



Militarization, the Rape as a Weapon of War (Judges 19, 1-28; 21, 25; Ruth 2, 8-9, 14-18; Mica 4, 1-4)

Overview

The text of Judges speaks of a couple who left Bethlehem, the city of the family of the wife to the marital home to Ephraim. En route, they stopped in Gibeah to spend the night there; the inhabitants of the area came to attack them. To protect himself, the husband gave them his wife and they raped her. This happened because of the absence of state authority and everyone did as they pleased. In the book of Ruth, we have the story of Ruth, Naomi's daughter-in-law, who out of courage went to glean in the field of Boaz. Ruth was granted favors by Boaz, which she in turn shared with Naomi. Micah speaks of the goodness of God that will attract the nations to him and Israel. Thus, there will be no more trouble and everyone will enjoy the fruit of his field.

Materials

- The blackboard
- The image of people who are fleeing the war in eastern DR Congo,
- Photos of women being used as human shields.

Discussion Questions

- Why didn't the relative want the couple to leave before danger fell upon them?
- Why did the Levite refuse to spend the night in foreign cities?
- What was the cause of the brutality on the couple by the people of Gibeah?
- Why did the husband give his wife over to the attackers?
- How should the Fvors bestowed on Ruth be understood?
- What are the benefits of being in a world where God reigns?
- What does God ask so that chaos in the world can be ended?

Commentary

With the absence of the rule of law, the situation in Gibeah becomes chaotic. Violence prevails to the extent that foreigners have no protection. Given this situation, the Levite decided to deliver his wife to protect themselves against violence of the inhabitants of Gibeah. This behavior of the Levite shows

how women have long been considered as things and not as human beings. This way of using the woman as a human shield is present today in DR Congo where violence continues to reign. In order to protect themselves from attack by the rebels, some heads of families will hand over their daughters or their own wives to be abused. Because of poverty, some prepare their daughters for early marriage or sometimes to prostitution to make money at home. Violence and poverty are evils to fight, they cause strange behavior.

In the case of Ruth, she goes to glean in the fields of Boaz to provide for the needs of her household. Rather than dominate her, Boaz protects her by granting her favors, a situation that is contrary to what we are living today, where in most cases the strong crush the weak. In the DR Congo, the country is exploited by the major powers and where the rich in power crush the poor. Like Ruth, women are beautifully brave. Because of the ongoing crisis in the Congo, they have reversed the pyramid. It is by the work of their hands and the sweat of their brows that several families survive in spite of the difficulties. The Congolese woman wakes up early in the morning and sleeps very late after spending a very busy day.

According to Micah, this situation will only end when there is the establishment of more than a nominal government of justice but a genuine state of rule of law where justice will reign and where peace and love are the virtues of the Kingdom of God. That is why the Congolese people must struggle with the help of God and their partners so that justice, peace and love reign in it.

The United States must engage fully and sincerely for peace in Congo because of their role in the catastrophic situation in the Congo along with many other great powers of the world. The United States armed Mobutu at the time. The strength he had allowed him to destroy the Congo until the United States no longer needed him.

The people of Congo take great interest in elections in the United States because the situation in Congo is closely linked to the elected leader in the United States. Before the victory of Clinton, the people of what was then called "Zaire", were very engaged and Christians organized periods of fasting and prayer for Clinton because everyone was afraid of the victory of George Bush, who had become a personal friend of Mobutu. As such, once elected, it was felt Bush would continue to support his friend. Prayers were heard and Bill Clinton was elected president of the USA. It was a big celebration for the "Zairians" and "Zaire". He certainly succeeded in moving Mobutu away from a dictatorship. Unfortunately, he tenaciously supported Rwanda ignoring the fact that Rwanda swears on the name of Congo. Any aid to Rwanda is a war against the DRC. Countries that help Rwanda may do so with a good heart but are unaware that Rwanda uses and will always use everything it has to destroy the Congo in order to plunder the wealth.

Discouraged by the action of Bill Clinton, it was then necessary to pray against the Democratic candidate lest they come to power to continue the work of his predecessor. Again, prayers were answered and George Bush Jr. was elected. Certainly he did not help the Congo to get out of its problems but he did not support Rwanda as Clinton did. This is why the Congolese continued to

support his second term for fear that a Democrat at the head of the United States would continue the dream of Clinton.

The recent Democrat candidates greatly interested the majority of the Congolese population. On one hand there was a woman who, for the Congolese, would have the heart of a mother and would not support the huge loss of more than 6,000,000 people of which most were women and children who had been raped or looted. On the other hand, a black candidate would know the consequences of injustice having lived it or known it as recorded in history. The people of Congo preferred praying especially for the black candidate because of his statements and actions in favor of the Congo when he was Senator. If the woman succeeded, it was hoped that there would be peace. Again our prayer was exalted and we now wait for the turn of a woman as the head of state in the Congo. However, the Congo does not see any strong signals from President Obama of a commitment to engagement in the Congo. There are fine words but no concrete action. There is reason to believe that it is the policy of American politics to help Rwanda and thus destroy the Congo. We think that the same God who gave the United States the grace to be ranked the number one nation in the world will also change the USA politics so that God will cease to hear the cries of a Christian state.

Some people may think that elections in the United States have nothing to do with the prayers of the Congolese. They are mistaken because it is God who controls and will continue to control the world's history. If the United States and other powers want to benefit from the wealth of the Congo, why not deal directly with the Congo? Why would you want to use other neighboring states? One accuses the Congolese in vain as being weak and lazy, which is not true. The hands of the Congolese are tied. They are not even allowed to freely choose their leaders as everything is dictated. How can a country develop in a situation like this?

The world will have peace only by creating peace in every state. God now looks at the United States because it was God who allowed it to develop as such. If it fails to perform its duty properly, God will surely give it to another state. Remember the lessons from history. No country has ever thought of losing its positions until another takes its place.

If genocide is the main cause of U.S. support for Rwanda, which is quite normal, how is it that the United States cannot have compassion for the situation in the Congo which has lost a number of people ten times higher than all the dead of Rwanda during the genocide? There is no noble reason that can justify such behavior.

This true story is an important message for every reader: In a part of Congo, there was looting. A uniformed man living in the neighborhood stormed the home of a widow who lived with her two sons. For reasons unknown, he killed the widow and a son, the younger managed to escape the killer. Many years later, the boy became a Christian and an important man in social services. He worked regularly to help old people. One day, an old man who was struggling to regularize his application for retirement in order to receive benefits came into his office. This exercise was so difficult to the point that there were people who even died before completing their application. Out of pity, the young man came to

the aid of the old man. He asked him not to come to the office and that he, himself, will take care of the paperwork. When everything was ready, the young man went to the old man's home to return the completed file. The old man and his wife received him with joy. The young man spoke up and said "I've seen your record; you are certainly Mr. X who lived in neighborhood Y during the period Z?" The old man responded positively while feeling at ease. Then the young answered and said, "I am the child you tried to eliminate after killing his mother and brother." The old man was very scared and did not know what to say. The young man took the floor again and said: "Do not be afraid, I am a Christian, and as such, I have forgiven you and I love you in the Lord."

Lesson: The future is directed by God. When one is strong, one tends to believe that one will always be strong. If we are not careful, we can crush even the people who will be useful to us tomorrow. This was the case of the old man. If he had succeeded in killing the boy, he would have died without the benefit of retirement. "We do not cut the branch on which we are sitting," the saying goes. Isn't Congo similar to this branch on which the world is sitting?

Questions for reflection after study

- What must be done to end war, rape, and poverty?
- Why has rape taken momentum in DR Congo?
- Why are women being used as human shields in DR Congo?
- Should one encourage favors towards women?

Prayer

In a world like ours where war, violence, insecurity and poverty prevail despite the great riches that you have given us, Lord, we beseech you to help us become peacemakers through love for our neighbor. This will make you have a rule of law where your name will be glorified. In the name of Jesus Christ,
Amen!