

Judges 21:1-25 **Wives for the 600 survivors of the tribe of Benjamin**

Oath at Mizpah

¹ Now the men of Israel had sworn an oath at Mizpah, saying, "None of us shall give his daughter to Benjamin as a wife."

Grief that a tribe of Israel is missing taken before Yehowah – search for wives for survivors

² Then the people came to the house of God, and remained there before God till evening. They lifted up their voices and wept bitterly, ³ and said, "O LORD God of Israel, why has this come to pass in Israel, that today there should be one tribe missing in Israel?"

⁴ So it was, on the next morning, that the people rose early and built an altar there, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. ⁵ The children of Israel said, "Who is there among all the tribes of Israel who did not come up with the assembly to the LORD?" For they had made a great oath concerning anyone who had not come up to the LORD at Mizpah, saying, "He shall surely be put to death." ⁶ And the children of Israel grieved for Benjamin their brother, and said, "One tribe is cut off from Israel today. ⁷ What shall we do for wives for those who remain, seeing we have sworn by the LORD that we will not give them our daughters as wives?"

Wives for Benjamin from Jabesh Gilead 400

⁸ And they said, "What one is there from the tribes of Israel who did not come up to Mizpah to the LORD?" And, in fact, no one had come to the camp from Jabesh Gilead to the assembly. ⁹ For when the people were counted, indeed, not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead was there. ¹⁰ So the congregation sent out there twelve thousand of their most valiant men, and commanded them, saying, "Go and strike the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead with the edge of the sword, including the women and children. ¹¹ And this is the thing that you shall do: You shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman who has known a man intimately." ¹² So they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead four hundred young virgins who had not known a man intimately; and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan.

¹³ Then the whole congregation sent word to the children of Benjamin who were at the rock of Rimmon, and announced peace to them. ¹⁴ So Benjamin came back at that time, and they gave them the women whom they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh Gilead; and yet they had not found enough for them. ¹⁵ And the people grieved for Benjamin, because the LORD had made a void in the tribes of Israel.

Plan for dancing wives for Benjamin at Shiloh

¹⁶ Then the elders of the congregation said, "What shall we do for wives for those who remain, since the women of Benjamin have been destroyed?" ¹⁷ And they said, "There must be an inheritance for the survivors of Benjamin, that a tribe may not be destroyed from Israel. ¹⁸ However, we cannot give them wives from our daughters, for the children of Israel have sworn an oath, saying, 'Cursed be the one who gives a wife to Benjamin.' " ¹⁹ Then they said, "In fact, there is a yearly feast of the LORD in Shiloh, which is north of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goes up from Bethel to Shechem, and south of Lebonah." ²⁰ Therefore they instructed the children of Benjamin, saying, "Go, lie in wait in the vineyards, ²¹ and watch; and just when the daughters of Shiloh come out to perform their dances, then come out from the vineyards, and every man catch a wife for himself from the daughters of Shiloh; then go to the land of Benjamin. ²² Then it shall be, when their fathers or their brothers come to us to complain, that we will say to them, 'Be kind to them for our sakes,

because we did not take a wife for any of them in the war; for it is not as though you have given the women to them at this time, making yourselves guilty of your oath.' "

23 And the children of Benjamin did so; they took enough wives for their number from those who danced, whom they caught. Then they went and returned to their inheritance, and they rebuilt the cities and dwelt in them. 24 So the children of Israel departed from there at that time, every man to his tribe and family; they went out from there, every man to his inheritance.

Right in their own eyes

25 In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

Oath at Mizpah [Judges 21:1]

- ✧ No one will give his daughter to Benjamin as a wife.
- ✧ In the heat of battle men make strange vows to Yehowah which they later grow to regret.

Grief that a tribe of Israel is missing taken before Yehowah – search for wives for survivors [Judges 21:2-7]

- ✧ Realizing they had killed the entire tribe of Benjamin except 600 survivors, the Children of Israel came to the House of Elohiym at Shiloh and wept bitterly asking, "**O LORD God of Israel, why has this come to pass in Israel, that today there should be one tribe missing in Israel?**"
- ✧ So many times when we do something we regret, we ask God why we now face the consequences of our actions. That is human nature.
- ✧ When they recognized the result of the war that had occurred, they began to plan a way out of the situation and how to rectify the consequence of their actions.
- ✧ How do we get around our vow without breaking it?
- ✧ Their second oath seemed to satisfy the dilemma. Their oath said, "anyone not represented in the assembly before Yehowah at Mizpah will be put to death."

Wives for Benjamin from Jabesh Gilead 400 [Judges 21:8-15]

- ✧ The search indicated that no one from Jabesh Gilead showed up at Mizpah, so they went to Jabesh Gilead and killed everyone except virgin girls.
- ✧ That provided wives for 400 men of Benjamin.
- ✧ The people grieved for Benjamin, because the LORD had made a void in the tribes of Israel.

Plan for dancing wives for Benjamin at Shiloh [Judges 21:16-24]

- ✧ To make up for the 200 survivors of Benjamin who remained without wives, the Children of Israel decided to allow the men of Benjamin to catch and carry away 200 wives from the girls who danced at the yearly Feast of Yehowah in Shiloh.
- ✧ They gave the men of Benjamin instructions to wait in hiding until the girls come out to dance at the feast of Yehowah, and then to catch each man a wife from among the dancers so a tribe of Israel would not be eliminated.
- ✧ That way no one could say that he gave his daughter to Benjamin.
- ✧ It was done as instructed and Benjamin returned to his inheritance and rebuilt the cities and dwelt in them.

Right in their own eyes

- ✧ **In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.** [Judges 21:25, Deuteronomy 12:8, Judges 17:6, Ezekiel 36:17]

- ✧ This is a good example of people doing what is right in their own eyes and suffering the consequences of their actions.
- ✧ Today is no different, most people ignore the clear Word of God that would enable them to live good and satisfying lives, preferring to do what is right in their own eyes.
- ✧ We see it today in business practices, political decisions, educational curriculum, and general public attitudes and values.
- ✧ Even in religious groups the majority of the people follow the same pattern of doing what seems right in their own eyes, rather than searching out the commandments of God to obey them.
- ✧ There is little wonder why the Wrath of God is coming on our world, and few are even aware of the fact. The Great Tribulation is fully justified by the ungodliness in the world today.
- ✧ Laws of the nations have been corrupted to make the commandments of God seem unacceptable in the eyes of mankind, and the things God condemns have become acceptable life behavior in the eyes of people of our time.
- ✧ There is a consequence to our ungodly behavior and it is approaching rapidly.
- ✧ The world needs to repent fully and turn to God, that the Wrath of His judgment may be delayed.
- ✧ We indeed need to pray, and along with prayer we need to call the world to repentance.