

Deborah, An Influential Woman of Faith

By Proverbs 31 Woman — Contributing Authors, PGAMO Online Bible College

Deborah is one of the most influential women of faith in the Bible! She is known for her wisdom and courage of the Old Testament. As a judge and prophetess Deborah listened to God's voice and shared His Word with others. During the historical period of the Judges, Israel often turned to idolatry, which resulted in God punishing them by causing them to suffer under harsh rulership of neighboring nations. One such time was when King Jabin, ruling in Hazor of Canaan, harshly oppressed Israel for 20 years. The Israelites finally cried out to God for deliverance (Judges 4:3).

It was during this time of King Jabin's oppressive rule that we first read of Deborah. "Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time. And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment" (Judges 4:4-5).

According to the New Bible Dictionary, "She had her headquarters under 'the palm tree of Deborah' between Ramah and Bethel, and was consulted there by Israelites from various tribes who wished to have their disputes settled." (New Bible Dictionary, Deborah, p. 275).

Deborah sent and called for Barak and said to him, "Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded, Go and deploy troops at Mount Tabor; take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun; and against you I will deploy Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude at the River Kishon; and I will deliver him into your hand" (Judges 4:6-7). She called for Barak to lead Israel in a war against the mighty armies of Jabin and his general Sisera.

Barak said he would only go against the enemy if Deborah went with him (Judges 4:8). Deborah saw Barak's less-than-confident attitude, and she reassured him that she would surely go with him. Then she also prophesied that the glory of killing Sisera, God's enemy, would not go to Barak, but "the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman" (Judges 4:9).

Because of Deborah's strong leadership to Barak and her encouragement to him, Barak took 10,000 Israelite troops down from Mount Tabor as commanded. "And the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army with the edge of the sword before Barak" (Judges 4:15). God spoke through Deborah and His prophecy came to pass!

Deborah wrote a song and taught it to the people; "when leaders lead in Israel, when the people willingly offer themselves, bless the LORD!" (Judges 5:2). "Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes; I, even I, will sing unto the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel." (Judges 5:3). More details of Deborah's song can be found in Judges 5:19-21. The ending of

Deborah's song describes the battle that God fought against the enemy. "Thus let all Your enemies perish, O LORD!" (Judges 5:31). Deborah is an influential example of a woman with faith in God, who became a great leader for her people.

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