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## Deborah

**Series** - To celebrate and display the character and personal stories of biblical women as examples of the image and character of God in them. This week is Deborah.

**Context** - After the death of Joshua, the Israelites didn't follow through with the Lord's commands to drive out their enemies when they entered into the promised land. Over time they became like their pagan neighbors worshipping their idols. The Book of Judges is a sad part of the Israelites history.

Judges 2:10-13 (NLT) After that generation died, another generation grew up who did not acknowledge the LORD or remember the mighty things he had done for Israel. 11 The Israelites did evil in the LORD's sight and served the images of Baal. 12 They abandoned the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They went after other gods, worshipping the gods of the people around them. And they angered the LORD. 13 They abandoned the LORD to serve Baal and the images of Ashtoreth.

- The pattern in the book of Judges is repetitive: 1) The people rebelled through idolatry and disbelief 2) God brought judgment on them through their neighbors 3) God raised up judges to deliver the people from their oppressors 4) They would repent and turn back to God. When the Israelites fell back into sin, the cycle started over again.
- God would use Deborah as not only a civil judge but as a prophetess to speak on behalf of God. Deborah helped rescue the Israelites from the oppression of Jabin, the Canaanite King.

## Who was Deborah and what did she do?

Judges 4:4-10 (NASB95) Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. 5 She used to sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the sons of Israel came up to her for judgment. 6 Now she sent and summoned Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-naphtali, and said to him, "Behold, the LORD, the God of Israel, has commanded, 'Go and march to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men from the sons of Naphtali and from the sons of Zebulun. 7 I will draw out to you Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his many troops to the river Kishon, and I will give him into your hand.'" 8 Then Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go." 9 She said, "I will surely go with you; nevertheless, the honor shall not be yours on the journey that you are about to take, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hands of a woman." Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. 10 Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali together to Kedesh, and ten thousand men went up with him; Deborah also went up with him.

- She was a wife of Lappidoth.
- She was a judge - she had the role of a judge where people came to her to settle civil disputes. Much like a judge we have in our culture today.
- She was a prophetess - prophets only spoke on behalf of God to the people. God gave the gift of prophecy to both men and women.

We celebrate Deborah because she was *faithful, courageous, walked in wisdom and worshiped the Lord*. There is a time to step up and step in when God calls you.

### 1. Deborah was faithful to God and His message

- She prophesied faithfully God's messages to Barak, the military man.
- She tells Barak 'The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you.' She did not take credit for the prophetic word, only delivered what God told her to say.

### 2. Deborah had great character, wisdom and courage

- She honored Barak's position as the military leader to exhort him to go and conquer Jabin's army. Vs. 6

- In doing so challenged Barak's passivity to lead. The result was that he stepped up into his God given role to lead the troops.
- She courageously accompanied Barak to the place where he assembled the troops for battle, helping him overcome his apprehension. Notice, she didn't go into battle with him.

Judges 4:14 (NASB95) Then Deborah said to Barak, "Get ready! This is the day the LORD will give you victory over Sisera, for the LORD is marching ahead of you." So Barak led his 10,000 warriors down the slopes of Mount Tabor into battle. 15 When Barak attacked, the LORD threw Sisera and all his chariots and warriors into a panic. Sisera leaped down from his chariot and escaped on foot. 16 Then Barak chased the chariots and the enemy army all the way to Harosheth-haggoyim, killing all of Sisera's warriors. Not a single one was left alive.

- Notice her words of encouragement, reminding Barak that this was the Lord's battle.
  - The result of their partnership and obedience led them to worship God, giving him the credit. (Chapter 5)
3. Deborah serves as an example to women on how to obediently follow God's lead in an area where it takes wisdom and courage.
- She did not become an overbearing controller.
  - She understood her area of responsibility and didn't hold on to her authority but pointed things back towards God.
  - She was truthful and yet not critical or condescending.
  - She spoke life and encouragement.
  - She was courageous to do the right thing with the potential for criticism and personal harm.
  - She kept her eyes on God.

### Take away:

**Men:** you are called to lead in your home. *Learn how*, be in a discipling relationship with someone who gets it and is doing it.

- Men, you are called to treat your wives in an understanding way. (1 Peter 3:7-9)
- If you are passive or apathetic, how will you step into the gap that only you can fill?

Women, how will you encourage and support the men in your life to fulfill their God given responsibilities?

**Women:** Some of you have husbands who don't lead well. Chances are they were never taught how to lead in a Godly way. Many men did NOT have great models of Godly leadership in their homes.

- Be kind & understanding of this.
- Give your longings & desires to God on this and pray that HE will guide your husband, son, Dad, brother, boss. Pray for Godly mentors to come into their lives.
- Criticizing them and making your disappointment in them obvious, will only cause them to shut down more. Choose to have the opposite spirit towards them.
- When they start leading, praise them, don't fight them. Don't correct them.
- Remember that as a wife, you are the most important 'mirror' your husband will ever look into. What he sees in you, when you look at him, is how he will view himself.
- If he sees disappointment or even worse, disrespect; he will see himself as a failure.
- If he sees kindness, love, acceptance and grace; he will see himself as worthy of love and therefore more apt to live worthy of your love.
- If he sees joy and pride in your face, he will see himself in a healthy way - as 'enough'.
- Most importantly, pray for him - your husband, son, father, brother. And pray from a heart of love, not anger nor criticism.

To watch the Sermon Team on The Overtime Podcast, go to: <https://bit.ly/RLOvertime>



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