

# *Women of the Bible*

## **Lesson 3: DEBORAH** **“Women in Leadership”**

**OBJECTIVE:** To examine God’s calling on your life, removing any fears or doubts, and act on faith in leadership positions

### **INTRODUCTION:**

A woman in leadership is and can be a controversial subject. Let’s begin by asking the question -- Do you believe women should serve in major leadership positions, both in and outside of the church?

Listed below are several issues and questions to help explain why women in leadership positions are controversial.

- Do you feel women should pastor churches?
- Men and women receiving equitable compensation in the workforce or in ministry
- Why are male aggressive leaders viewed as being more effective bosses than female aggressive bosses? Whereas a woman may be viewed differently and even called another name.
- Why do women tear each other down when they are in leadership positions versus building each other up? Men tend to operate under the good ole boy system.
- Does sexism exist in ministry?

These are just some issues that exist when women seek leadership roles and are in leadership positions.

**Scripture Lesson:** Read Judges 4: 1-10

Deborah is a well-known personality in scripture. Not only is she well-known, but she is a leader in the Bible who is a woman. Her purpose in scripture is interesting because she serves in a role that is dominated by men. Deborah serves as one of the Judges for Israel.

The role of a Judge in the Old Testament was a military leader or a person who was a clan chieftain, who helped the tribes with deliverance from enemies who threatened Israel.

Deborah also served as a prophetess, which is a person who serves as spokesperson of God to the people. See Deuteronomy 18:15-22.

In this lesson, we are asking Deborah to help us determine ways we can improve our leadership and our lives.

### **I. Leaders Seize the Opportunity**

Deborah is living in an era where the morality of Israel was at a low point.

1. Vs. 1 says, "Sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord." The Lord took His hand off of Israel because of their behavior and sold them over to Jabin, King of Canaan. In other words, their enemies oppressed Israel for twenty years.
2. Vs. 4, Deborah, a prophetess, - She worked in her calling

**APPLICATION:** Deborah teaches us that disciples or the people of God must step into their calling

The moment arose where a leader could step up and step into Israel's disobedience and help them.

Oftentimes, when there is a problem or where there is conflict, it yields itself to someone to step in and offer some resolve.

**APPLICATION:** (1) What is your calling? and (2) Where do you sense God moving you to help?

Opportunities are all around us to be involved and make a difference. God needs people who are not fearful and willing to show courage to better the lives of others.

## II. Leaders Exercise Wisdom and Discernment, vs. 4-8

A. Vs. 5, Deborah helped court under the palm tree, and the sons of Israel came up to her for judgment. Another greater leader did the same, Moses - Ex. 18:13

Great leaders should possess wisdom, I Kings 3:9

During this court sessions, she exercised her prophetic gift, which involved knowing the times and seasons of God. In order for her to exercise this gift, she had to clearly hear from the Lord.

**QUESTION:** How does a person accurately hear from God?

1. It requires a consistent prayer life.
2. It requires that you be inquisitive and want to know what is on God's mind.
3. It means reading God's word so you can match words with voice.

B. She discerned Barak was a person to deliver the nation of Israel, vs. 6-7

1. She summoned Barak to go as the Lord commanded
2. Take ten thousand men
3. Draw out Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army

## III. Leaders Offer Encouragement and Support, vs. 8-9

A. Barak asked Deborah, "If you will go with me, then I will go..."

The people had been oppressed for 20 years. They were tired and discouraged to fight.

**APPLICATION:** Here is a commander in the army asking a woman for support. Truth of the matter, everybody needs support. There is nothing wrong with affirming people and offering them hope for the journey.

B. Deborah was a strong person of faith. You need strong people of faith on your team and to be in your corner.

**APPLICATION:** Seek out strong spiritual support to help you walk through the journey of leadership

**QUESTION:** Who is your spiritual support and encouragement?

#### **IV. Leaders Should Be All They Can Be**

Deborah was an all-around woman. However, she did not flaunt her leadership role. She just worked in her gifts and her roles.

What were her roles?

1. She was a Mother – Judges 5:6
2. She was a Worship Warrior – Judges 4:9 – She encouraged Barak to trust the Lord
3. She was a Judge – Judges 4:4 – Willing to guide people in the right direction
4. She was a prophetess – Judges 4:5 – Desired to hear from God

#### **CONCLUSION:**

Deborah was a woman who did not fear man, nor was she afraid to walk in her calling. It's time for women and men of God to be bold and courageous and use your unique gifts and talents to do God's work. In this season, where God has placed you to assert yourself, engage your mind and also don't be afraid to build relationships. Believe it or not, opportunities come from relationships.