

“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 600 Benjamites who were left after the campaign the Israelites did against them to deal with the sons of Belial who raped the Levite concubine and caused her to die, had escaped and hid in the rock of Rimmon. All their families, animals were killed and their cities were put to 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)* The remaining of the Benjamites they 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 put mercy in the hearts of the Israelites toward the 600 who left from the tribe of Benjamin. The Israelites cried to God, *“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?”* With such an outcome, of 600 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 Benjamites in marriage, the tribe of Benjamin is to be lacking in Israel.

The Israelites said *“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.”* Therefore God responded to the prayer and the plea of His people for the Benjamites, and He made a way for this tribe to continue to exist in Israel. 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 Paul of Tarsus who wrote 50% of the New Testament was also from the tribe of Benjamin.

Our God is God of justice. He dealt properly with the sons of Belial and with the Benjamites 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 sin. Those who are complacent to deal with evil doers are sharers with them. God sent his judgment on the people of Jabeshgilead and were put to the edge of the sword. With such judgment 400 virgins were found among the people of Jabeshgilead and were given to the Benjamites in marriage. The Benjamites they went to their inheritance to repair and dwell in. So materially they have houses and good physical resources to sustain the families. Spiritually both the Benjamites men and the Jabeshgileadites virgins had seen the bad effect of condoning sin and non willingness to stand for the truth and deal with sin and evil doers. Sure their stories are good atmosphere of repentance in their life and in the life of their children, the next generation. Both of them had left their fathers and mothers and united on the truth to raise up a godly generation and to teach them not condone or cover up sin. In regard to 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 happened in Genesis 2, Adam and Eve, they did not choose or like each other

and they did not meet and marry according to their timetable and wish. Here the Lord arranged the marriage of those four hundreds Benjamites through His people the church.

Four hundred virgins were given to the Benjamites, therefore two hundred women were needed for the remaining. God moved for their behalf and made a solution 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.”* Both men and women married not of their choice, wish or on their timetable. No wedding preparations were made. God was just in that because the Israelites of Shiloh should not let their virgins to display 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. But for sure those Benjamites were well provided physically because the inheritance of the whole tribe of Benjamin will be distributed only to 600 men and sure everyone share will be very big. That is why these 200 wives from Shiloh even their fathers and brethren were alive, they did not move to get their daughters back because they are now blessed with well materially provided houses and resources to sustain their families and their children in the future.

My dear and beloved: God can work miraculously through His church to arrange marriages and do the needful, and all what He do go along His word and what He instituted in Genesis 2 in building and forming the family. 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 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 death to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word that teaching me new things and show how you are a God of justice and a God of love and restoration. I surrender my life and my will unto you. Lord leads me and guide for I am willing to abide with your plan. Lord sustains me and provide for me to do it. This is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.*

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