

Gulf Cove UMC
Winter Study: Women of the Bible
Rev. Patty Frick, Facilitator

Week 2 Focus: Women Warriors



Old Testament: Deborah

Deborah serves as a prophet, judge, and leader—an unusual and powerful role for a woman in a deeply patriarchal society. She listens for God's direction, speaks with authority, and inspires others to act. She does not lead the army herself, but she clearly sets the course and trusts God's promise of deliverance. Jael, another key woman in the story, lives outside Israel's centers of power, yet she becomes the unlikely and decisive force that brings victory to the Israelites.

Opening Prayer

Historical Snapshot – See other side for Maps, etc.

- **Date:** Approximately 12th Century BCE, during the period of the Judges
- **Location:** Ancient Israel and surrounding Canaanite territories
- **Scripture Reference:** Judges, Chapters 4-5
- **Role in God's Story:** Israel lived in a recurring cycle: turning away from God, falling under oppression, crying out for help, and being delivered through a judge. Deborah arises during one of these periods of crisis, when Israel is oppressed by the Canaanite King, Jabin and his military commander, "Sisera."

Scripture: See Handout 2/*Reader's Theater-Highlights of Judges*

Food for Thought: Rev. Patty

Discussion:

1. What qualities make Deborah an effective leader in a time of chaos and fear?
2. Barak will only go into battle if Deborah goes with him. What does this reveal about trust and leadership?
3. Jael's actions are unsettling to many readers. How do we wrestle with violence in biblical stories while still recognizing courage and faithfulness?
4. Both Deborah and Jael act outside traditional expectations. Where do you see women today being called to similar courage?

Handout 1

5. What might it mean for us, in our own time to be “warriors” for God?

Closing Prayer/Requests

