

Marriage: the Nation that Tests You

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[Announcer]:

Welcome to Brothers of the Word. Because brother, you need the word!
[Applause]

And if you are undergoing a test today, I want you to listen to what I have to say very carefully, if you've got tests in your life, then you need to hear today's message.

I'm going to be speaking primarily from the book of Judges in the Bible, from two particular passages in Judges. The first one is Judges the second chapter, the twentieth through the twenty-third verse and it reads thus-
"Then the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he said, because this nation has transgressed my covenant which I commanded their fathers and has not heeded my voice, I also will no longer drive out before them any of the nations which Joshua left when he died. So that through them, I may test Israel, whether they will keep the ways of the Lord, to walk in them as their fathers kept them or not. Therefore the Lord left those nations, without driving them out immediately nor did He deliver them into the hand of Joshua."

God says here that, because the children of Israel had gotten away from His command, He said *I'm going to leave some folks here to test you.* He said, in essence: *Look, I could have gotten rid of all of the folk, I could have empowered Joshua, just like I empowered him to bring down the walls of Jericho and to conquer so many other people.* God says: *Look, I could have cleaned out all of your enemies, I could have taken all of these nations out from around you, I could have given you dominion over all of this land.* He said: *But because you have not been obedient, he said I've got to leave some people to test you, to see whether you're going to do right or not.*

Turn to the person sitting next to you and just tell them "Or Not."

God says: *I have got to leave some nations to test you, to see whether you will do right or not.* See, God has some experience dealing with folks, and God knew that more often than not, folk wouldn't do right. So he said: *I'm going to leave some nations here just to test you.*

Then on down in Judges Chapter 3, beginning at the first verse, -*"Now these are the nations which the Lord left, that He might test Israel by them, that is all who had not known any of the wars in Canaan; this was only so the generations of the children of Israel might be taught to know war. At least those who had not formerly known it, namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sideonans, and the Hivites who dwelt in Mount Lebanon, from Mount Baalhermon to the entrance of Hamath. And they were*

left that He might test Israel by them to know whether they would obey the commandments of the Lord, which he had commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.”

Now here God goes into a second reason why He did not clear out all of the enemies of the children of Israel. He said first in Judges 2:20-23, he said, *I'm leaving these people to test you.* Then when it gets on down to the third chapter of Judges, those first four verses he says: *“I'm leaving these people to test you, and I'm leaving them because they're some of you here who basically don't know war. You've never experienced it like your fathers; you've never gone through some of the trails and the tribulations and the hardships.* He said I believe in some of these people here need to learn how to fight. So God says I'm leaving you these nations to test you, and so the children of Israel might be taught to know war.

And I'm going to be speaking today from the subject of the Nation that tests you. And the revelation behind this, there are many of them as there are in many passages in the Bible, but what really hit me was when it got to the fifth verse of the third chapter of Judges. And God had left all of these people he left five lords of the Philistines, and yet... and you know who the Philistines were, but it's when it got to the fifth and sixth verse of that third chapter of Judges, something hit me, and this is what the Bible says- *“Thus the children of the Israel's dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.”* And this verse number six is the kicker- *“And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons and they served their gods.”*

The nations that God left to test, to try and to train the children of Israel, the nations that God left, the children of Israel married. They married them!

You see people even today; marriage is about the biggest test that you ever undergo. God says, I left these folk to test you, some of you wondering why you got who you married, just turn to the person sitting and tell them: it's just a test. Some of you are wondering, why in the world... Lord what in the...Don't you understand that's what Adam was thinking? Adam told God that, when God asked Adam, you know what Adam said? Adam said, Lord, he said the woman...what, you don't remember?...that you gave me. That's what Adam said. He said look at the woman that you gave me. And see you have to be able to read between the lines- Adam what he was saying was, Look Lord, why didn't you give me a woman that wasn't going to eat the fruit? You could have just as easily, you made her, you shaped her, you got the rib out of me, you made her, you could have just as easily infused in that woman that she wasn't going to eat that fruit and get me into this mess. The woman you, why you given me a woman... and I know good and well that you could have made a woman that wouldn't have eaten that fruit. So why in the

world you had to give me this woman that ate that fruit, brought me this fruit, got me in this mess, and got me booted out of the garden? Here I am in this mess, got to work all the rest of my life by the sweat of my brow, all because of the woman you gave me!

See that was the monologue that Adam really was going through in his mind. Hey Lord, God look- God had made the one woman, made the one woman...and the one woman he made, got Adam in trouble. So I know Adam had to wonder, Lord what in the world were You thinking?

I've got to leave some nations to test you, so that some of you who have never been in war, so that you would even know war. Do you know sometimes in marriage, you know that thing is ... whew. Anyone that's married, don't agree with me- you sitting there with your wife, you sitting there and say I wonder what in the world the pastor is talking about. So don't say Amen too loud, it'll get you in trouble.

But even marriage can be some of the most difficult, some of the greatest conflict, some of the stuff that you have to go through, that you've never gone through before. And you will even wonder- Lord what in the world did you give me this man for? Lord what in the world did you give me this woman for? Because he had to put you in a nation to test you!

See some people, sometimes people we think we get married just to be happy. Now sometimes God has made you married to make you holy, because the only way you can survive it sometimes is to get holy. And there be some things that he has placed you—and it looks like you know the problem with the children of Israel—you know that's the only thing that God said the children of Israel did with the people? And the other thing is he said they didn't even see it like they married their own nation, all he said is that they went out and they took their daughters to be their wives and they gave their daughters to their sons. Look like, from the bible, it looks like that's all that they married!

God had to leave some nations to test them. And if you're married, or thinking about getting married, you got to ask yourself, can you pass the test? Because I can just about guarantee you, it's going to be one of the toughest tests in your life. I have one of the sweetest wives in the world, sweetest wife in the world. But when God spew, when God spew put it out in the dust, and putting the spirits together- God said I'm going to put something in here that's going to test this boy. I need to develop his spirit, I need to mold him more into my image, I got to purge some things out of him. So I got to put some of this in him. And God said I need to make him more humble so I need to put a little of this in here. And God molded, and he shaped and he gave me a nation, and then had me marry the nation. But I

meant, I told her straight, you're putting me to the test on my shirt, I'm just going to go on through me, and the minute I walked down that aisle, it disappeared.

[Laughter]

And I can imagine that the children of Israel, when they looked over and they saw the daughters of the Philistines, these were the Philistines. The ones that they battled with, all this time and yet they saw the daughters of the Philistines, God said, because He said I've got to test them. Number one, to see if they will keep My commands and number two, so that may be taught the art of war.

And you see people even in marriage, there is an art to reducing and eliminating the natural conflict that occurs, it is inherent in any type of- there are some extremely rare situations where there is virtually none. But I don't know them. Every situation that I know, where I know close details you have to learn the art of war. And you have to learn how to mesh and to mold and to keep things peaceful. It's the nation that tests you.

And God said he left five lords of the Philistines. David had to conquer the Philistines. You know who else had a battle with the Philistines? Samson. None of the men could've fought Samson, Samson was so powerful, he took the jawbone of an ass, and just beat him to death. So who did they send in? Who? They send in Delilah! She tested that rascal to no end.

And here the same thing occurs with the children of Israel, and I'm going to give you... when David went to conquer the Philistines, the giant of Goliath, David took with him five smooth stones and I'm going to give you five smooth stones to deal with in your relationships. Because it is a nation that God has sent to test you.

Most people did not pass the test. That's why God was testing them, because prior in history they didn't pass the test. So he was testing them.

Five smooth stones. Now even the five lords of the Philistines, David whipped Goliath with the five smooth stones. But there was one he didn't conquer, Bathsheba. She messed him up. And you will see that David went; now marriage is divine, it is the best thing in the world, but it can be the worst thing in the world if you don't pass the test. So here David faced the Philistines, Samson faced the Philistines. And when David took the five smooth stones, there were five lords of the Philistines, so he really took a stone for every lord. Goliath had four brothers. And the five lords were- Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath and Gaza. You all hear about all the fighting going on in the Gaza strip? Do you all know that was one of the laws of Philistines? They're still battling over that rascal.

You need these five smooth stones, and there's a power just inside, there are five books of the Tara, the Pentair, there are five fingers on each hand that you must do and handle, there are five toes on each foot, there are five senses. The Ten Commandments had two tablets of stone, and on each tablet was five commandments. Five smooth stones so that you can pass the test of the nation of marriage.

First of all David got his five smooth stones from a brook, and verse Samuel 17:40 says "*And he took his staff in his hand and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook.*" You have to be careful where you get your stones. Turn to the person next to you and tell them you gotta be careful where you get your stones. You see, in the brook, they were covered in running water, and water is always symbolic of a type of spirit. You need to get your stones covered in spirit.

See now a lot of people got stones but they not covered in spirit, they just throwing some heavy duty stones, you need some spiritual stones. The stones were smooth because if you ever go in a stream in a river bed, you'll find all of the rocks are smooth because as spirit flows over you- when it flows over you enough, it'll smooth out all of your rough edges.

And in the five smooth stones, we have essentially five senses in the natural flesh and it's within these five senses that we use to sense and intake in the material world, and I want to relate just a five smooth stones to our five senses that we will need in relationship and the first of the senses is fight, vision.

Often times you will not be able to get along in your nation of marriage because you got two different visions. And the problem that what happens when the children of Israel married the Philistines, they had different guards. And when you have different guards, you gonna have different visions. You have to have one vision. You don't have to agree all of the time but you must have one vision. Anytime there are two visions you have division. And it's why even though you have two eyes, they are one vision. They form one image in the brain.

Do you know what they call it when you got one eye going one way and one eye going another? You can't even walk if both of your eyes going in different directions. That's what happens in relationship, when you don't have a unified vision. It is by divine law the male's responsibility to set the vision for the house. But you must be able to speak the vision. Mean if you married your wife need to know what your vision is and it ought to be more than "I'm in charge" that's not a vision. But they need to know what your vision is in every single area of life; they need to know what the vision is. I tell my wife what the vision is. There are some things I say- look that's not important,

that's not a priority in this household. This is what is prioritized within this house. You have to be able to set a vision. Sight is the first criteria of your smooth stone and if you get on one accord, and both of you can see the same thing, the same mission. Submission means under the mission, where you have to be to see the mission. If you can see the same mission you're half way there.

Second thing, the second sense is the sense of hearing. The bible says faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. That's in Romans 10-17. But most of us have never read all of that, see we just read that verse. Let me read the whole verse which is 17 through 19 in Romans, it says this— "So then faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God but I say have they not heard? Yes indeed, their sound has gone out to all the earth and their words to the ends of the world. But I say- did Israel not know? First Moses says, I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation. You already know that part of that verse didn't you? Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Right after the man says, and I'll provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation and anger by a foolish nation. Sometimes people when God sends people to us they're foolish and it just makes you mad but you got to deal with it, cause it's a test. Turn to the person sitting next to you and say it's just a test. You have to learn how to deal with some of this stuff, even, and if you don't constantly abide the word of God and if both of you don't hear the same things, you won't have the same vision. What're you hearing together? You just can't have one person going to church hearing the word and the other one doesn't. And when that happens you're not hearing the same things. And it's important for us to spend time together, but see faith does not come by going to the movies together. Faith doesn't come by having a romantic dinner together. Faith doesn't come by watching television together. Faith comes by hearing the word of God and you cannot hear for the other person. So many times we sit up in church— oh I wish my husband could hear that word. You can't hear for the other person. Oh I wish my wife could hear that, you can't hear for the other person. You need to have that person-- The person has to hear for themselves. And you have to hear for yourself.

Third of the five senses is the sense of smell- smell in a spiritual sense is simply this, it is the ability to sense and discern what's in the air. See all smell by the olfactory nerve, all smell basically is caused by airborne molecules. If you have no air you have no smell. Nor do you have any hearing for that matter. But smell is simply the ability to sense and discern what's in the air.

Do you know my wife can smell when something's wrong with me? She senses it. Sometimes I'll get home from work and she'll say, what's wrong

with you? I haven't said a word, but she can sense the spirit. See you have to be able to smell the state of your relationship; you have to know what's in the air. When you're sensitive to the relationship you'll be able to discern some things before the stuff gets all out of hand. See it's no good for you to be able to smell fire once you see flames coming through the roof. There's no good. You need to be able to smell it, while some fire brewing when you came through, you have to do this even with your relationship. You have to know when something is in the air that is not right so you can get the thing fixed before it turns into something that's irreparable.

The fourth thing is taste. Actually do you know there are five different types of taste? There is sweet, produced by sugar, there is the opposite of sweet which is bitter, produced by alkaloids. There is salty, produced by sodium chloride, and there is sour, normally produced by acids. But there is a fourth taste that most people are not familiar with by technical name and it's called, umami, now umami is the taste of savoriness, it's a taste- is perhaps best known and imparted by the flavor of monosodium glutamate. It's called savoriness. See, some people - some of us need to get some umami in our relationship. We need to get some savoriness in it, because we got too much sour and we have too much bitter.

I am out of time for those of you who are watching me by television, simply go to AirJesus.com and you can listen to message number 5232 and hear the remainder of this message or send this to a friend who you know that needs it. We thank you for joining us here at Brothers of the Word, because brother you need the word. [Applause]

And the five different types of taste, they very adequately describe the five different types of relationships. Some are sweet, some are sour, some are salty, some are bitter and some are savory. What does your relationship taste like? And see in order for us to change the taste of something we have to change the ingredients. If it's too salty, if it's too bitter, if it's too sour, you have to take the salty and the bitter and the sour stuff out. What does your relationship taste like?

And the fifth of the five senses, it is the sense of touch or put another way it is the sense of feeling. See really when you touch something what you really do is feel it and if we can ever become sensitive to the other person's feeling instead of just our own. One of the great cheeses of being able to have a truly happy and successful relationship is the ability to put yourself in the other person's shoes. You need to care about my feelings. And unfortunately it is the way most relationships break up, because all we focused on is my feelings. And if you can learn to see something from the other person's point of view—I had to readjust to my wife's, cause my wife is more sensitive than I am. My wife even in a physical form is far more sensitive. I found out my

wife can literally hear, in reality a dog whistle. I bought a little device because she's scared of dogs, I'm not, I have to recognize that difference. So I bought my wife a little electronic device and when you press the button it emits an ultrasonic pitch to scare the dogs away and I told her, Quinton I got this device, so you never walking around the neighborhood, and if a dog comes up you just press the button you can't hear it. I pressed the button to show her how to light it, my wife said "ow", I said now you don't understand you can't hear it. I said this is for the dog. This is above the frequency range that the human ear can pick up, you cannot hear it. Quin said I can hear that. I said no you can't, I said that's scientifically just impossible, only dogs have ears sensitive enough to hear this. She said I heard it, no you didn't. I said let me show you, you can't hear this thing. We were riding in the van, so I took a newspaper and just covered it up so she couldn't see it and I waited a while before I pressed the button and I pressed the button, and Quinton was driving and couldn't see it, Quin said "Oww". [Laughter] and it shocked me, I said how in the world can this woman hear what is scientifically a human being is not suppose to be able to hear? And I couldn't hear it and the children were in the back, they couldn't hear it, but she could.

See people we've got to understand in a relationship that there are some things and there are some feelings that others are sensitive to, that we're not. The button could be pressing all day long- I could go to sleep with that button being pressed and it wouldn't bother me at all. There are some things that they don't bother me at all but because Quinton is sensitive to those things. We have to understand the sense of touch and the sense of feeling and to understand great relationships are made when the other person is different. Why do you think Jesus said to love a neighbor and thyself? Bring that thing home if you love your husband or love your wife as yourself, if you gave just as much thought to their feelings as you do yours. If you understand that they come from a different background and some of the things you may have grown up with they never had. Or some problems they went through that you never went through and there's some fears that they have that you don't. When you understand that there's some things they are sensitive too that you are not, you won't press the button! And we press that button, over and over and over again, and we say it never bothered them because I can't hear it. And it's killing them, and we don't understand some of these things, nor do we understand the principle that God has often sent someone into our lives to test us, to train us because we know not the way of war. They call it the war between the sexes, not suppose to be but it is. And it's a war between the sexes because we know not the way of war; we don't know how to handle it. The book is out, you know, Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus? People we better understand we're on the same planet. Now how you gonna go through thinking, not only are you from the same planet, you in the same bed, so how in the world youWe're from the same planet!

There are different sensitivities and different needs. Now sometimes the men, they're more sensitive than the women, you got to understand and the women are tough. So you gotta understand who can hear the noise. It used to be that the women, but now they got a new term for the men, as a metro sexual. Whatever in the world? That's the men, they grooming more than the women. They're crying, they're worried about their sensitive side, all this kinda stuff so it's different. And if you got a metro sexual then you need to know. So it's different now. But God has sent often people into our lives to test us and to train us. The problem is we're failing the test, divinely sent but it's not an easy test to pass people I'll tell you. Marriage has been the greatest test I have ever taken and one of the reasons its one of the greatest tests, because you're always in it. See if you go to school and you take a test in science, that thing lasts about an hour an a half, you out of there one way or another, pass or fail, you out of there. But marriage is a continual test that you in day and night, and you deal with this and you deal with that and not only do you deal with your spouse but you got to deal with all your spouse's folks, and all your spouse's queers and all your spouse's hits, and all this stuff. You got a whole lot of stuff you got to deal with. You got a whole nation—turn to the person sitting next to you and say a whole nation! That's why he said a nation, not just... when you walking down the aisle you not walking down the aisle to one person, you got a whole nation. It's a whole nation and you need to understand the principle and it will test you, it will try you, and it will train you. But you must have the tools to be able to handle it, to use those five senses to start with sight, and get on one accord.

And for those of you who are not married, you need to, if you're not married you need to sit down with whoever it is you thinking about marrying and make sure you're at one vision. Because I can tell you right now look, if you fussing and fighting before you go down the aisle, I can tell you right now it's going to get worse. I can just about guarantee you that. If you don't have one vision before you get married- whew! See I was engaged before I married Quinton and I remember when I was engaged, my ex-fiancé was over my house one day, and I got mad, I picked up and put her outside and locked the door. And when I did that I said to myself, what in the hell? I said I'm not even married yet and I'm putting this woman outside and locked the door, and I'm not even married. Now I was not a preacher at the time but I had sense enough to know that was not a good sign. I had sense enough to know if I was going to do that in the courtship, something wasn't quite right. And this thing had a strong probability of going downhill real fast, so if for those of you who are not married, if you are having a fussing and a fighting and can't feel the one [inaudible] right now, before you get married, I'm gonna tell you right now, that's not a good sign. And look you need to have the ability to heed the signs of the times. And sometimes you don't need a whole lot of divine, I'm not saying, that's not prophetic, that's just good old fashion common sense. See a lot of—you don't need prophecy when you have common

sense, you don't need prophecy with common sense. Repeat that you don't need prophecy with common sense. That's right, that's good old fashion common sense.

It is the nation that will test you, try you, but it will train you. And God wants, there's a reason why he did that. And I understand it and I thank God for putting me with my wife. Best thing in the world that could have happened to me. Best thing in the world that could have happened to me, he knew exactly, he custom molded that woman just for me. Everything about her just made just for me. For this been our test, and I passed. And Quinton said the same thing about me, and I'm saying to myself, I said Quinton, don't you know how good of a man I am? Don't you understand? All I was doing was pushing the button. So you have to understand some things, of the test of the nation that God will send you into, but if you understand his word and stay sensitive to his word, it becomes one of the greatest things that you will ever, ever experience. But it is not easy and most don't pass the test, just as it was with the children of Israel. Marriage is a nation to test you.

Bow your heads. Dear heavenly father we pray that upon this day that this message shall be heard around the world and that those who need to hear shall heed it. That it shall bring unity, it shall bring resolution and that it shall bring peace into areas dear father where you deem it to go, for though you sent the nations to test, it was for their good. It was not to harm them or to destroy them; it was for the good dear Father. For how will we ever know that we truly have your word unless it is tested? For just as it is in the natural, you never know what anything will do if it is untested and untried, Dear father I thank you for sending under me the test of my faith, that you would both test, try and train me in whom you deemed me to spend life with. Dear father I pray that you open the eyes of couples who would even hear this message in areas where they're seeing torment and where they're seeing tribulation, let them be able to see the divine purpose of the test and let them know that you make no mistakes and that when God has placed two together he knew the destiny and he knew what he was doing. He also knew that we must be tested. For even your son, whom we know you loved, the minute the Holy Spirit descended upon him, he was sent into the wilderness to be tested. Dear father let us not disdain or disavow the test. Let us understand it is a part of the process of growth, it is a part of the process of unity with you. It is a part of life that we must go through, we must be tested. I thank you for the test for it has been for my good. Dear father I simply pray for the understanding of the revelation that you must send unto us a nation to test us. The name of Jesus we pray. Amen. Amen [Applause]

