

Women of The Bible

Deborah the Spiritual Leader of Israel

Judges 4-5

Understanding Judges

- Period of Time between Joshua and Saul.
- Tribal Leadership
- The people would worship other gods. (National Sin)
- As a result, God would allow foreign powers to oppress them.
- A Judge would rise up to deliver the people from harm.

The Story of Deborah

- Deborah was a wife, prophet, and judge and leader of Israel. (v 4:4)
- She had authority over the people of Israel. (4:5)

Why was a Woman the Leader of Israel?

- One Theory– The men were unwilling to lead. (v.4:7-9)
- No one would volunteer to fight, until Deborah became the leader. (5:7)
- However, God chooses his leaders.

Being a Wife in Israel's culture

- Wives belonged to either their father's household or their husbands household.
- Deborah's special role as a spiritual leader did not create a conflict with her husband and the natural order of Old Testament society.
- In later years, rabbis had a negative view of Deborah. They felt she had overstepped her bounds.

Deborah as a Leader

- Deborah held court under a palm tree and settled disputes.
- The people respected her authority. (Moses held this same role)
- She was the acknowledged leader of all the tribes.
- Not all judges were Prophets. (Only her and Samuel)
- She was not a Military Leader. (Not Joan of Arc or Wonder Woman)

- Leaders of Israel were chosen by God.

The Negative and Positive of Barak's response

- Barak did not have total confidence in God.
- He did trust Deborah and felt confident with her presence.

Conclusions:

- God can give women the gifts that allow them to be spiritual leaders.
- Deborah had the gift of spiritual discernment.
- Her role of a mother illustrated her role for Israel. The mother of Israel. She protected the people of Israel.
- Even though she was married and belonged to her husband, she had authority over Israel.
- Deborah understood her role.