

Judges 20:47

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But six hundred men turned and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon, and abode in the rock Rimmon four months.

Analysis

But six hundred men turned and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon (רֶמ֮ם, sela rimmon, 'rock of Rimmon')—600 Benjamites escape to a wilderness stronghold. **And abode in the rock Rimmon four months** (אֶרְבַּעַשִׁים, arba'ah chodashim)—they hide four months while Israel destroys Benjamin's cities (v. 48). These 600 represent Benjamin's sole survivors; their tribe teeters on extinction.

The rock of Rimmon becomes refuge for Benjamin's remnant, from which the tribe will eventually be rebuilt (chapter 21). This demonstrates God's covenant faithfulness: despite Benjamin's guilt defending criminals, and despite righteous judgment destroying their army and cities, God preserves a remnant. The 600 survivors parallel other remnant themes throughout Scripture—God never completely destroys His covenant people, always preserving a seed from which restoration comes. Yet the four months at Rimmon represent liminal space between judgment and restoration, where the guilty remnant must dwell in their desolation before grace provides reconciliation. This pattern recurs throughout biblical history: judgment → remnant preservation → period of desolation → gracious restoration.

Historical Context

The rock of Rimmon, located about 3.5 miles east of Bethel, was likely a limestone formation with caves providing defensible refuge. Similar strongholds dot Israel's

wilderness regions. That 600 men could hide there four months demonstrates both the location's remoteness and Israel's rage—they spent four months systematically destroying all Benjaminite cities rather than immediately pursuing the survivors.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does God preserve remnants even when judgment is righteous and severe?
2. What does it mean to dwell in liminal space between judgment and restoration?
3. How do you see God's covenant faithfulness maintaining hope even through devastating consequences of sin?

Interlinear Text

מְאֹד תְּשַׁבַּח רַמּוֹן בְּשַׁבָּע שְׁשׁוֹנֶה תְּיִגְנֶן
turned and fled to the wilderness H413 in the rock Rimmon But six hundred
H6437 H5127 H4057 H5553 H7417 H8337 H3967

אַיִשׁ נִשְׁבּוּ אֶרְבָּעָה חֲדַשִּׁים: רַמּוֹן בְּשַׁבָּע אַיִשׁ
men and abide in the rock Rimmon four months
H376 H3427 H5553 H7417 H702 H2320

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