LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 03-Jun ..... Joshua 1:1-18
2) 10-Jun ..... Joshua 2:1 – 6:27
3) 17-Jun ..... Joshua 7:2 – 12:24
4) 24-Jun ..... Joshua 13:1 – 22:34
5) 01-Jul ..... Joshua 23:1 – 24:33
6) 08-Jul ..... Judges 1:1 – 3:6
7) 15-Jul ..... Judges 3:7 – 5:31
8) 22-Jul ..... Judges 6:1 – 8:21
9) 29-Jul ..... Judges 8:22 – 12:15
10) 05-Aug ..... Judges 13:1 – 16:31
11) 12-Aug ..... Judges 17:1 – 21:25
12) 19-Aug ..... Ruth 1:1 – 2:23
13) 26-Aug ..... Ruth 3:1 – 4:22

INTRODUCTION

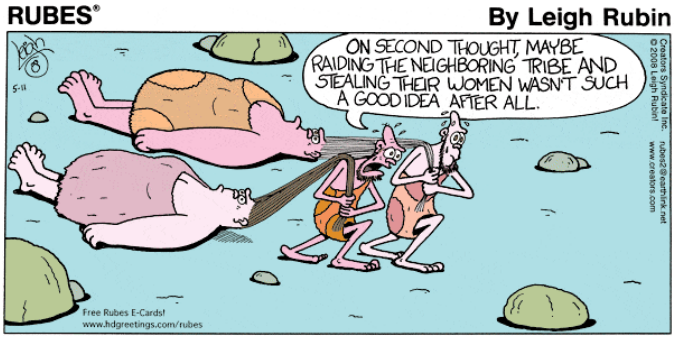
- What happens when we take the path of least resistance?
- What happens when we compromise our moral standards?
- These last 5 chapters of Judges tell the unglamorous story of two Levites living during the time when everyone did what was right in their own eyes
  - **Chapters 17-18.** The 1st Levite, a grandson of Moses, seemed to have a tender heart, but he chose the path of least resistance and joined forces with whomever would pay him the most
  - **Chapters 19-21.** The 2nd Levite, seemed awfully calloused, but he chose the hard path and did what was right, though it meant nearly wiping out the tribe of Benjamin

Passage	Comments
Judges 17:1-13 18:1-31 Verses to highlight: 17:1 17:6-7 17:13 18:1 18:3 18:19-20 18:30-31	• The characters in the next 51 verses make quite a Soap Opera: **1) Micah** stole from his mother but returned the money; **2) Micah's mother** turns the returned loot into an idol; **3) Micah's son** becomes the family priest to honor this idol; **4) An unnamed Levite** assumes the priestly duties of Micah's household for money; **5) Some spies** from the tribe of Dan seek for more land to acquire and they recognize the Levite staying at Micah's house; **6) 600 Danites** traveling by Micah's house entice Micah's Levite to travel with them – of course for more money – and the Danites rob precious things from Micah's house, and threaten Micah's life if he tries to put up a fight; **7) Laishites** are annihilated by the Danites for being an easy prey; **8) Jonathan** is revealed as the unnamed Levite – and his grandfather was Moses (18:30) • We are given an historical marker that all this took place while the house of God was still at Shiloh. Shiloh, in a few years, would eventually be destroyed and the ark of God captured by the Philistines.....1Samuel 4:11 • This story seems to have nothing in common with the next Levite story EXCEPT for the common time period they lived in where men did what was right in their own eyes, & the moral fiber of the nation was spiraling down • **The Story's Conclusion.** Even the revered lineage of Moses is tainted with idolaters and moral decay • **Note.** Some translations for 18:30 identify Moses as the grandfather of Jonathan (ESV, NIV, HCSB), while other versions have Manasseh (AV, NASB, NKJV). The Latin Vulgate has "Moses," the Septuagint "Manasses." According to Barne's commentary "the Masoretes, probably grieved that a descendant of Moses should have been implicated in idolatrous worship, adopted this expedient (a slight character shift in the name) for disguising the fact without absolutely falsifying the text"

Passage	Comments
A Note on the Tribe of Dan	From this point forward in Scripture, the Tribe of Dan, which was part of the northern kingdom of Israel, is reckoned with idolaters. Dan along with Ephraim, are eventually de-listed from the 12 tribes of Israel, and are replaced with Joseph and Levi.....see Rev 7:5-8
Judges 19:1-30 20:1-48 21:1-25 Verses to Highlight 19:1-3 19:10 19:14-16 19:22-30 20:1,4-6 20:11-15 20:17,21 20:23-27 20:35 20:46-47 21:3,15 21:19-23 21:25	• Another Soap Opera story unfolds with an unnamed Levite chasing his wayward wife back to her home town. He is restrained from leaving by his father-n-law. • Eventually, the Levite, his servant, and his wife head back to the Levite's hometown in northern Israel • They stop for the night near Jerusalem in a suburb populated by people of the tribe of Benjamin • Similar to what happened in Sodom with Lot's visitors (Gen 19), "worthless men" came to rape the Levite. • Strange to our western understanding, the host offers up his virgin daughter and the man's wife to the rapists, but the Levite seems to thrusts his wife into their arms • When the Levite gets up in the morning he callously tells his wife – 'get up and let's go' – but she was dead • The Levite carves up his wife's body and sends a piece to each of the tribes – something so brutal & grotesque demanded a response by all of Israel • The Israelites did not act rashly, but investigated the incident, and sought godly counsel before taking action - It was 400,000 Israelites against 26,000 of Benjamin • For some reason, God allowed the Israelites to lose 2 fierce battles and suffer more than 40,000 casualties • The Israelites nearly wipe out the tribe of Benjamin, but allowed the remaining 600 men to cart off young women participating in a feast in Shiloh to recover
A Note on the Tribe of Benjamin	The tribe of Benjamin eventually recovered in numbers. To Benjamin's credit, they learned their lesson and they become the only tribe willing to stand with Judah to remain loyal to God as the other tribes broke away to set up their own kingdom in northern Israel. • From Benjamin came the first anointed King of Israel (Saul) and the Apostle Paul (previously named Saul)

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- To turn a wicked situation around there might be wars to fight, and not all righteous wars can be won without suffering heavy losses
- We are not commanded to fight with swords these days, but with prayer to pull down the enemy's strong holds 2Cor 1-:3-5
- What other weapons can we use? Testimony? Money? _____?

NEXT WEEK: **Ruth 1-2.** Ruth, born into a heathen culture, through providence became a Jewish wife, a daughter-in-law, a widow, a wife for 2nd time, a mother, and finally a great-great-grandmother of Jesus

- Nobody is a waste in God's scheme if they chose to follow Him