

Happiest Countries in the World, 2017

- 1 Norway
- 2 Denmark
- 3 Iceland
- 4 Switzerland
- 5 Finland
- 6 The Netherlands
- 7 Canada
- 8 New Zealand
- 9 Australia
- 10 Sweden

United Nations World Happiness Report, 2017

1. Stunned Country

vs. 1,2 Then all the people of Israel came out, from Dan to Beersheba, including the land of Gilead, and the congregation assembled as one man to the LORD at Mizpah. And the chiefs of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, 400,000 men on foot that drew the sword.

Nation is QUIETED and UNITED > Eager for JUSTICE and RESTORATION

Ch 19 > Levite and his Concubine > Passing thru Gibeah way to House of Lord

Some Terrible Men in Gibeah > Pounded on Door wanting Sex with Levite

Woman GANG RAPED thru Night > Left for Dead at Door of Guest House

Man CUT Woman into 12 PIECES and Sent to Each of 12 Tribes of ISRAEL

Perhaps Thought ONLY way to get NATION'S Attention when was NO KING

So NATION GATHERED in SHOCK > Londoners @ PARLIAMENT

Many Places where TERROR has RIPPED Across our TROUBLED WORLD

EVENTS Chs. 17- 21 Happened SOME TIME Early in Period of JUDGES
 GRANDSONS of Both MOSES and AARON are INTRODUCED Here
 Levite and his Knife DRAW OUT More Men than any God-Appointed JUDGE
 Far MORE than the GATHERING at the Calls of...

Deborah or Gideon or Jephthah or Samson > Had to FIGHT ALL ALONE

v. 8 And all the people arose as one man, saying, “None of us will go to his tent, and none of us will return to his house.

v. 11 So all the men of Israel gathered against the city, united as one man.

2. Spin Crafted

After NATIONAL Tragedies > CHURCHES often MORE FULL

People looking for MEANING / UNDERSTANDING / TRUTH / REASONS

v. 3 And the people of Israel said, “Tell us, how did this evil happen?”

vs. 4-6 And the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, “I came to Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night. And the leaders of Gibeah rose against me and surrounded the house against me by night. They meant to kill me, and they violated my concubine, and she is dead. So I took hold of my concubine and cut her in pieces and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel, for they have committed abomination and outrage in Israel. Behold, you people of Israel, all of you, give your advice and counsel here.”

IT’S ALL ABOUT HIM – HE is OFFENDED VICTIM – IMPORTANT ONE

Ch 19 – Attackers are HOOLIGANS of GIBEAH > Worthless Fellows

v. 5 LEADERS of the Whole City

Ch 19 – Want to KNOW Him – Have Homosexual Sex

v. 5 meant to KILL ME

v. 5 VIOLATED my Concubine > Not Say HE threw her Out for their Pleasure

v. 5 SHE IS DEAD > Not clear whether Killed by Rapists, or Levites KNIFE

v. 6 So I Cut her to Pieces > Sure, that is the Normal way to Respect the Dead!

NOT Concerned about Woman's HONOR > Zealous to DEFEND HIS OWN

We will all have told ourselves a better story about ourselves than the whole truth would reveal.
 Tim Keller

Levite Could have GONE where he Said he was Going "House of the Lord"

CONSULTED with High PRIEST > Instead he CUTS Poor Woman to Pieces

This is VERY FAKE NEWS – Not Truth-teller, Truth MANIPULATOR

Whatever Now happens is Based on TWISTED HALF-TRUTHS

"Fake News" – being PUMPED Out Faster than we can FILTER It!

As St. John said, "Test everything." But to evaluate other sources we must be grounded in truth. And so make sure that among your sources is the ultimate source more reliable than any of the others: the revealed Word of God.

Fr. Robert Sirico

LEVITE Not MODEL Husband, Concubine PROPERTY Not PARTNER

Try and SATISFY Rapists and SAVE himself > throws to WOLVES of Gibeah

While Man gets GOOD Night's SLEEP – Woman Terribly Violated and Abused

Levite got a GOOD SLEEP > A.M. Finds her lying Doorway - Brutalized Heap

Though the Levite may have lacked the facilities that modern media could have given him, he had three things which produced the desired result: a corpse, a knife, and an unerring instinct for what the public relishes. Michael Wilcock

We aren't living in a 'Post-Truth' era because we never lived in a 'Pre-Truth' era.

Roy Speckhardt

3. Sides Chosen

v. 3 (Now the people of Benjamin heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.)

NOT Surprising that BENJAMIN was MISSING from CONVOCATION...

GIBEAH > Part of Tribe of BENJAMIN > Probably Ashamed & AFRAID

vs. 12-13 And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, “What evil is this that has taken place among you? Now therefore give up the men, the worthless fellows in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and purge evil from Israel.”

SOME Wise Israelites TRIED to get Benjamin to Hand Over BAD GUYS...

LEAVEN of GIBEAH was Permeating whole TRIBE > Needed REMOVAL

Urged them to CRACK those NUTS before HAMMER of Israel would FALL

v. 14 But the Benjaminites would not listen to the voice of their brothers, the people of Israel. Then the people of Benjamin came together out of the cities to Gibeah to go out to battle against the people of Israel.

It was RIGHT they TRIED to EXTRIDITE the OFFENDERS from GIBEAH

TRIBAL Loyalties were Stronger than TRUTH and TRUST

ISRAEL Experienced what Since Happened in Many of our Nations – Civil War

World Court INDICTED Heads of State > Rarely BROUGHT to TRIAL

Enjoy Protection of OWN People > No Foreigners will Tell Us What to DO!

Often what is CALLED PATRIOTISM is only PRIDE

“My COUNTRY or My TRIBE – Right or Wrong!!” – is IDOLATRY

Last Month visited FAVORITE UNCLE – Now in his 80’s

Visited Home found him Hooked Up to OXYGEN Mask for Breathing

Later talked to Daughter – Sorry Uncle Cannot Breath “Oh, he can Breathe OK!”

Problem is HOUSE is TOO DUSTY > Goes Out he can Take OFF the Oxygen

NATIONAL PRIDE STIFLING, Need to GET OUT See World Take BREATH

IMPRESSIVE Unity for HORRIBLE Crime > TRAGIC Unity – 3 X’s “brothers”

ERUPTS into the HUGE and HORRIBLE Civil War in NATION of GOD

Israel NEVER so United to Fight Canaanites, Midianites, Ammonites, Philistines

ONLY time they were ever SO UNITED was when they’ll KILL EachOTHER

4. Sovereign Consulted?

BEFORE the BATTLE actually STARTED...

v. 18 The people of Israel arose and went up to Bethel and inquired of God, “Who shall go up first for us to fight against the people of Benjamin?” And the LORD said, “Judah shall go up first.”

ISRAEL already made their VERDICT and sworn their VOWS

EMPTY RITUAL / PERFUNCTORY PROCEEDURE / Bless THEIR PLANS

As we saw in CHAPTER 1 – JUDAH called to LEAD THE WAY!

But JUDAH leading is ONLY SIMILARITY...

| | |
|--|---|
| The LORD said, “Judah shall go up; behold, I have given the land into his hand.” 1.2 | the LORD said, “Judah shall go up first.” 20.18 |
| Nation United | Nation Divided |
| Fighting Canaanites | Fighting Brothers |
| Directed by God’s Leader: Joshua | Directed by Godless Levite |
| Promised Victory | No Promises |

DO We Sometimes GO to God with our PLANS and NOT our PRAYERS??

“When should I marry my boyfriend?” --- SINGLE? WRONG PERSON?

“Where should I go to College?” College NOT for All – Better Training? Later?

“What job should I take back home?” Sure going Home? Lord of Harvest Sends!

Need to LISTEN both for HIS ANSWERS AND HIS AGENDA!

vs. 15,16 And the people of Benjamin mustered out of their cities on that day 26,000 men who drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who mustered 700 chosen men. Among all these were 700 chosen men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair and not miss.

BENJAMIN will Not go DOWN without a TERRIBLE FIGHT

ELITE CORP of Super-Slingers > Like David hurled Stone into GOLIATH

700 Left Handed SLINGERS > HURL a One Pound STONE at 100 kms Hr.

Most Soldiers RIGHT Handed – Carried SHIELD on LEFT Arm

Israel TRAPPED in NARROW Spaces of Hills of Benjamin

LEFT SLINGERS & Armies of Benjamin – Hidden in Woods

STONES flying at 100 km/h STRIKE their UNGUARDED Side > Smash Them

v. 21 The people of Benjamin came out of Gibeah and destroyed on that day 22,000 men of the Israelites.

ISRAEL comes to God 2nd Time – Not Quite so Confident - CONFUSED

vs. 23,24 And the people of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until the evening. And they inquired of the LORD, “Shall we again draw near to fight against our brothers, the people of Benjamin?” And the LORD said, “Go up against them.” So the people of Israel came near against the people of Benjamin the second day.

Call them “Our BROTHERS” > ADMIT that they are in a MESS HERE!

This MIGHT NOT be best way to MEND Fractured Family!

God says GO! But He does NOT say he is GOING WITH Them!

GO! - NO PROMISE of Victory – Romans 1 “God handed them OVER”

If you want to REBEL, RUN from God > the DOOR is OPEN > You are FREE!

NOTICE the LEVITE No Longer APPEARS in Story > Influence WANES

v. 25 And Benjamin went against them out of Gibeah the second day, and destroyed 18,000 men of the people of Israel. All these were men who drew the sword.

2nd SORTIE 18,000 MORE Israelites are KILLED > 40,000 Dead in 2 Days!

26 Then all the people of Israel, the whole army, went up and came to Bethel and wept. They sat there before the LORD and fasted that day until evening, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. 27 And the people of Israel inquired of the LORD (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, 28 and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, ministered before it in those days), saying, “Shall we go out once more to battle against our brothers, the people of Benjamin, or shall we cease?” And the LORD said, “Go up, for tomorrow I will give them into your hand.”

PRAYER is Not just PIXIE-DUST Sprinkled on PLANS we ALREADY Made!

Come before God 3rd Time – Not just TOKEN DELEGATION > Whole Army

Not making PROUD WAR WHOOPS but with PENITENT WEEPING

CONFUSED > God said to GO! Went TWICE and Got HAMMERED

One MORE Painful STRUGGLE and they will WIN the VICTORY

35 And the LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel, and the people of Israel destroyed 25,100 men of Benjamin that day. All these were men who drew the sword.

HARD to Understand God's INTENTION > Lots of Unanswered Questions

HOW can SUPPORT Either Side in this Horrible CIVIL WAR

Clearly difference between GOD'S DESIRE and DECREE

Hard to Answer Question – What is God Doing? – in this Chapter

By their REVOLT Benjamin cut their Tribe from MEANS of Grace

No Tabernacle to Meet God in Sacrifice / No High Priest to Hear from Heaven

No ark, no priest, no direction from Yahweh, no word from heaven, no light in turmoil... Is this not divine judgment – that he leaves us alone? Dale Ralph Davis

5. Senseless Carnage

21 The people of Benjamin came out of Gibeah and destroyed on that day 22,000 men of the Israelites.

25 And Benjamin went against them out of Gibeah the second day, and destroyed 18,000 men of the people of Israel.

3rd Sortie Israel Used WINNING TACTIC from Battle at AI recorded in Joshua 8

LURE the Defenders out of City to Supposedly Rout Fleeing Enemy

Stealth Forces Rise Up and Capture the VACANT City > BURN it DOWN

Instead of EXTRIDITING the Troublemakers > EXTERMINATED the TRIBE

44Eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell, all of them men of valor. 45And they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon. Five thousand men of them were cut down in the highways. And they were pursued hard to Gidom, and 2,000 men of them were struck down. 46So all who fell that day of Benjamin were 25,000 men who drew the sword, all of them men of valor. 47But 600 men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon and remained at the rock of Rimmon four months. 48And the men of Israel turned back against the people of Benjamin and struck them with the edge of the sword, the city, men and beasts and all that they found. And all the towns that they found they set on fire.

Israel Pyrric Victory > WIN by Experiencing IRREPLACABLE CASUALTIES
LOST their BROTHERS AND they lost their BEARINGS

Every single man, woman, child, and even animal is slaughtered. This is not justice; it is genocide... This is the work of bitterness – which demands not one eye, but two...
Tim Keller

PAINFULLY Obvious how POWERLESS we are to make things Right

General Assemblies, World Courts, Protests and Policies ALL FAIL

If God's Own Country is so DESTROYED – Pity our Fallen Nations

Kingdom of GOD will NOT Fly in on Air Force One No Matter who Inside

Avenge Woman's DEATH Genocide > Soldiers, Wives, Children, Animals

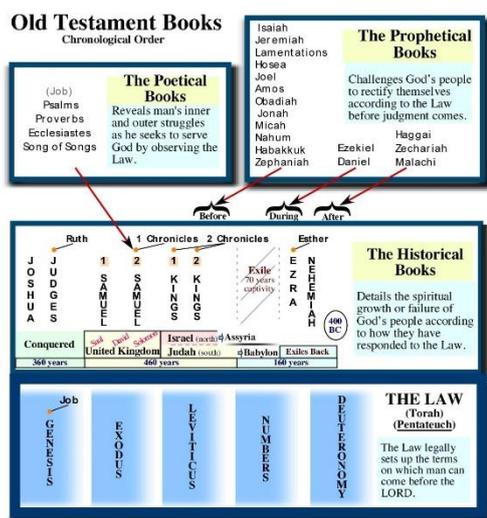
Everyone is their OWN KING, Following DICTATES of their Own GLANDS

In Churches around the World there are GOOD People, Moral, Respectable

But they have Not truly BOWED Down to KING JESUS to do HIS WILL

Those Religious People have same REBEL HEART as Evil Men of GIBEAH

Everything in Bible is DESCRIPTIVE, but not all is PRESCRIPTIVE



Foundation of OT/Bible LAW of Moses >

Learn God's RULES, Put on Glasses

READ OT History thru Lenses of Law >

See for Yourself is Right or Wrong

Forgiveness

1. Forgiveness is granted before it is felt (Luke 17.3-6)

Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him." Luke 17.3,4

Forgiveness is PROMISE to LEAVE it Alone > Not PICK Up Thoughts, Bitterness, Hurts, Memories, Grudge, Revenge

Rarely is it Forgive and Forget – Esp when things are PAINFUL

We MUST FORGIVE because we CANNOT FORGET

2. Forgiveness is only possible when you know the cost of having been forgiven.

Matthew 18.21-35

We KEEP SCORE – I can't Forgive, He HURT Me MORE

Would rather TAKE REVENGE than Forgive > Try to EVEN the SCORE!

Matthew 18 reminds Jesus GOT HURT the Most all Because of YOU & ME

AGONY of Cross to Forgive and Restore us to Children of God

DEBT we could NEVER PAY – Far Beyond anything we DESERVE

NOT Forgiving after Christ Forgave You > Demanding PENNIES of Others

SIGN you Never Knew how MUCH the King has Forgiven You

WARNING you are about to be THROWN OUT!

Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”
Matthew 18.32-35

3. We must forgive BEFORE we try to fix things! (Mark 11.25)

“And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.” Mark 11.25

If the PEACE of CHRIST has not Come into your Heart > Won't be Peacemaker

MEET the Other Person as ENEMY that you need to HUMILIATE

RECONCILIATION is about Restoring RELATIONSHIPS, Both Made Right

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.
1 Peter 2.21-25

Save, O LORD, for the godly one is gone; for the faithful have vanished from among the children of man.
Psalm 12.1

Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. Ephesians 5.11,12

Judges 20 ¹Then all the people of Israel came out, from Dan to Beersheba, including the land of Gilead, and the congregation assembled as one man to the LORD at Mizpah. ²And the chiefs of all the people, of all the tribes of Israel, presented themselves in the assembly of the people of God, 400,000 men on foot that drew the sword. ³(Now the people of Benjamin heard that the people of Israel had gone up to Mizpah.) And the people of Israel said, “Tell us, how did this evil happen?” ⁴And the Levite, the husband of the woman who was murdered, answered and said, “I came to Gibeah that belongs to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to spend the night. ⁵And the leaders of Gibeah rose against me and surrounded the house against me by night. They meant to kill me, and they violated my concubine, and she is dead. ⁶So I took hold of my concubine and cut her in pieces and sent her throughout all the country of the inheritance of Israel, for they have committed abomination and outrage in Israel. ⁷Behold, you people of Israel, all of you, give your advice and counsel here.” ⁸And all the people arose as one man, saying, “None of us will go to his tent, and none of us will return to his house. ⁹But now this is what we will do to Gibeah: we will go up against it by lot, ¹⁰and we will take ten men of a hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred of a thousand, and a thousand of ten thousand, to bring provisions for the people, that when they come they may repay Gibeah of Benjamin, for all the outrage that they have committed in Israel.” ¹¹So all the men of Israel gathered against the city, united as one man. ¹²And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, “What evil is this that has taken place among you? ¹³Now therefore give up the men, the worthless fellows in Gibeah, that we may put them to death and purge evil from Israel.” But the Benjaminites would not listen to the voice of their brothers, the people of Israel. ¹⁴Then the people of Benjamin came together out of the cities to Gibeah to go out to battle against the people of Israel. ¹⁵And the people of Benjamin mustered out of their cities on that day 26,000 men who drew the sword, besides the inhabitants of Gibeah, who mustered 700 chosen men. ¹⁶Among all these were 700 chosen men who were left-handed; every one could sling a stone at a hair and not miss. ¹⁷And the men of Israel, apart from Benjamin, mustered

400,000 men who drew the sword; all these were men of war. ¹⁸The people of Israel arose and went up to Bethel and inquired of God, “Who shall go up first for us to fight against the people of Benjamin?” And the LORD said, “Judah shall go up first.” ¹⁹Then the people of Israel rose in the morning and encamped against Gibeah. ²⁰And the men of Israel went out to fight against Benjamin, and the men of Israel drew up the battle line against them at Gibeah. ²¹The people of Benjamin came out of Gibeah and destroyed on that day 22,000 men of the Israelites. ²²But the people, the men of Israel, took courage, and again formed the battle line in the same place where they had formed it on the first day. ²³And the people of Israel went up and wept before the LORD until the evening. And they inquired of the LORD, “Shall we again draw near to fight against our brothers, the people of Benjamin?” And the LORD said, “Go up against them.” ²⁴So the people of Israel came near against the people of Benjamin the second day. ²⁵And Benjamin went against them out of Gibeah the second day, and destroyed 18,000 men of the people of Israel. All these were men who drew the sword. ²⁶Then all the people of Israel, the whole army, went up and came to Bethel and wept. They sat there before the LORD and fasted that day until evening, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. ²⁷And the people of Israel inquired of the LORD (for the ark of the covenant of God was there in those days, ²⁸and Phinehas the son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, ministered before it in those days), saying, “Shall we go out once more to battle against our brothers, the people of Benjamin, or shall we cease?” And the LORD said, “Go up, for tomorrow I will give them into your hand.” ²⁹So Israel set men in ambush around Gibeah. ³⁰And the people of Israel went up against the people of Benjamin on the third day and set themselves in array against Gibeah, as at other times. ³¹And the people of Benjamin went out against the people and were drawn away from the city. And as at other times they began to strike and kill some of the people in the highways, one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah, and in the open country, about thirty men of Israel. ³²And the people of Benjamin said, “They are routed before us, as at the first.” But the people of Israel said, “Let us flee and draw them away from the city to the highways.” ³³And all the men of Israel rose up out of their place and set themselves in array at Baal-tamar, and the men of Israel who were in ambush rushed out of their place from Maareh-geba. ³⁴And there came against Gibeah 10,000 chosen men out of all Israel, and the battle was hard, but the Benjaminites did not know that disaster was close upon them. ³⁵And the LORD defeated Benjamin before Israel, and the people of Israel destroyed 25,100 men of Benjamin that day. All these were men who drew the sword. ³⁶So the people of Benjamin saw that they were defeated. The men of Israel gave ground to Benjamin, because they trusted the men in ambush whom they had set against Gibeah. ³⁷Then the men in ambush hurried and rushed

against Gibeah; the men in ambush moved out and struck all the city with the edge of the sword. ³⁸Now the appointed signal between the men of Israel and the men in the main ambush was that when they made a great cloud of smoke rise up out of the city ³⁹the men of Israel should turn in battle. Now Benjamin had begun to strike and kill about thirty men of Israel. They said, “Surely they are defeated before us, as in the first battle.” ⁴⁰But when the signal began to rise out of the city in a column of smoke, the Benjaminites looked behind them, and behold, the whole of the city went up in smoke to heaven. ⁴¹Then the men of Israel turned, and the men of Benjamin were dismayed, for they saw that disaster was close upon them. ⁴²Therefore they turned their backs before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness, but the battle overtook them. And those who came out of the cities were destroying them in their midst. ⁴³Surrounding the Benjaminites, they pursued them and trod them down from Nohah as far as opposite Gibeah on the east. ⁴⁴Eighteen thousand men of Benjamin fell, all of them men of valor. ⁴⁵And they turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon. Five thousand men of them were cut down in the highways. And they were pursued hard to Gidom, and 2,000 men of them were struck down. ⁴⁶So all who fell that day of Benjamin were 25,000 men who drew the sword, all of them men of valor. ⁴⁷But 600 men turned and fled toward the wilderness to the rock of Rimmon and remained at the rock of Rimmon four months. ⁴⁸And the men of Israel turned back against the people of Benjamin and struck them with the edge of the sword, the city, men and beasts and all that they found. And all the towns that they found they set on fire.

1. When do you find it easiest to edit the truth about your thoughts, words, or actions?
2. Are there well-buried secrets in your life which you need to confess, mourn and repent of, knowing that despite who we are, God is full of grace toward us?
3. What happens to our understanding of “the gospel” if we don’t admit our own inherent sinfulness?