

Judges 19:22- 20:13

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Date: 28 December 2022

[0 : 00] it's still the same today. When sin stays unchecked in our lives, it doesn't have to be played out in this way, but all of a sudden those things which are wholesome and natural desires begin to be a little distorted, a little twisted, a little crooked. And when allowed enough time, they become completely miserable.

And we begin to be reflections of the world rather than reflections of the Lord God. These people were put in this land to be a billboard to a watching world of what God looked like, and instead they have become a billboard to the world of what the world looked like.

They don't look any different than what we find happening in Genesis. Because when sin is just allowed to reign, those things which God has put in us that may be wholesome in their own place, that may be right in their own ways, all of a sudden become twisted.

It says, And then the owner of the house went out to them and said, No, my fellows, please do not act so wickedly, since this man has come into my house. Do not commit this act of folly.

Think about just the irony here. The man which they were seeking to bring out of the house was a Levite who was supposed to be teaching the people right and wrong.

[1 : 32] And here we have people of God, Benjamites, who are clearly doing wrong. And this Levite is silent.

Never says a word. Distorted desires. The second thing that happens when sin remains unchecked is a devaluation of life.

You have devalued life. This is where the story really gets bad. And where we wish it wasn't there. Because the owner of the house says, Don't do this.

Let me bring out my daughter, my virgin daughter to you and his concubine. Do them whatever you want. That just doesn't make sense. Because by the way, here's where we know the owner of the house is also walking in sin.

Hospitality was to be extended, not just to strangers, but to one's own home. He was to be a protector of his children. He was to be a protector of everyone that was in his house.

[2 : 33] Yet, he was valuing one life above another, which is not appropriate at all. And the men would have nothing to do with it. So then we find the Levite himself taking his concubine and forcing her outside.

How despicable is this? That he puts her outside, knowing full well what's going to happen because he has heard exactly what they have said.

He knows what is going on. He knows the account. Surely everybody by this time, especially Levi, knows the account of what took place in Sodom and Gomorrah. And now these same things are happening among God's people.

And yet he pushes his concubine outside. Why? Because when sin is left unchecked, one of the things that happens is the devaluation of life. My life becomes more important than anybody else's life.

Jesus says, no greater love has one than this than he lay down his life for another. We all know John 3, 16, for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.

[3 : 45] That God so loved that he gave his son. I wonder how many of us know 1 John 3, 16. 1 John 3, 16 says that we should lay down our lives for our brothers. That the love of God is manifested in this, that we lay down our lives for the brethren.

See, John 3, 16 says God loved us enough that he sent his son to die for us. 1 John 3, 16 says we should love our brothers enough that we would die for them. We're okay with John 3, 16 because somebody died for us.

It's harder to take on 1 John 3, 16 because that means we die for them. But when sin is left unchecked, the devaluation of life, life all of a sudden doesn't become that important.

The only life that the sin individual, the individual so wrapped in sin, cares about is his or her own life. And here we see because of the testimony of the Levite later declared to the men of Israel, they wanted to kill me, but I sent out my wife.

He says, they took my wife. Remember how he kind of didn't tell the whole story, right? He said, they intended to kill me, but they took my concubine instead. No, you gave them your concubine.

[4 : 54] And I have to agree with Warren Wearsby here because we see what happens. We know what happens. It tells us what happens. The men ravish her.

And I have to agree with Warren Wearsby where he says, what is even more despicable is not the fact that he put her out there, but the fact that he went to sleep after he did so.

Because it says, after her master arose, after he woke up. Now, what kind of individual, knowing full well what is going to happen, can just lay down and go to sleep?

One who does what is right in his own eyes. And it's come to the point in a sin walk that the only life that is important is their own.

When sin remains unchecked, it is a devaluation of life. We live in a day and time where slavery is as rampant at any other time in history.

[6 : 01] human trafficking is taking place today on an equal scale than it has at any other time. No longer are ships going to Africa and bringing people over.

No, men are going to the Super Bowl and picking up girls and swapping them back and forth. And it's because there are sins unchecked that the value of life is no longer important, but rather it is as long as I'm okay, it's okay.

See, when sin is left unchecked, inevitably, life becomes less precious, especially the lives of others.

this is the only answer we have for how in the world can this Levi and even the man of the house do such things? Not only were there worthless fellows around the house, I would just say that there were two worthless fellows in the house too.

Because those who know to do right yet do not do it sin. and no one should have to convince.

Remember, we know the historical practice of having a master and a concubine, husband and wife, but if we want to know what marriage is supposed to look like, you've got to go back to the beginning.

[7 : 34] God created them male and female and the two shall become one, right? And shall no longer ever be separate. No man should ever come between them, which means nothing should have ever come between them.

He should have stood up. He should have resisted this evil even at the cost of his own life. But yet, sin unchecked leads to devaluation of life.

And in case we think that's not the case, look at what happens when he walks out the door. He walks out the door, tells her to get up. She doesn't get up. I mean, how just cold is that? She says get up.

She doesn't get up. He picks her up, throws her on a donkey, and notice what he does when he goes home. Absolutely desecrates the body. It's disturbing to even think about, right?

Happening among the people of God. Taking out a knife, sending her among the tribes of the nation of Israel. Makes no sense, and we scratch our heads and we wonder how.

[8 : 30] It's because sin just continues to reign. Third, the third thing we see is not only a distorted desire to devalued life, the third thing is a desired revenge.

A desire for revenge. When sin is left unchecked and man does what is right in his own eyes, then man begins to take his own revenge.

This Levite comes home, does the unthinkable, cuts her in 12 pieces, send her among the nation of Israel. Now what should have happened? Let's talk about what should have happened. According to the law of God found in the book of Leviticus, Be Holy as I Am Holy, these men absolutely deserve to die.

The men of Gebeah. Absolutely. For the wages of their sin was death. It was to be stoning. They were to die. The sin of sodomy was to be stoning.

They didn't commit sodomy, but they took another's life. The sin of murder shall be stoning. But the way it happened was that the offense was to be brought to the priest.

[9 : 39] And then the priest were to declare judgment. Remember that? The priest were to take the offense before God. God was to declare the judgment.

And the priest were to utter the judgment. And then the nation was to carry out the judgment. That's what should have happened. What should have happened is when the Levite got home, rather than doing what he did, the Levite should have went to the tabernacle.

He should have went to where the priests were serving in the presence of God. And he should have went before the priests and confessed to them what had taken place. But when a Levite won't even go to the tabernacle, we got a problem.

Because the Levites were supposed to be serving the tabernacle. Because rather than going to the priest, he went into his house. And rather than going before God, he thought he would take it before man.

Because he sent the evidence. He didn't set it before God. He sent it before men. So that all who saw it said, take counsel and speak up. See, the counsel had already been declared.

[10:42] God had already said in the book of Leviticus what the wages of this sin was. All he had to do was go before God. All he had to do was go to where the presence of God was manifested.

All he had to do was to go before the high priest. All he had to do was let God declare judgment. But that's not what he did. What he did is he decided it would be better to go before his brothers. Now the only reason you do that is because you want revenge.

It's because you're mad. Now we run into a problem and I'll kind of jump ahead of the account a little bit here. So rather than doing it the right way, he decided to do it his way.

And when he did it his way, he went before the nation and asked the nation to give their judgment. By the way, let's just say it right here and I know it's not popular but especially in Baptist circles but it's something that needs to be understood.

Every time the multitude gets to decide what happens, it never works out good in Scripture. Every time. Because God has an order.

[11:48] It is God who determines what happens, not the multitude. A wise man is to seek counsel, sure. But we don't have to seek counsel about things God has already declared.

Right? Counsel was to be sought before the priests and the word of God. So he went before the multitude and here's where I'm going to jump ahead a little bit. His desire was for revenge. When we start reading about the Civil War, as we finish or we pick up in the 14th verse there, you'll see that the nation of Israel has 400,000 foot soldiers.

The tribe of Benjamin has something like 27,000 soldiers and then 700 valiant warriors who could sling a stone at a hair and cut it in half. I mean, it's pretty bad guys, right?

And Benjamites were all left-handed which made them kind of unique. And what we find is the first day they go out some 22,000 or 20 plus thousand people of Israel die.

The next day they go out another 20 something thousand of the nation of Israel die. For two days the nation of Israel, now the Benjamites are the ones who've done wrong, right? But for two days the other tribes are the ones who are suffering loss.

[12:56] And we ask ourselves why? Why would so many thousands of people on the quote unquote innocent side die rather than just punishing the side that's wrong, the tribe of Benjamin?

Well, because they were seeking revenge not seeking God's counsel. Anytime man begins to operate in revenge, everybody pays. Everybody pays.

You know the word of God tells us to do not seek revenge but to leave that into the hands of God. It doesn't mean they weren't to do anything. It doesn't mean they were to sit back and go, well we'll let God take care of that.

Well God had a way for taking care of that. But it says seek not your own revenge. Now a lot of people read that and they love where it says after that that you are to heap burning coals upon their head and you're like, yeah I got a lot of people I want to put burning coals on their head and take care of them.

Well the problem with that is is that actually the burning coals on their head was to be a blessing because when they walked by your house you were to share your fire with them so that they could go home and cook a meal which means rather than seeking revenge you were to surrender that to God and even bless those who had done you wrong.

[14:09] You were to provide for them because you knew God was going to now that's the other side of the cross okay so let's keep that that's the other side of the cross here on this side of the cross among the people of God where he is the king the theocracy where God is reigning God had a way for dealing with this but they stepped out of that way and began to seek their own revenge and in seeking their own revenge everybody pays this is why we say there's no innocent in this

story none not one innocent individual because everybody's going to pay and one of the effects of an unchecked sin is men begin to operate by revenge rather than God's designed plans take it in my own hands take it in my own hands and do it my own way the fourth and final thing we see when sin is left unchecked not only distorted desires devalued life desired revenge fourth and finally is a defended wrong defended wrong you know one thing that we as mankind are good at is defending ourselves even when we are wrong my brother's pretty new police officer here but I'm sure very quickly you have found out that man even when he's wrong and he knows he's wrong can defend himself to the utmost of his last breath when man is wrong he usually defends himself the most one thing

I have found with all of our kids is they have more to say when they're wrong and they know they're wrong than when they're right because we have a way of defending ourselves when we're wrong and we try to twist the story around even though we know we're wrong and we believe and I'm reminded the Bible tells us in the book of Proverbs that sin is found in a multitude of words right so I remind people I talk to the more you have to try to convince me of it the more I know you're wrong and we see this notice that it tells us that when this Levite did this all of the men were gathered together in Mizpah and it says and the tribe of Benjamin knew they were gathering together don't miss that the tribe of Benjamin knew they were doing it they knew this council was coming the tribe of Benjamin didn't go they knew what had happened Gebeah is a city of Benjamin these are they're not I mean they're all part of the nation of Israel but these are they're really close relatives these aren't cousins these are brothers right these are close family it says they made this judgment the men got together and said this is what we're going to do now their judgment don't miss this was to just go punish the men of the city of Gebeah those men that had committed the crime in that one location that was the judgment that's a right judgment by the way they came about it the wrong way but that's the right judgment just that one location it tells us in verse 12 of the 20th chapter then the tribes of

Israel sent men through the entire tribe of Benjamin saying what is this wickedness that has taken place among you now then deliver up the men the worthless fellows in Gebeah that we may put them to death and remove this wickedness from Israel this is biblical by the way God had commanded his people to the book of Leviticus always remember we're on the other side of the cross right be holy as I am holy God had commanded his people when someone among you does wrong you don't shelter them you hand them over purge the evil from among them that you were to give them up so they asked the tribe of Benjamin they say give up these men we'll punish them penalize them for their crime we'll purge the evil from among us and we'll be done but notice what it says but the sons of Benjamin would not listen to the voice of their brothers the sons of Israel they defended the wrong rather than handing over the wrong they defended the wrong there's no denying what had happened notice how many pieces were sent out twelve who is among that twelve the sons of Benjamin they saw the evidence right but they defended it rather than handing them over they defended them as a matter of fact when we get into the civil war it is Benjamin that declares civil war not the nation of Israel against Benjamin they defend them so much that the entire tribe of Benjamin is almost completely wiped out because my friend listen to me right is right and wrong is wrong and if we defend wrong long enough we'll pay great enough and there's no way around those realities when sin is left unchecked in our lives and we begin to defend the wrong in others rather than standing up for what God has clearly declared is right then great prices will be paid and great loss will be experienced that is an absolute truth which we see marked in the word of God here we find in Judges 19 22 through 2013 the dangers of unchecked sin the dangers of unchecked sin every man was doing what was right in his own eyes their desires became distorted life was devalued revenge was desired and wrong was defended and it should never happen that way but that's who we are this is not just who they are that's who we are naturally we need a redeemer we need a savior we need someone to set us free from these things praise be to God through Jesus

Christ our Lord we are free we have a redeemer he has set us free so may we never live with unchecked sin in our own life but rather may we be those who hand it over and say here Lord you deal with this before it deals with me Judges 19 22 through 2013 thank you my brothers so may come Thank you.