

20[1] And all sons of Israel went out, and the congregation assembled as one man from Dan and unto Beersheba, and the land of Gilead, to Yehvah at the Mizpah. [2] And the corners¹ of all the people of all tribes of Israel in the assembly of the people of the Gods was four hundred thousand, each on foot drawing a sword. [3] And sons of Benjamin heard that sons of Israel went up to the Mizpah.

And sons of Israel said, "Speak. How did this bad happen?" [4] And the Levite man, the man of the woman who was killed, answered and said, "I and my concubine went into the Hill which belongs to Benjamin to lodge. [5] And the owners of the Hill arose against me and surrounded the house against me at night. They intended to kill me, and they humbled my concubine and she died. [6] And I grabbed onto my concubine and cut her and sent her to every field of Israel's inheritance, because they did wickedness and folly in Israel. [7] Look, all of you sons of Israel, give your word and advice here."

[8] And all the people arose as one man saying, "We will not go each to his tent and we will not turn aside each to his house. [9] And now, this is the thing that we will do to the Hill against her by lot. [10] So, we will take ten men to the hundred to all tribes of Israel, and a hundred to the thousand, and a thousand to the ten thousand to take provision for the people to make for their going to Geba in Benjamin, for all the folly which he² did in Israel." [11] And every man of Israel was³ gathered together to the city united as one man.

[12] And tribes of Israel sent men in all tribes of Benjamin saying, "What is this bad that was done among you? [13] And now, give up the men, sons of Belial, who are in the Hill, and we will put them to death. And we will burn⁴ bad from Israel." And Benjamin,⁵ they were unwilling to listen to their brethren's voice, sons of Israel. [14] And sons of Benjamin were gathered together from the cities to the Hill to go out to the war with sons of Israel.

[15] And sons of Benjamin mustered on that day from the cities twenty six thousand men drawing a sword, besides from tribes of the Hill they mustered seven hundred chosen men. [16] From all this people, seven hundred chosen men, his right hand bound,⁶ every one a slinger with the stone to the hair and not miss.⁷ [17] And men of Israel mustered besides from Benjamin were four hundred thousand men drawing a sword, all these men of war.

[18] And they arose and went up to House of God, and they asked of Gods. And sons of Israel said, "Who shall go up for us in the beginning to the war with sons of Benjamin?" And Yehvah said, "Judah, in the beginning." [19] And sons of

1 פְּנֹתַי (pinnot) "corners" WYC; "chiefs" YLT, NAS; "chief" KJV; "leaders" NKJV – used for "leaders" or "chiefs" also in 1 Samuel 14:38; Isaiah 19:13 (singular); Zechariah 10:4(?), singular). Used for "corners" in 1 Kings 7:34; Job 1:19; Ezekiel 43:20; 45:19. This is the same word (in the singular) as in Psalm 118:22 translated "cornerstone" speaking of Christ (Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11; Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6-7), likewise Isaiah 28:16.

2 אָשָׂה (’âsâh) "he did" – "he" referring to Geba, another name for Hill (Gibeah).

3 יָאֵסַף (yê’âsêph) "was gathered together" – singular masculine verb

4 נִבְעַרְהָ (neva`arâh) "burn" MSG; "put away" KJV, YLT; "remove" NKJV, NAS – see footnote for Deuteronomy 17:7, see also verses 6-7, 12; 19:13, 19. This is what was to be done according to the law (Leviticus 20:10a).

5 No "sons" in this verse. Some read "sons."

6 "his right hand bound" = "left-handed" – see footnote Judges 3:15.

7 אָחַטַי (yachati) "miss" - this is the same verb for "sin" e.g. Ecclesiastes 7:20.

Israel arose in the morning and camped against the Hill. [20] And sons of Israel went out to the war with Benjamin, and men of Israel set themselves in order for war to the Hill. [21] And sons of Benjamin went out from the Hill, and destroyed in Israel on that day twenty two thousand men to earth. [22] And the people, men of Israel, strengthened themselves and again set in order for war in the place where they set in order there on the first day.

[23] And sons of Israel went up and wept before Yehvah until the evening. And they asked of Yehvah saying, “Should I again draw near for the battle with sons of Benjamin my brother?” And Yehvah said, “Go up to him.” [24] And sons of Israel drew near to sons of Benjamin on the second day. [25] And Benjamin went out to meet them from the Hill on the second day and destroyed sons of Israel again eighteen thousand men to earth, all these drawing a sword.

[26] And all sons of Israel went up, and all the people, and they came to House of God and wept. And they sat there before Yehvah and fasted on that day until the evening. And they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before Yehvah. [27] And sons of Israel asked of Yehvah (and the ark of the covenant of the Gods was there in those days, [28] and Phinehas, son of Eleazar son of Aaron, stood before him in those days), saying, “Shall I yet again go out to the battle with sons of Benjamin my brother, or shall I stop?” And Yehvah said, “Go up, for tomorrow I give him in your hand.”

[29] And Israel put ambushers to the Hill roundabout. [30] And sons of Israel went up to sons of Benjamin on the third day, and set in order to the Hill as in other times. [31] And sons of Benjamin went out to meet the people, being drawn away from the city. And they began to strike from the people slaying as in other times on the highways (where one goes up to House of God and one to Hill), in the field, about thirty men in Israel.

[32] And sons of Benjamin said, “They are being struck before us as in the beginning.” And sons of Israel said, “Let us flee and draw him away from the city to the highways.” [33] And all men of Israel arose from his place and set in order in Baal Tamar.⁸ And ambush of Israel burst forth from his place from an open area⁹ of Geba. [34] And they came in from opposite to the Hill, ten thousand chosen men from all Israel. And the battle was heavy, and they did not know the bad that was striking against them.

[35] And Yehvah struck Benjamin before Israel. And sons of Israel destroyed in Benjamin that day twenty five thousand one hundred men, all these drawing a sword. [36] And sons of Benjamin saw that they were smitten, and men of Israel gave place to Benjamin, because they trusted the ambush whom they set to the Hill. [37] And the ambushers made haste and rushed to the Hill, and the ambush deployed and struck all the city to a mouth of a sword.

[38] And the signal for men of Israel with the ambush was for them to cause much going up of a rising of the smoke from the city, [39] and men of Israel turned in the battle. And Benjamin began to strike slaying in men of Israel about thirty men. For they said, “Indeed, he is surely stricken before us as the first battle.” [40] And the rising began to go up from the city, a pillar of smoke. And Benjamin turned

8 בַּעַל תָּמָר (ba`al tāmâr) “Baal Tamar” - only here.

9 מַעְרָה (ma`arêh) “open area”; “plain” NKJV; “meadows” KJV, DARBY; “meadow” YLT, Green; “Maareh” NAS; “bare (open) space” BDB – same root word found also in 1 Kings 7:36 (“clear space”); Nahum 3:5 (“nakedness”).

after him and behold, the whole city was going up to the heavens. [41] And men of Israel turned back, and men of Benjamin panicked; for he saw that the bad was striking against him. [42] And they turned before men of Israel toward the way of the wilderness, and the battle clung to him. And who was from the cities they destroyed him in his midst.

[43] And they surrounded Benjamin and chased him, easily trampling him unto the front of the Hill from rising of Sun. [44] And eighteen thousand men fell from Benjamin, all of these men of valor. [45] And they turned and fled to the wilderness to the Rock of the Pomegranate¹⁰ and cut him down on the highways, five thousand men. And they pursued after him unto Gidom¹¹ and struck from him two thousand men. [46] And all those fallen from Benjamin were twenty five thousand men drawing a sword. On that day all these were men of valor.

[47] And six hundred men turned and fled to the wilderness to the Rock of the Pomegranate and dwelt in rock of Pomegranate four months. [48] And men of Israel turned to sons of Benjamin and struck them with a mouth of a sword from every city unto beast unto all who were found. Also, all the cities that were found they set on fire.

10 רִמּוֹן (rimon) “Pomegranate” - NKJV, etc. “Rimmon” - see footnote for Joshua 15:32.

11 גִּדּוֹם (gid`om) “Gidom” - only here.