

The Gibeon solution (Jgs 19-21) - a mirror to reclaiming women dignity in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Chronicling the history of gendered and sexualised violence in Zimbabwe, our article upholds the view that what transpired in Judges 19:20–48 offers the contemporary readers some important lessons that are worth pondering over. Looking through feminist hermeneutical lenses, we engage in a comparative analysis of the gender-based violations, human rights abuses, and the lack of hospitality depicted in Judges 19–21 with the lived realities of Zimbabwean women in our contemporary times. The discussion draws to a close by proffering a theology of restorative justice. It is our argument that Zimbabwe needs healing through a non-retaliative response to some wrongdoing that prioritises repairing harm and the recognition that maintaining positive relationships with fellow humans is a core human need. This is the only way forward to reclaim and restore the humanity and dignity of women exposed to diverse forms of gender-based violence in our Mother Earth.

Contribution: This article reveals the link between the violations and brutality endured by the woman in Judges 19–21 with the history of sexualised violence in Zimbabwe. It is worth noting that in African Traditional Religion, the three worlds (spiritual, natural, and human) are intertwined and make up the cosmic totality; sexually violating women is tantamount to desecrating Mother Earth.

Keywords: gender-based violence; Gibeon men; human rights; Mother Earth; texts of terror; restorative justice; Zimbabwean women.