

What Judges, Housewives and Harlots Can Teach Us About Spiritual Warfare

Not a single woman was listed among David's mighty men but that doesn't mean God doesn't use women mightily in warfare. Of course, in modern times we aren't wrestling against flesh and blood like the Joshua generation, Israel's many judges or David's mighty men. But the battle is just as real in the spirit realm.

Deborah the judge and **prophetess** offers a strong example **spiritual warriors** can draw from in modern battle—and so do Jael and Rahab. Whether you are spiritually mature enough to lead the **spiritual warfare** campaign or are just entering into the truth of spiritual warfare, you can glean lessons from the brave actions of women in the Old Testament.

First let me stress this point: As a believer in Christ, you have spiritual authority. If you are a disciple of Christ, Jesus promises you this: "I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (Luke 10:19). Jesus also said, "In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover" (Mark 16:17).

Daring Prophetess Deborah

Deborah was a **prophetess** and a judge. She got a **prophetic word** that the Lord was giving Israel dominion over Canaan's army and shared it with Barak, the commander of Israel's army, but he did not immediately run to the battle line like David. No, he would only go on the condition that Deborah went with him

(see Judges 4:4-8).

“So she said, ‘I will surely go with you; nevertheless there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking, for the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman’” (Judges 4:9). Deborah not only went with Barak, she used her prophetic insight to offer instructions to launch out with his 10,000 men. Just as Deborah prophesied, God delivered Sisera, a commander in the Canaanite army, into the hands of Israel.

Barak was not a coward, but he recognized the gift on Deborah’s life and wanted her prophetic insights into waging victorious battle. Deborah was no coward either, willingly entering the battlefield as an oracle for God—and displaying more faith than Barak in the process.

From Deborah, we learn this **spiritual warfare** lesson: Have a plan before going into battle and rally the troops to execute that plan. Battle alongside those who don’t have as much faith to wage spiritual war as you and you’ll leave them with new confidence to enforce Christ’s victory in the next skirmish.

Jael’s Just Judgment

Barak and Deborah didn’t get the final victory until Jael did her part. Sisera fled on foot and was approaching Jael’s tent. Jael was married to Heber the Kenite and there was peace between Sisera’s camp and Heber’s camp. Jael went out to meet a fleeing Sisera and invited him to come inside. She was hospitable to him, covering him with a blanket and giving him some milk to drink.

“And he said to her, ‘Stand at the door of the tent, and if any man comes and inquires of you, and says, ‘Is there any man here?’ you shall say, ‘No.’ Then Jael, Heber’s wife, took a tent peg and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it went down into the ground; for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died. And

then, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said to him, "Come, I will show you the man whom you seek.' And when he went into her tent, there lay Sisera, dead with the peg in his temple" (Judges 4:19-22).

Matthew Henry's commentary says of the incident, "It was a divine power that enabled her to do it, and inspired her with a more than manly courage. What if her hand should shake, and she should miss her blow? What if he should awake when she was attempting it? Or suppose some of his own attendants should follow him, and surprise her in the face, how dearly would she and all hers be made to pay for it? Yet, obtaining help of God, she did it effectually."

Here's the lesson: Jael didn't have the spiritual influence Deborah did, but she still did her part in the battle to deliver Israel. God doesn't just use prophets and generals in spiritual battle, He will use whomever He will—and whosoever is willing—to enforce His will on earth in the face of enemy resistance.

Rahab Runs a Risk

Then there is Rahab. She was a harlot, though some Bible commentaries suggest she had long ago repented of that sin even though she couldn't shake the reputation. Rahab proved instrumental in Israel's battle plan to take Jericho. Rahab hid two of Israel's spies and even gave them advice that helped them escape after they left (see Joshua 2:1-16). If it wasn't for Rahab, the two Israelites would surely have been caught and the element of surprise in the coming attack ruined.

What's the lesson here? Rahab didn't have any great spiritual authority to speak of but she acted on faith. She was obedient to God's will to preserve His chosen people whether she was fully aware of the implications of her actions or not. Baby Christians who have yet to be equipped for **spiritual warfare**

can still help advance God's kingdom through simple faith and obedience.

In fact, Rahab even made it into the Hebrews Hall of Fame: "By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace" (Heb. 11:31) and was part of the lineage that eventually birthed King David. She's mentioned three times in the New Testament, including this statement from James: "Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?" (James 2:25).

So whether you are just beginning in **spiritual warfare** or you are an old pro, the lessons are clear: be obedient, be bold in your God, exercise your faith and do your part. You have the victory in Jesus' name!

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