

The Marriages of the Men of Benjamin

“1 Now the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpeh, saying, There shall not any of us give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife. 2 And the people came to the house of God, and abode there till even before God, and lifted up their voices, and wept sore; 3 And said, O LORD God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to day one tribe lacking in Israel? 4 And it came to pass on the morrow, that the people rose early, and built there an altar, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. 5 And the children of Israel said, Who is there among all the tribes of Israel that came not up with the congregation unto the LORD? For they had made a great oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD to Mizpeh, saying, He shall surely be put to death. 6 And the children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their brother, and said, There is one tribe cut off from Israel this day. 7 How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them of our daughters to wives? 8 And they said, What one is there of the tribes of Israel that came not up to Mizpeh to the LORD? And, behold, there came none to the camp from Jabeshgilead to the assembly. 9 For the people were numbered, and, behold, there were none of the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead there. 10 And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children. 11 And this is the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man. 12 And they found among the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead four hundred young virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. 13 And the whole congregation sent some to speak to the children of Benjamin that were in the rock Rimmon, and to call peaceably unto them. 14 And Benjamin came again at that time; and they gave them wives which they had saved alive of the women of Jabeshgilead: and yet so they sufficed them not. 15 And the people repented them for Benjamin, because that the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel. 16 Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin? 17 And they said, There must be an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel. 18 Howbeit we may not give them wives of our daughters: for the children of Israel have sworn, saying, Cursed be he that giveth a wife to Benjamin. 19 Then they said, Behold, there is a feast of the LORD in Shiloh yearly in a place which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah. 20 Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards; 21 And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. 22 And it shall be, when their fathers or their brethren come unto us to complain, that we will say unto them, Be favourable unto them for our sakes: because we reserved not to each man his wife in the war: for ye did not give unto them at this time, that ye should be guilty. 23 And the children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught: and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and repaired the cities, and dwelt in them. 24 And the children of Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe and to his family, and they went out from thence every man to his inheritance. 25 In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.” (Judges 21:1-25 KJV)

The six hundred of Benjamin, who were left after the campaign the Israelites did against the tribe of Benjamin to deal with the sons of Belial who raped the Levite's concubine and caused her to die, had escaped and hid in the rock of Rimmon. All their families and cattle were killed and their cities were set on fire, *“46 So that all which fell that day of Benjamin were twenty and five thousand men that drew the sword; all these were men of valour. 47 But six hundred men turned and fled to the wilderness unto the rock Rimmon, and abode in the rock Rimmon four months. 48 And the men of Israel turned again upon the children of Benjamin, and smote them with the edge of the sword, as well the men of every city, as the beast, and all that came to hand: also they set on fire all the cities that they came to.”* (Judges 20:46-48 KJV) The remaining six hundred of Benjamin got a good lesson of what they did and what God had brought unto them, and sure they were repented of their sins of condoning and protecting the sons of Belial and the criminal acts that they did. Therefore God had mercy on them and had put mercy in the hearts of the Israelites toward the six hundred men who left from the tribe of Benjamin, *“15 And the people repented them for Benjamin, because that the LORD had made a breach in the tribes of Israel.”* (Judges 21:15 KJV) The Israelites cried to God in prayer, *“2 And the people came to the house of God, and abode there till even before God, and lifted up their voices, and wept sore; 3 And said, O LORD God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be to day one tribe lacking in Israel?”* (Judges 21:2-3 KJV) With such an outcome, of six hundred men from the tribe of Benjamin without women left for them to marry, as well as the Israelites had sworn that none of them will give his daughter to any of the remaining men of Benjamin in marriage, the tribe of Benjamin was to be lacking in Israel.

But as God had mercy on tribe of Benjamin, the Israelites said: *“There must be an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel. 18 Howbeit we may not give them wives of our daughters: for the children of Israel have sworn, saying, Cursed be he that giveth a wife to Benjamin.”* (Judges 21:17-18 KJV) Indeed, God responded to the prayer and the pleas of His people for Benjamin, and He made a way for this tribe to continue to exist in Israel as we will explain later on.

Good to know that Saul the first King of Israel was from the tribe of Benjamin. Mordecai and Esther in the book of Esther who played an important role to save the people of God from the plot of Haman were from the tribe of Benjamin, and Saul of Tarsus who wrote around half of the New Testament was also from the tribe of Benjamin. **Marriages are important to give birth to heros who would serve God.**

Our God is the God of justice. He dealt properly with the sons of Belial and with the men of the tribe of Benjamin who protected them. He also dealt properly with the people of Jabeshgilead from the tribe of Gad who were absent and did not come with the Israelites when they gathered to deal with the sin of the men of Benjamin. **Those who are complacent to deal with evildoers are sharers with them.** God sent His judgment on the people of Jabeshgilead and were put to the edge of the sword. *“7 How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them of our daughters to wives? 8 And they said, What one is there of the tribes of Israel that came not up to Mizpeh to the LORD? And, behold, there came none to the camp from Jabeshgilead to the assembly. 9 For the people were numbered, and, behold, there were none of the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead there. 10 And the congregation sent thither twelve thousand men of the valiantest, and commanded them, saying, Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead*

with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children. 11 And this is the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man. 12 And they found among the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead four hundred young virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. 13 And the whole congregation sent some to speak to the children of Benjamin that were in the rock Rimmon, and to call peaceably unto them. 14 And Benjamin came again at that time; and they gave them wives which they had saved alive of the women of Jabeshgilead: and yet so they sufficed them not.” (Judges 21:7-14 KJV) With such judgment, four hundred virgins were found among the people of Jabeshgilead and were given to the men of Benjamin in marriage. **You see here, that when we do what is right and just, the Lord shall provide for our needs and the needs of His church.** The men of Benjamin went to their inheritance to erect their houses to dwell in. So materially they were having good physical resources and fields to sustain the families. Spiritually both the men of Benjamin and the virgins of Jabeshgilead had seen the bad effect of condoning sin and non-willingness to stand for the truth and deal with sin and with evildoers. Sure their stories and their repentance are good atmosphere and are good stories to tell and to teach their children, the next generation. Both of them had left their fathers and mothers and united on the truth to raise a Godly generation and to teach them not to condone and not to cover up sin.

This story of the marriages of the men of Benjamin has peculiar lessons that we can learn from them.

- Regarding their choice of marriage both the men and the women were not asked about their opinion of their partner and the time to marry.
- Like what had happened in **Genesis 2**, Adam and Eve, did not choose or like each other and they did not meet and marry according to their timetable and wishes.
- Here the Lord arranged the marriages of those men of Benjamin through His people the church.

Four hundred virgins were given to the men of Benjamin therefore two hundred women were needed for the remaining. God moved on their behalf and made a solution for them, again through His church, **“16 Then the elders of the congregation said, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin? 17 And they said, There must be an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel. 18 Howbeit we may not give them wives of our daughters: for the children of Israel have sworn, saying, Cursed be he that giveth a wife to Benjamin. 19 Then they said, Behold, there is a feast of the LORD in Shiloh yearly in a place which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah. 20 Therefore they commanded the children of Benjamin, saying, Go and lie in wait in the vineyards; 21 And see, and, behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in dances, then come ye out of the vineyards, and catch you every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh, and go to the land of Benjamin. 22 And it shall be, when their fathers or their brethren come unto us to complain, that we will say unto them, Be favourable unto them for our sakes: because we reserved not to each man his wife in the war: for ye did not give unto them at this time, that ye should be guilty.” (Judges 21:16-22 KJV)**

- Again both those men and women married not of their choice, wish, or on their timetable.

- No wedding preparations were made. Marriage preparation was made by God but no wedding preparation was made by man.
- God was just in His discipline to the people of Shiloh because the Israelites of Shiloh should not let their virgins display and dance in public even in the feasts of the Lord.

That was most likely the feast of the tabernacles. What God did was a good discipline for those families and sure after what had happened no one will allow his daughter to dance in public. **Even a good lesson for us today, that we need to keep holiness in our church and not allow girls to display and dance so that boys will not be allowed to get enticed and do things wrong and that would displease us and disturb us.**

But for sure those men of Benjamin were well provided physically because the inheritance of the whole tribe of Benjamin will be distributed only to six hundred men and sure everyone's share will be very big. That is why these two hundred wives from Shiloh even their fathers and brethren were alive, they did not move to get their daughters back because they were blessed well materially and were provided with huge resources to sustain their families and their children in the future.

God can work miraculously and use His church to arrange marriages as His Holy Spirit leads us to do the needful. In pertaining to that, all that God will do will go along His Word and what He instituted in **Genesis 2 in building and forming Godly families.**

My Dear and Beloved: Commit yourself to the principle of this message and humble yourself before God and His church and accept His will for you in your life as you agree to surrender your life and your will unto God. As you do that, the Lord shall surely leads you and guides you as you are willing to abide by His plan. The Lord shall sustain you and provides for you to do and live in His will. **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, the discipline, the rebuke and the correction that I received through your Word. Lord thank you for the good plan that you have for me and thank you for your grace and for the restoration that you had started in me.

Now confess and renounce all your sins. Confess your corruptions, compromises and condoning the sins of others. Confess and renounce your worldliness, and your love for material things. Confess and renounce your non willingness to stand for the truth nor to take a disciplinary action against sin. Confess and renounce doing your own will and plan and not the will nor the plan of God, especially 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, having many friends and in bondage with the Media. Confess and renounce your non willingness to serve God and suffer for Him. Lord forgive me, I repent of the following sins _____.

Lord I commit myself to live and to do your will, to deal with sin and to submit myself to your will in pertains to marriage. Lord I commit myself to set a good example to others so people will see Christ in me and will start to follow you. Lord I am willing to suffer for you and to

serve your will and your purpose in my life. Lord uphold me with your grace and provide for me so I will continue to live my life for you.

Lord thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins, humbled themselves and willing to follow your will and plan for them. Lord bless them, continue to provide for them and use them to serve you. Lord I pray that you will restore those who repented and came back to you.

Lord, bless us as your church, and help us to continue to implement the teaching of preparation for Godly marriage and to prepare your people to do your will and your plan in their lives. Lord we commit ourselves to discipline those in sin and who caused trespasses in your church. Lord prepare us for your second coming that we will be ready when you will come to take us to Heaven. Lord refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need in order to go on and evangelize, and make new disciples and train new workers to go and plant more Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord we pray for more people to get water baptized and receive the Holy Spirit baptism. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.' 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 fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

The Marriages of the Men of Benjamin. Judges 21:1-25. Judges 20:46-48.

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