

Victoria Fellowship Church
International & Interdenominational
Bible Study Worksheet – March 19, 2023

Theme: Servant Leadership Topic: Deborah, a Leader in Israel

Main Texts: Judges 4:4-16

Key verse: Judges 4:4 – *“Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time.”* (NKJV)

INTRODUCTION: Last Sunday, we looked at the consequences of leadership failure, one of which is its impacts on future generations. And this is what happened in Israel. Joshua led them into the promised land. The Israelites served the Lord as long as Joshua was alive, and they continued serving the Lord during the lifetimes of the elders who lived after Joshua had died. After that whole generation died, the next generation grew up not knowing about the Lord or what He had done for the Israelites. So, the Israelites began serving false gods. This led to a dark time of chaos and collapse. Repeatedly, the people of Israel are defeated in battle or fall into moral decline, only to be saved by leaders, called ‘Judges.’ Whenever there arose a judge, the people would obey God’s laws and remain faithful to Him. But whenever that judge died, the children of Israel would turn their backs on God and give in to disobedience and ungodliness. Deborah was one of those judges God used to rescue the people from their spiritual and moral decline. Deborah not only functioned as a judge but was also a prophetess.

1. **(a) How would you describe the personality of Deborah from Judges 4:4-7. (b) Deborah was a wife, prophet, and a mother, and she was serving as judge for the Israelites at a time of great depression and oppression. In what ways could her unique role as wife and mother have contributed to her leadership in Israel at the time? (c) How can we apply these in our individual lives and in VFC?**

Deborah was a busy woman. She was a wife, mother, daughter, and prophetess, and yet, she was able to carry out her civic and judicial responsibilities, embracing the call of God on her life. According to Judges 4:5 NKJV, *“...She would sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the mountains of Ephraim. And the children of Israel came up to her for judgement.”* Imagine the Israelites in their number! Think about how many people would have been coming to her daily to settle their quarrels and disputes. This would have required great wisdom, patience, revelation and discernment. In Judges 5, we find that Deborah was also a worshipper.

2. **(a) What are some of the reasons why women today might be reluctant to answer God’s call to take up certain leadership roles? (b) Deborah is estimated to have led Israel for 60 years. How might this have impacted the society considering her role as wife, mother, prophet, and judge in a traditionally masculine culture? (c) What lessons from the life of Deborah can encourage women to overcome these obstacles?**

Deborah offers a Biblical example of a female servant leader with distinct leadership qualities that are relevant for the 21st century Christian woman and worthy of emulation: i.) She had a relationship with God. She could hear His voice and could discern the times; ii.) She was wise and feared the Lord. She took His commandments seriously and was obedient to His direction; iii.) She spoke with authority as one having confidence in the power of her God. She found strength and encouragement in worship to God; iv.) She was courageous and not afraid to go to the battlefield. She led by example; v.) She recognized her role as a leader called out to deliver a nation, and she stepped up to the plate. Deborah had a positive influence over Barak and his army, and inspired them to victory, securing her place in history as one of Israel’s most outstanding female leaders.

3. **(a) What would have happened if Deborah had not prompted Barak to raise an army? What would have happened if she did not go with him to battle? (Judges 4:7-8) (b) What are some of the consequences when we do not obey God’s call to leadership? (Read Proverbs 11:14; 29:2) (c) What leadership role(s) is God calling you to assume today, in your home? In your place of work? In your community? In government? In the church?**

Prayer: *Dear Father, help me to discern Your will concerning areas of leadership. Grant me the grace to obey Your commands and the courage to step up in spite of my fears, In Jesus Name, Amen.*