

# Judges 20:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the Levite, the husband of the woman that was slain, answered and said, I came into Gibeah that belongeth to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to lodge.

## Analysis

**The Levite, the husband of the woman that was slain, answered and said**—the text identifies the speaker by his relationship to the victim and his tribe (Levite). His testimony begins the formal presentation of evidence. **I came into Gibeah that belongeth to Benjamin, I and my concubine, to lodge** (בָּאתִי...לְלֹעֵן, ba'ti...lalun)—his purpose was innocent: seeking overnight hospitality (לֹעֵן, lun, 'to lodge, spend the night').

The Levite's self-presentation omits crucial details revealed in chapter 19: his concubine had left him due to unfaithfulness (19:2), he retrieved her from her father's house after four months, he made poor travel decisions refusing hospitality in Jebusite Jerusalem, and his own actions contributed to the tragedy. His selective testimony—technically true but incomplete—illustrates how victims can become manipulative accusers. The text forces readers to hold two truths in tension: Gibeah's crime was genuinely horrific and demanded justice, yet the Levite's account serves his interests by omitting his failures. Truth-telling requires full disclosure, not merely factually accurate fragments designed to maximize sympathy.

## Historical Context

Levites held special status as Israel's priestly tribe but owned no tribal territory (Numbers 18:20-24), living in designated cities throughout Israel. This Levite's

origin from 'the remote hill country of Ephraim' (19:1) placed him far from proper religious centers. His seeking lodging in Gibeah rather than among fellow Levites suggests the general breakdown of proper social structures during this anarchic period.

## Related Passages

## **Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith**

## **John 3:16 — God's love and salvation**

## Study Questions

1. How do you present your side of conflicts—with full honesty or selective truth designed to maximize sympathy?
2. What responsibility do victims bear for their own contributions to tragic situations?
3. How can you pursue justice for genuine wrongs while acknowledging your own failures?

## Interlinear Text

רִאֵעַ	פָּלֵי	אִישׁ	בְּאֵשׁ	הַנְּרָצֶן	הַנְּרָצֶן
answered	the husband	And the Levite	the husband	of the woman	that was slain

וַיָּאמֵר	לְבִנֵּים	בְּאֶתְיוֹ
<b>and said</b>	<b>that belongeth to Benjamin</b>	<b>I came</b>
H559	H1144	H935

לְלִוְנָה וְפִילְגָּשׁ I  
to lodge and my concubine H3885 H6370