

MORAL DECADENCE—THE DEPTHS OF DEPRAVITY

Pastor Lucas Almeida—Judges 19-21—Central Baptist Church—August 13th, 2023

INTRODUCTION

The Book of Judges is a book of warriors who God used to deliver his people from their enemies.

The judges led Israel from sin to salvation, but they too struggled with their own sins.

moral decadence / *Canaanized*.

Violence and oppression are coming from Israel itself; there is no enemy outside, the enemy is within—the enemy is sin.

Even when we are faced with the greatest depths of sin and depravity of the human heart, we can always find hope in Christ.

A TERRIBLE SIN

Dysfunctional relationship

Concubine = wife with lesser honor.

-Ephesians 5:15–16—[15] *Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, [16] making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.*

Distorted judgment

1 Peter 3:7—*Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel...*

Depraved society

Men are in many ways the moral thermometer of a society.

Notice the cowardice of the old man

Notice the callousness of the Levite

Ephesians 5:25—[25] *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her...*

A SAD RESULT

As gory and grotesque as the rape and murder of the concubine was, this event revealed a deep sense of godlessness that already existed in the heart of all Israel.

Israel needed to focus on the enemy without, but instead Israel decided to fight against the enemy within.

--Matthew 16:18—[18] *And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

--Ephesians 6:12—*For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*

--1 Peter 5:8—*Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.*

Galatians 5:15—[15] *But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.*

When Christian communities are filled with dissention, clicks, bickering they display a false gospel to the world.

John 17:20–21—[20] *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, [21] that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.*

“God is the only properly functioning community in the universe...only when human beings live in community do we fully reflect the likeness of God.” —**Paul Tripp** and **Tim Lane** *Relationships: A Mess Worth Making*

A FOOLISH VOW

The greatest mark of the fool is a rejection of God.

Psalms 14:1—[1] *The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.”*

Leviticus 5:4–6—[4] *or if anyone utters with his lips a rash oath to do evil or to do good, any sort of rash oath that people swear, and it is hidden from him, when he comes to know it, and he realizes his guilt in any of these; [5] when he realizes his guilt in any of these and confesses the sin he has committed, [6] he shall bring to the LORD as his compensation for the sin that he has committed, a female from the flock, a lamb or a goat, for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for him for his sin.*

Why is depravity running so deep among the tribes of Israel? Because in those days there was no king in Israel, so everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Ultimately the Book of Judges is about David’s son—King Jesus.

Isaiah 53:5—[5] *But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.*

Matthew 27:37—[37] *And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”*