

**CONCUBINE OF THE LEVITE–
DIVIDED INTO TWELVE PIECES
JUDGES 19**

Introduction.

--- This text illustrates the lawlessness that prevailed in Israel at that time. **21:25, "In these days there was no king in Israel; Everyone did what they thought was right."**

--- The tribe of Levi, one of the sons of Jacob (Israel) was the tribe in charge of worship, sacrifices, offerings, but the conduct of this Levite was not religious at all.

--- It's a story of acts of supreme violence.

--- **19:1-4, "In those days, when there was no king in Israel, there was a Levite who dwelt as a stranger in the remotest part of Mount Ephraim, who had taken for himself a wife concubine from Bethlehem in Judah."**

--- **Concubine.** Israelite society accepted having concubines, even though this was not in accordance with God's original plan for marriage. **A concubine had the duties but not the privileges of a wife.** Even though she was legally tied to a man, she and her children usually did not have the inheritance rights that legitimate wives and children had. Its main purpose was to give the man sexual pleasure, bring additional children, and contribute more help to the house and the state.

--- **19:2, "And his concubine was unfaithful to him, and went from him to her father's house, to Bethlehem in Judah, and remained there for four months."** This woman of the Levite was his concubine. Be that as it may, the definition of "concubine" was not a wife according to God's original plan. **Matthew 19:4-6, "He answered and said to them, 'Have you not read that he who made them at the beginning made them male and female,⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?' 6 Therefore they are no longer two, but one flesh; therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate."** There is no way to fit 'concubine' into this definition of marriage."

Therefore this woman did not respect the divine arrangement and so we are not surprised to read that she "was unfaithful" to her "husband."

Concubinage was accepted, but they also had to accept the consequences of this arrangement.

--- **19:3, 4** And her husband arose and followed her, to speak to her lovingly, and to bring her back: and she had with him a servant, and a pair of donkeys: and she brought him into her father's house. **4 When the girl's father saw him, she went**

out to meet him with joy, and her father-in-law stopped him, and stayed in his house three days, eating and drinking, and staying there."

According to the Law of Moses, this woman would have been stoned for her adultery (Leviticus 20:10) but "there was no king in Israel" and so "every man did what was right for him" (**Judges 21:25**). Besides, knowing her father well, she knew that he would be willing to receive her, and that is what happened.

---"The young woman's father came out to meet her joyfully." Joyful to see that she was reconciled with her husband, or simply to see his daughter again?

After some time with the concubine's father, they left to return to Gibeah.

19:9-12, "Then the man arose to depart, he and his concubine and his servant. Then her father-in-law, the girl's father, said to her, "Behold, the day is waning for nightfall, I beg you to spend the night here; Behold, the day is coming to an end, sleep here, that thy heart may rejoice; And tomorrow you will get up early on your way and go home. **But the man would not spend the night there, but got up and went away, and came to** Jebus, which is Jerusalem, with his pair of donkeys saddled and his concubine.

19:11 **And when he was near** Jebus, the day had long declined, and the servant said to his master, "Come now, and let us go to this city of the Jebusites, that we may spend the night there." **12** **And his master said to him, "We will not go to any city of foreigners except the children of Israel, but we will pass through to** Gibeah."

If they had sought lodging in Jerusalem, they would have avoided the catastrophe that occurred at Gibeah. The Levite said, "We shall not go to any city of foreigners that is not of the house of Israel," but sometimes the conduct of foreigners (even the conduct of Sodom and Gomorrah) is more acceptable than the conduct of the Israelites. Many times, the Gentiles have more faith in God than the Israelites, as we see in the case of Rahab.

19:15, "And they turned aside from the way to go in there to spend the night at Gibeah; And when they went in, they sat down in the town square, for there was no one to take them into the house for the night." The Gibeonites disobeyed the Law of Moses regarding hospitality. ([Leviticus 19:33-34](#), [25:35](#)).

19:22-25, But when they were rejoicing, behold, the men of that city, wicked men, surrounded the house, knocking at the door, and spake unto the old man, the master of the house, saying, Bring out the man that hath come into thy house, that we may

know him." The word "know" in this context means to have sexual intercourse. They were identical homosexuals to those of Sodom and Gomorrah. Such behavior reveals the decline of customs in this period.

--- Helpless women were handed over to be subjected to brutal abuse. Humiliate Them: A euphemism used to indicate to men that they could rape them. It is very difficult to imagine such conduct inspired by Satan and well illustrates how he abhors woman.

--- **Bring out the man who has come into your house, that we may know him.** Their request was the same as that made by the homosexuals surrounding Lot's house in Sodom ([Genesis 19:5](#)). The illustration was clear: During the time of the Judges, Israel was as bad as Sodom and Gomorrah.

- **19:23 And the master of the house came out to them and said unto them, No, my brethren, I beseech thee, do not commit this evil: since this man hath entered my house, do not do this wickedness.** ²⁴Behold, my virgin daughter, and his concubine: I will bring them out to you now; humble them, and do unto them as you please, and do not do such a vile thing to this man."

This man's suggestion to offer his virgin daughter to these wicked men almost shakes us out of our mind.

19:25 But those men would not listen to him: so the man took his concubine and brought her out, and they went in to her, and abused her all night until morning, and left her at the breaking of day."

--- Speaking of wicked men, were they worse than this man who gave his own concubine to them to sexually abuse her to death? Was this Levite a religious "man of God"? Did he choose this concubine to be treated this way?

19:26 And when it was daybreak, the woman came, and fell before the gate of the house of that man where her master was, until it was day. **27 And his master arose in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go on**

his way; and behold, the woman his concubine was lying before the door of the house, with her hands on the threshold.

^{19:28} And he said unto her, Arise, and let us go: but she answered not. Then the man picked her up, threw her on his donkey, and got up and went to his place. **29 And when he came to his house, he took a knife, and took hold of his concubine, and broke her by the bones into twelve parts, and sent her out into all the land of Israel."**

They appear to be Sodomites, but they went beyond them by abusing women.

The Levite seems to be one of them. How could a "man of God" lower himself to the level of such wicked men, giving them his own concubine? Such diabolical conduct!

WHY BREAK IT INTO TWELVE PIECES AND SEND THEM TO THE TWELVE TRIBES? This well illustrates the importance of the role of government. Romans 13 explains that civil government is of God, and being of God it is certainly indispensable to have it.

What this Levite does well illustrates the desperation of the people when there is no civil government. He did this to publicize the scandalous conduct of wicked men, and He does it not only to inform but also to protest such conduct.

--- The purpose of this act would be to determine the disciplinary action they should take against the men of Gibeah and the Benjaminites who supported them.

... **19:30** And every one who saw this said, "Such a thing has never been done or seen, from the time that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt until this day." Consider this, take counsel, and speak.

Wayne Partain, Nov 17, 2023