

The Marriage of the Daughters of Zelophehad

“1 Then came the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph: and these are the names of his daughters; Mahlah, Noah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Tirzah. 2 And they stood before Moses, and before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes and all the congregation, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, 3 Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not in the company of them that gathered themselves together against the LORD in the company of Korah; but died in his own sin, and had no sons. 4 Why should the name of our father be done away from among his family, because he hath no son? Give unto us therefore a possession among the brethren of our father. 5 And Moses brought their cause before the LORD. 6 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 7 The daughters of Zelophehad speak right: thou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren; and thou shalt cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them. 8 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter. 9 And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his brethren. 10 And if he have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his father's brethren. 11 And if his father have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his kinsman that is next to him of his family, and he shall possess it: and it shall be unto the children of Israel a statute of judgment, as the LORD commanded Moses.” (Numbers 27:1-11 KJV)

The daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hepher, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph, their father died in the wilderness, and they were about to be denied to receive their father's inheritance because all of them were girls and there was no boy among them. Therefore they raised that particular issue in this form of question and request, *“4 Why should the name of our father be done away from among his family, because he hath no son? Give unto us therefore a possession among the brethren of our father.” (Numbers 27:4 KJV)* At that time the inheritance would pass from the fathers to the sons and not to the daughters because the name of the fathers would pass to the sons and not to his daughters. The name of the father and the family name and the name of the tribe will be passed to the sons who will carry that for the next generation. Therefore all the material inheritance of the father would pass to his sons.

That issue was raised by the daughters of Zelophehad, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph, while they were still in the wilderness because they knew that when they will enter the Promised Land they will not receive any inheritance.

With this statement, *“Give unto us therefore a possession among the brethren of our father,” (Numbers 27:4 KJV)* the daughters of Zelophehad, secured their rights in having inheritance like others of their father's relatives as well as secured that the name of their father will not disappear from his clan.

Therefore, in response to their questions this what happened, *“5 And Moses brought their cause before the LORD. 6 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 7 The daughters of Zelophehad speak right: thou shalt surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren; and thou shalt cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto*

them. 8 And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass unto his daughter.” (Numbers 27:5-8 KJV) God approved their request and made it a law that if a man dies and has no sons then his daughters can take the inheritance.

God also answered the question in more detail that can solve any queries in the future even if the man has no daughters, *“9 And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his brethren. 10 And if he have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his father's brethren. 11 And if his father have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his kinsman that is next to him of his family, and he shall possess it: and it shall be unto the children of Israel a statute of judgment, as the LORD commanded Moses.” (Numbers 27:9-11 KJV)*

That issue of the daughters of Zelophehad son of Hepher and their concerns was a well-known issue, and it was still in the mind of the people, that one day needed to be readdressed and solved thoroughly. It was raised and mentioned in their census that was done as God recommended in the plains of Moab, *“And Zelophehad the son of Hepher had no sons, but daughters: and the names of the daughters of Zelophehad were Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah” (Numbers 26:33 KJV)* That issue was complicated and not a simple one to be easily solved, therefore it was brought up and opened before the highest leadership in the congregation, *“1 Then came the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph: and these are the names of his daughters; Mahlah, Noah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Tirzah. 2 And they stood before Moses, and before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes and all the congregation, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, 3 Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not in the company of them that gathered themselves together against the LORD in the company of Korah; but died in his own sin, and had no sons.” (Numbers 27:1-3 KJV)* The issue was brought to Moses according to his instruction to the judges that the hard cases needed to be brought to him, *“And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.” (Exodus 18:26 KJV)*

Later on, when the time had come that the half-tribe of Manasseh would receive their inheritance, Moses gave to the descendants of Makir son of Manasseh their allotment beyond the Jordan as you can read here: *“33 And Moses gave unto them, even to the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, and unto half the tribe of Manasse the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land, with the cities thereof in the coasts, even the cities of the country round about. 34 And the children of Gad built Dibon, and Ataroth, and Aroer, 35 And Atroth, Shophan, and Jaazer, and Jogbehah, 36 And Bethnimrah, and Bethharan, fenced cities: and folds for sheep. 37 And the children of Reuben built Heshbon, and Elealeh, and Kirjathaim, 38 And Nebo, and Baalmeon, (their names being changed,) and Shibmah: and gave other names unto the cities which they builded. 39 And the children of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead, and took it, and dispossessed the Amorite which was in it. 40 And Moses gave Gilead unto Machir the son of Manasseh; and he dwelt therein. 41 And Jair the son of Manasseh went and took the small towns thereof, and called them Havothjair. 42 And Nobah went and took Kenath, and the villages thereof, and called it Nobah, after his own name.” (Numbers 32:33-42 KJV)* Therefore when Moses did so, the issue of the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hepher, the son of Gilead, the son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, who

belonged to the tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph, again was raised because they were in that half-tribe. The Tribe of Manasseh were objecting to give the daughters of Zelophehad their inheritance and they put a valid reason for that before Moses and the rest of the church leaders as you can read here:

“1 And the chief fathers of the families of the children of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph, came near, and spake before Moses, and before the princes, the chief fathers of the children of Israel: 2 And they said, The LORD commanded my lord to give the land for an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel: and my lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of Zelophehad our brother unto his daughters. 3 And if they be married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then shall their inheritance be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and shall be put to the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall it be taken from the lot of our inheritance. 4 And when the jubile of the children of Israel shall be, then shall their inheritance be put unto the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall their inheritance be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.” (Numbers 36:1-4 KJV) They put a valid reason why they have reservation toward what God had said in giving the inheritance to the daughters of their brother Zelophehad; that his daughters if they will marry men from other tribes, then their tribe inheritance will be transfer to the other tribes, and the property of Zelophehad daughters will be taken from the tribal inheritance of their ancestors. That was a valid reason to object and it was linked with their decision to whom they will marry.

Now the Israelites and among them the Zelophehad daughters they knew that they cannot marry to other nations and people but only with their fellow Israelites, as you can read hear, *“15 Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; 16 And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.” (Exodus 34:15-16 KJV)* But in addition to that, the issue was raised that the Zelophehad daughters should not have the freedom to marry from other tribes so the tribal inheritance shall not be transfer to another tribe. And God responded to that objection and agreed with their suggestion that the daughters of Zelophehad should marry only from the tribe of Manasseh as you can read here:

“5 And Moses commanded the children of Israel according to the word of the LORD, saying, The tribe of the sons of Joseph hath said well. 6 This is the thing which the LORD doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them marry to whom they think best; only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry. 7 So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe: for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. 8 And every daughter, that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers. 9 Neither shall the inheritance remove from one tribe to another tribe; but every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance. 10 Even as the LORD commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad: 11 For Mahlah, Tirzah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married unto their fathers brothers' sons: 12 And they were married into the families of the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance

remained in the tribe of the family of their father.” (Numbers 36:5-12 KJV) According to what we had read the following can be concluded and explained:

I. The right to marry: *“This is the thing which the LORD doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them marry.” (Numbers 36:6 KJV)* Every disciple of Jesus has the right to marry and has a family but everything should go according to the will of God, and God’s Word should come true in the life of the disciple. The daughters of Zelophehad had inheritance and they were prepared, so they can marry. Every disciple needs to be well prepared before marriage. The daughters of Zelophehad were allowed only to marry Israelites as we stated above. In the New Testament is the same situation, the disciple of Jesus, can marry a disciple of Jesus; a believer and a follower of Christ as God’s Word instruct us, *“14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? 15 And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? 16 And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18 KJV)* Paul also stated the right to marry, *“28 But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you.” (1 Corinthians 7:28 KJV)* Also, Paul stated about himself that he can marry, *“5 Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?” (1 Corinthians 9:5 KJV)*

II. The restriction of choice: The daughters of Zelophehad although they allowed them to marry, but they were restricted to marry only from their particular tribe, *“6 This is the thing which the LORD doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying, Let them marry to whom they think best; only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry.” (Numbers 36:6 KJV)* Now regarding the statement of *“Let them marry to whom they think best”*; it means does not depend on their wishes, dreams, desires, ambition, or a heart condition. But the statement to whom they think best, that they should use their mind, that based on the mind of God and the Word of God, to find out to whom God calling them to marry. So what God had put before them that they need to think properly before they can think about marriage. Their thinking should go with God’s Word and His will and His plan, then only they can think who is the best, whom they are called, to be a helper to him, to marry, to do God’s will and plan.

III. There is always restriction about the choice of marriage: If you look intently into the Word of God you will discover that God with the solution that He gave to the daughters of Zelophehad, He put restrictions on the choice of marriage, *“7 So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe: for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.” (Numbers 36:7 KJV)* * A disciple simply cannot marry another disciple unless ordained by God so that ministries will be built up and not abolished and diminished. * That is why the approval of the Godly parents and the elders of the ministry and church approval should go together to serve the purpose and the will of God in the life of the church and the life of His people. * As we stated before, that

God is the one who will appoint the partner for marriage and the church and the elders of the church are to approve what God had appointed.

IV. Restriction in marriage choices is generalized: The Lord with the solution that He gave to the daughters of Zelophehad, generalized that to the rest of the Israelites, *“8 And every daughter, that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers. 9 Neither shall the inheritance remove from one tribe to another tribe; but every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance.”* (Numbers 36:8-9 KJV) When it says here, *“every daughter, that possesseth an inheritance”*, God generalized that to the rest of the Israelites daughters who were having inheritance. The same now today in the New Testament church, those who have eternal life, whether men or women, who had believed in Christ, and gave their lives to Him and got water baptized, are obliged to follow God’s restriction and choices in marriage. They cannot marry what they want and wish and leave the ministry of God and the work of God got disturbed.

V. Marriage choice is linked with an eternal inheritance: God with the solution that He gave to the daughters of Zelophehad, He linked the marriage of the disciples with their inheritance, *“8 And every daughter, that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers.”* (Numbers 36:8 KJV) It says here, *“that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance”*; at that time the inheritance was about their father’s land. For us today is our eternal life from God our Father through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord. We receive eternal life today while we are on earth, through what Jesus did for us on the cross. But we are accountable to respond to that faithfully in how we live our lives and serve God and how we conduct our ministries and responsibilities. Our marriages and the choices we make should bring glory to God. Our marriages and the outcome of them can bring us either to heaven or hell. A man or woman, who is the disciple of Jesus, cannot marry apart from what God had ordained for her or for him to marry.

VI. Marriage choice should bring prosperity to the ministry: * The disciple who has a service and ministry, his marriage should bring the enhancement of that as it is in accordance to God’s Word, will, and plan. * God’s restriction in marriage for the disciple is the way that God used to lead the disciple to marry following God’s choice and will, and on the perfect time of God. *“8 And every daughter, that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers.”* (Numbers 36:8 KJV) It says here, *“that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers”*. Therefore marriage following God’s Word, will, and the choice is blessing, enjoyment, and prosperity for the ministry and for God’s church.

VII. There is always a right choice provided by God: *“10 Even as the LORD commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad: 11 For Mahlah, Tirzah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married unto their fathers’ brothers’ sons: 12 And they were married into the families of the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.”* (Numbers 36:10-12 KJV) * God is a just God and He will provide all the needed things. * When the church and the disciples and the elders and the parents and the children are abiding with these

guidelines that God had placed in His Word, things will go well and God’s choices will find out. * When disobedience and disregard to God’s Word and instruction prevail, wrong matches with wrong choices will form new marriages and the ministry of God will be greatly affected.

The daughters of Zelophehad did what Moses commanded and they married their cousins on their father’s side as God-ordained, *“12 And they were married into the families of the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.”* (Numbers 36:12 KJV) But if they would marry otherwise from outside their tribe then the tribe of Manasseh would have the right and will take their lands out of their hands. **In the same way, the church has the right not to entertain and keep the disciples, who would not do what God ordained but will do their own will, and marry wrong choices that would affect the outcome and the quality of the service and the ministry of God.**

The leaders of the tribe of Manasseh were responsible people and they addressed the issue and put outlines with the leadership of Moses for solutions so that mistakes would not happen that will affect the outcome of the people’s lives and God’s ministry.

My dear and beloved: God had a purpose to place this message in your hand, to impart to you deeper understanding, and to grasp God’s choice and will in your life about marriage. You are called to be a responsible person, to think about God and the people with you and yourself, with God’s perspective and eternity view in pertain to the choices of marriage. God had promised you eternity and life to the full as you abide with His will in your life and impart that to the people around you and to the people who are under your care.

Humble down before God, and He will lift you up in due time. Follow all the instructions that you received in this message and do your best to apply them in your life and in the life of your family and children and in the life of the church and the ministry that you are placed in. Stand firm in faith, trust Him and continue to obey Him and He will provide for you. Let us pray

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus, who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for the teaching that I received in this message about the rule of the church in preparation for Godly marriage. Lord thank you for all the corrections and the admonishments that I received in this message. Lord thank you for all your good promises to me as I put my full trust on you.

Come now to God and confess and renounce all your sins. Let us confess our sins and our trespasses. Confess and renounce your worldliness, your greed, and your love for money and material things. Confess and renounce your selfishness and your non concern to the ministries of God in His church. Confess and renounce doing your own will and plan and not the will nor the plan of God in pertains to marriage. Confess your lack of reading God’s Word and your lack of prayers. Confess and renounce your yoke with non believers, and in bondage with the Media. Confess your non willingness to serve God and to suffer for Him. forgive me, I repent of the following sins _____ .

Lord I humble myself before you and accept the teaching that I received in this message in pertain to marriage and the rule of the church in it and how to abide with the restriction so that the ministries of God’s church shall not be affected. Lord I commit myself to serve you and to do the task entrusted to me to do according to the teaching that I received in this

message in pertain to Godly marriages. Lord uphold me with your grace and provide for me so I will continue to serve you.

Lord thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who committed their lives to serve you and to go along the teaching that we received in this message. Lord use them to be instruments of righteousness to raise their children and disciples in a Godly way and to preserve to implement the teaching of Godly marriages. Lord use their lives as a good example for others to follow you.

Lord bless us as you church and sustain us to continue to teach and implement the teaching about preparation for Godly marriage that we received in this message. Lord prepare us so when you come we are ready to go with you. Lord form new families and add to us Godly families and prosper the ministries of the church. Lord refill us once again with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need to go and serve you. Lord enable us to evangelize and to reach new people with the gospel of Jesus. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.' Lord help us to plant new Bible studies and new congregation for the church. Lord we pray for more people to get water baptized and receive the Holy Spirit baptism. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us, and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all in Jesus name, Amen.

The Marriage of the Daughters of Zelophehad. Numbers 27:1-11. Numbers 26:33. Exodus 18:26. Numbers 32:33-42. Numbers 36:1-12. Exodus 34:15-16. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18. 1 Corinthians 7:28. 1 Corinthians 9:5.

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