to fight Benjamin the second day. This time, when the Benjamites came out from Gibeah to oppose them, the men of Benjamin cut down another eighteen thousand Israelites, all of whom were experienced with a sword. Then all the Israelites went up to Bethel 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. And the children of Israel inquired of the Lord, (for the Ark of the Covenant of God was there in those days, and Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron was the priest that stood [ministered] before it) "*Shall I yet again go out to battle against the children of my brother Benjamin or shall I cease?*" After being defeated two days in succession, the children of Israel sought God more seriously. They stopped trusting in their great numbers (own power and might) and humbled themselves by fasting, offering burnt offerings and peace offerings. The Lord said, "Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hand." **Numbers –chapter 20** tells the story of Phinehas whose zeal turned away the wrath of God from the children of Israel because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement (reconciliation) for the children of Israel during the time of Moses.

Then Israel set men in ambush all around Gibeah. On the third day the Israelites assembled at the same place as before. When the warriors of Benjamin came out to attack, they were drawn away from the city. They began to inflict casualties on the Israelites as before, so that about thirty men fell in the open field and on the roads –the one leading to Bethel and the other to Gibeah. While the men of Benjamin were saying, "we are defeating them as before", the Israelites were saying, "Let's retreat and draw them away from the city", as they had agreed upon in advance. Then Israel's men in ambush burst forth from their position in the plain of Geba, and ten thousand select men from all Israel came against Gibeah, and the battle was fierce. The fighting was so heavy that the Benjamites did not realize disaster was upon them. The Lord defeated Benjamin before Israel, and on that day the Israelites killed 25,100 Benjamite warriors all of whom were valiant fighters. 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, whereupon the men of Israel would turn toward the men of Benjamin and fight. When the Benjamites looked behind them and saw the smoke of the whole city going up into the sky, the men of Benjamin panicked, turned their backs before the men of Israel in the direction of the desert. The Israelites surrounded the men of Benjamin and were relentless in chasing them down and overtook them. Who ever came out of the cities, they destroyed in their midst. Only 600 men escaped to the rock of Rimmon, where they lived for four months. The men then 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."

**Judges –chapter 21**—The people grieved for Benjamin, because the Lord had made a gap in the tribes of Israel. The men of Israel had taken an oath at Mizpah: "Not one of us will give his daughter in marriage to a Benjamite." The people came to Bethel and sat in the house of God where they sat until evening and lifted up their voices and wept bitterly before God. "O Lord God of Israel, why has this come to pass in Israel, that today there should be one tribe missing in Israel?" The next morning the people rose early and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and peace (fellowship) offerings. Then they asked, "*Who is there among all the tribes of Israel who did not come up with the assembly to the Lord?*" They had taken a solemn oath that anyone who failed to assemble before the Lord at Mizpah should certainly be put to death. "One tribe is cut off from Israel today. What shall we do for wives for those who remain, seeing we swore to the Lord that we will not give them our daughters as wives?"

They discovered that no one from Jabesh Gilead had attended the assembly, for when the people were counted, indeed, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead was there. So they sent 12,000 warriors to



Jabesh Gilead and said, “This is what you shall do. Completely destroy with the sword all inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead —males, every woman who is not a virgin and children.” Among the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead they found four hundred young virgins and brought them to the camp to Shiloh in the land of Canaan. The whole Israelite assembly sent a delegation and announced peace to the Benjamites living at the rock of Rimmon. So Benjamin came back at that time, and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh Gilead; yet they were still two hundred women short. They commanded the children of Benjamin: there is a feast of the Lord in Shiloh yearly in a place eastside of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem and on the south of Lebonah. Go and lie in wait in the vineyards at the time the daughters of Shiloh come to dance in dances. If the daughters dance, rush out of the vineyard and every man of you seize himself a wife of the daughters of Shiloh and go return to your inheritance to the land of Benjamin. When their brothers or fathers complain to us we will say to them, “Be kind to them for our sakes, because we did not take a wife for any of them in the war; and you are innocent, since you did not give your daughters to them.”

Phinehas, grandson of Aaron, was still alive and serving as high priest in Israel at Bethel where the Ark of the Covenant was when this occurred in the nation of Israel. The whole tribe of Benjamin was covering up for the perverted men in Gibeah—rapists, murderers, homosexuals – and chose to fight for their “so called rights” instead of obeying God’s laws. **Romans 1:18-25,28** —“The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God has shown it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the Creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. God gave them up to uncleanness *through the lusts of their own hearts*, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. For this reason God gave them up to vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature; and Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence (reward of their error) which was meet (due) [STD’s, Aids, etc.] Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.” **Verses 29-31**—“**being filled with all unrighteousness...**” **Verse 32**--“Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such thing are worthy of death, **not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.**”

**2 Peter 2:4-6, 9**—God spared not the angels that sinned but cast them down to hell to pits of darkness until judgment day. “God spared not the old world but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemning them to destruction, making them an example of those that should live ungodly.” “The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the Day of Judgment to be punished.” **Jude 6:6-7**—“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. As Sodom and Gomorrhah and the cities around them in a similar manner to these, having given themselves over to sexual immorality and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” This is what is ahead for those who follow their example.