Glory be to our Lord Jesus Christ forever. Welcome as we dive into an inspiring biblical story that highlights faith, justice, and God’s unfolding revelation in His covenant people.

Introduction: Context and Significance

In the Old Testament, we encounter the story of Zelophehad’s five daughters (Numbers 27:1-11), a narrative that challenges cultural norms and reveals God’s justice and mercy. These women from the tribe of Manasseh courageously stepped forward to claim their inheritance an act that ultimately led to a significant legal reform in Israel.

The story takes place during the Israelites’ wilderness journey from Egypt to Canaan. God, through Moses, was preparing to distribute the Promised Land according to tribal allotments (Numbers 26:52-56). Each tribe’s share was proportional to its size, with Judah being the largest and Manasseh among the smaller tribes (Numbers 26:62).

Inheritance laws in ancient Israel were patriarchal: property passed through male heirs to maintain tribal land holdings and family lineage (Deuteronomy 21:15-17). Women traditionally did

not inherit land, which made Zelophehad’s daughters’ case unprecedented.

The Story: A Bold Petition for Justice

Zelophehad died without sons, and according to custom, his inheritance was at risk of being lost to his family line (Numbers 27:3 NIV):

> *“Our father died in the wilderness. He was not among Korah’s followers who banded together against the Lord, but he died for his own sin and left no sons.”*

His daughters Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah came forward with a bold plea (Numbers 27:4-5 NIV):

> *“Why should our father’s name disappear from his clan because he had no son? Give us property among our father’s relatives.”*

Moses brought their case before God, who affirmed their claim, establishing a new legal precedent (Numbers 27:7-11 ESV):

> *"The daughters of Zelophehad speak rightly. You shall surely give them a possession of an inheritance among their father's brothers, and cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them... If a man dies and has no son, then you shall cause his inheritance to pass to his daughter."*

1. God's Justice and Inclusiveness
   This narrative reveals God's concern for justice and the inclusion of women within His covenant community. Though patriarchal customs prevailed, God's response showed that His justice transcends human traditions and recognizes the dignity and rights of all His people (Psalm 89:14). The daughters' faith and persistence reflect God's heart for equity and the protection of family legacy.
2. Faith that Transforms Culture
   The daughters' approach was courageous and rooted in faith. They did not resort to rebellion or social upheaval but respectfully appealed to Moses and, ultimately, to God's justice. Their example reminds us that faithful petitions grounded in God's truth can bring about transformation within society (Hebrews 11:1).
3. Inheritance and Covenant Identity
   Inheritance in Israel was not just material but deeply tied to covenant identity and belonging. To deny these daughters their inheritance was to erase their place in God's covenant community. Their claim, therefore, upheld their rightful identity as God's people.

Application for Today: Jesus as Our Advocate

Moses served as mediator in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 18:15-18), bringing the people’s petitions before God. Today, Jesus Christ is our perfect Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5), the one to whom we bring our requests for justice and provision.

Approach Him with boldness and faith, armed with God’s Word as your foundation:

> *Isaiah 41:21 (NIV)*
> *“Present your case,” says the Lord. “Set forth your arguments,” says Jacob’s King.*

> *Isaiah 43:26 (ESV)*
> *“Put me in remembrance; let us argue together; set forth your case, that you may be proved right.”*

The Power of Unity

The five daughters’ strength lay in their unity. Not one daughter, but all five together made their case. Jesus teaches that where two or more believers agree in prayer, their requests are powerful before God:

> *Matthew 18:19 (NIV)*
> *“Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.”*

Unity amplifies our faith and petitions, helping us stand firm in God’s promises.

May the Lord grant us faith like the daughters of Zelophehad bold, respectful, and united so that we can open the doors that seem closed in our lives.

Maranatha! The Lord is coming!

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