

Unwanted Answers to Prayer

Judges 20

- I. **Wake Up Call:** The other tribes were outraged by the Benjamites' sin (Judges 20:1-17).
- A. When the Israelites assembled and heard what happened they agreed they must purge this sin (20:1-11).
 - Serious sin brings serious judgment.
 - B. They offer to only judge the guilty men, but the Benjamites refuse (20:12-13).
 - We become guilty when we defend the guilty.
 - C. The forces gather at Gibeah to battle – 400,000 Israelites and 26,700 Benjamites (20:14-17)
- II. **Seeking God:** Israel prayed and God answered with defeat, before victory (Judges 20:18-48).
- A. **First Prayer:** When Israel asked, God revealed that the tribe of Judah should fight Benjamin first (20:18-22).
 - 1st battle: Although God told them to do it, Judah lost the battle and 22,000 men.
 - This defeat caused Israel to weep and pray more.
 - B. **Second Prayer:** When Israel asked, God said they should continue to fight Benjamin (20:23-25).
 - 2nd battle: Although God told them to fight again, the Israelites lost 18,000 men
 - This defeat caused prayerful weeping, fasting and offerings.
 - C. **Third Prayer:** When Israel asked this time God assured them that they would win the battle (20:26-48).
 - 3rd battle: The Israelites won, losing only 30 men while killing over 25,000 Benjamites.

Why Unwanted Answers to Prayer

- ❖ We need unwanted answers so we draw close to God.
 1. Unwanted answers cause us to humbly examine our own sin and draw near to God (26; James 4:3-10).
 2. Unwanted answers teach us to trust God with unresolved problems, relying on His strength (28; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10).
 3. Unwanted answers help us to eventually grasp and appreciate God's power and goodness (35; Jeremiah 29:10-14).