



Ministry Wives/Women in the Bible

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This compilation is not a book, nor an edited piece, it is a compilation of my personal devotional time either in the morning or during my afternoon meditations. I am praying that you will find the compilation a blessing regardless of the typing and grammatical errors.

Ministry Wives/Women in the Bible

Resources: *Bible, Concordance, Thomas Nelson's Women of the Bible, Albert Lockyer's all women of the Bible, The Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible names, dictionary and others*

Ministry means the office, duties, or functions of a minister. **Minister is** a person or thing through which something is accomplished.

1st September 2022

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10

Definition of a ministry wife

The ministry wife is someone through whom the plan of God is accomplished. Such a woman is first God's workmanship, that is, she is God's Own handiwork, His masterpiece, what He has made. And apart from this, the ministry wife must surely be recreated. There are good works that God has planned for His Own. He made these works ready beforehand for His ministry wives. In this study, I will examine various women and God's prepared plans for them.

1. Eve

Genesis 1, 2, 3

Her emergence

In Genesis 1, before getting to verse 26, I saw that God put the universe in place and all this ministry wife; Eve will need to function. There was a good work God has for the life of Eve, she was to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue and have dominion. She was to take charge of the earth alongside her husband, Adam. She was custom-made, never an afterthought, but uniquely created to come and fulfil a purpose on earth.

Genesis 2:18 shows that she was made a help for her husband. She was not equal to the beast of the ground nor the birds in the air. She was made out of her husband. Nothing else could fill the gap in her husband's life. There was a gap she was made to come and fill in her husband's life.

So, from the life of Eve, I see that the ministry wife is first called to help her husband, it is out of the help she has offered her husband that she may then offer to the world outside her home.

Her effectiveness

Her effectiveness will come out of acknowledging and recognising the One who brought her in, God who made her be a help. To engage her husband, she must first engage God. Why? God knew her pre-existence, her existence, the purpose of her existence, and how she can succeed on earth.

My association

From Genesis 3, I see that to effectively function as a ministry wife, whom I associate myself with matters. Eve associated herself with the serpent.

The person I associate with will get to know a bit or more about me and my home, so I must beware.

Apart from this, Eve should have been quick to hear and slow to speak, she divulged what should have been a family secret to the serpent. For me to effectively function too, I must take care of my mouth, it is not every question that I answer, and the way I answer questions must also be with discretion.

My knowledge of God

In verses 4 and 5 of Genesis 3, I see the need for me as a ministry wife to daily grow in my knowledge of God. There are many things that want to obstruct my view of God just as the serpent did for Eve. I must be very diligent in my desire and hunger to know God more and more. I must also be careful of the source from where I'm getting my knowledge; it must not be a polluted source like that of the serpent. The serpent portrayed God to Eve as a liar, meanwhile, that is not the true description of the person of God.

Beware of deception

Women are prone to deception, and this includes ministry wives. Deception comes in various forms and fashion, so I should beware. It was the serpent that deceived the woman, and she fell for deception. The tenderness of a woman's heart makes her sometimes vulnerable to deception. I must be a woman of discretion, discerning the enemy's plan and intention.

1 Peter 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (NKJV)*

As a ministry wife, I must be:

- a. **Sober:** I must be calm and take grave responsibility for my spirituality, my home and my calling.

- b. Vigilant:** I must be alert both physically and spiritually. This is because I have an adversary who goes about, he walks up and down seeking someone to devour. He succeeded in devouring Eve, and the moment he devoured Eve with sin, her marriage was devoured, and her children devoured one another

2. Sarah

Genesis 12, 16, 21, Hebrews 11:11, Galatians 4:22

In Genesis 12 God called Sarah's husband, Abraham and asked him to leave his familiar ground for a land He will show him. And God promised to make him great. Abram left and took his wife, Sarah with him.

In verses 7 and 8, Sarah's husband constantly built altars unto the Lord.

In their sojourn through the promised land, there came a famine, and Sarah's husband, Abram went to Egypt. Before entering Egypt, her husband told her not to disclose herself as his wife, but she should only disclose herself as his sister. This was a half-truth. Her husband required her to hide her full identity and she consented. Pharaoh took her hostage, but God defended her in Pharaoh's house.

Sarah was a beautiful woman, her beauty attracts any man, and so were Pharaoh's princes who took her to Pharaoh.

In chapter 15, God reassured Abram that he will have a child, and for this to happen, Sarah has a role to play. Sarah in chapter 16 took things into her own hands and asked her husband to go in, to her maid and impregnate her so that she can have a child through Hagar.

Sarah wasn't patient enough to wait for the Lord to do what He promised to do through her and her husband. She was God's workmanship created for good works that God would walk her into, but when she wasn't recreated in her view of her circumstance as a barren woman, she contributed a Hagar to the world, which is still a menace to our generation today.

In chapter 21, God visited her indeed and she became a mother at an old age.

Sarah had her mistakes as a wife of a man of God, but she corrected her mistakes, though the mistakes came with great scars that remain to date.

Her mistakes

- Telling her husband to go into Hagar
- Telling lies when the three guests were with them, saying she didn't laugh when she actually did.

Her positives

- She was a submissive wife, even though this nearly cost her, her own body, if not for God that intervened.
- She was also a wife that was hospitable and willing to support her husband whenever that's possible. For example, she helped her husband in entertaining the three guests.
- She rectified her mistake in sending Hagar out of her matrimony.
- She received the strength to conceive by faith even though she wasn't physically strong.
- She was a free woman, the mother of freedom.

For me

As a wife in ministry, I must know that if I make mistakes, I should get up and make amendments as quickly as possible. I must learn to wait on the Lord for His divine intervention, and not go and do things the way everybody does theirs.

I mustn't forget that God has a plan for my husband and I am included in that plan, for I am also His workmanship recreated anew in Christ Jesus for good works. Even when all earthly manners point towards not fulfilling the plan of God, I must wait on Him and receive the strength of His to conceive the plan and the purpose of God for me and my husband and to bring the same to birth.

PRAYER

- ✓ Father, give me the grace to wait on You and to trust You against all odds knowing that Faithful are you who called us.
- ✓ Help me not to focus on or have any plan B, but to focus on You who is my all in all. Amen.

12th January 2023 Bishops Court

12:35 pm

3. Zipporah

Exodus 2:15-22, 4:19, 24-26, 18:2-4

The Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible names defined the name Zipporah as a sparrow, a little bird or to chirp.

Her family background

Zipporah was from Midian, she was the daughter of a Midianite priest, called Jethro or Reuel, she was part of seven sisters, and she was the oldest of these seven sisters. She was the daughter of Jethro. She and her sisters looked after their father's flock, so it is safe to say she was a shepherdess.

She and her sisters were rescued by Moses at the well from the hands of cruel shepherds at the well. They then took the report to their father who asked them to let Moses come in and eat.

Her marriage

Zipporah was given in marriage to Moses by her father when Moses started living with them. I am sure that Reuel must have seen that Moses was a responsible man before giving his daughter to him in marriage. She was God's workmanship and there were good works God had in store for her life as the wife of Moses.

Her motherhood

Zipporah gave birth to two sons namely Gershom and Eliezer.

Her journey into ministry

In Exodus 4, her husband, Moses was told by God to go back to Egypt, this is after the burning bush encounter. So, Moses arose to go with his wife and son. I am not sure if Moses had been talking to Zipporah about the call of God upon his life before now like my husband told me before marriage and even after.

But I see that Zipporah followed her husband to go to Egypt, a land she knew not. On their way to Egypt while at a camping place, the LORD met Moses and tried to kill him, and Zipporah, his wife, took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son, and touched Moses' feet with it. And because of the rite of circumcision, she said to Moses, "You are a husband of blood to me." I am not sure of the full meaning of what she said here, her intention of saying and how she spoke whether she was angry, calm or sad.

This journey began the journey into working for God so to say. Zipporah saw that God will not lower His standard for anyone, for if He has demanded circumcision, it must surely be carried out without exception, and when Moses didn't, God came to kill him, and Zipporah stood in the gap for her husband.

Later on in Exodus 18, I saw that Jethro or Reuel brought Zipporah and the sons back to Moses after he sent her back. I am not sure why she was sent back, could it be that it was a result of her conduct when her husband was confronted by God to kill him for not circumcising their sons? Or was it that Moses sent them back so that the boy can heal from the circumcision? Whatever took place, I see that Zipporah's father had to take her and her two sons back to her husband.

Lesson for me

There are moments when husbands in ministry may not do the right thing, it is my responsibility as the wife to step in when necessary.

Herbert Lockyer tagged her as the woman who wrongly opposed her husband. I love how Herbert Lockyer made me see that Zipporah though brought back to her husband by her father, we didn't hear much about her, that she disappeared. Maybe she found the culture challenging, or she found ministry difficult as some wives in ministry do and then just take a distant position from their husband's ministry and would have nothing to do with it, saying it's him God called.

I see that there is a need for senior pastors or leaders of Christian ministries to see to it that newly wedded wives that are marrying ministers should be trained and equipped as to what they are getting into, and for those who are already married before their husbands start a ministry, I also see the need to prepare and train them to accept and fit into the new office God has called their husbands into.

I am a firm believer in equipping. If I find myself in a position where my husband heads a ministry, I must be prepared to prepare the wives of the leaders in understanding what their husbands are called into. And as I run pre-marital counselling, I must make wives who are getting married to men in ministry to have an awareness of what they are getting into.

I believe this is always good. I remember what my senior pastor's wife told me before marrying my husband about letting go of him when he travels for ministry, and I never had an issue in that area indeed. So, preparing in advance helps.

Conclusion

Not so much is said about Zipporah's life as a wife in ministry. I only saw her at the beginning of her husband's journey into ministry and the challenge that they came across. And it is so easy for a new wife in ministry to get overwhelmed with challenges at the onset of ministry as she is stepping on unknown terrain.

This was my case too as a new ministry wife, I married a pastor but was not equipped to know what it means to be a ministry wife, and I thereby handled situations foolishly both in dealing with my husband and the ministry itself.

Prayer

- Help me to be the helper you made me be to my husband
- Help me to offer help to my husband without complaints

15th January 2022
pm

Bishops Court

12:40

4. Miriam

Exodus 2:4,7, 15:18-20, Numbers 12, Deuteronomy 24:9-12

The exhaustive dictionary of Bible names defines Miriam as bitterness, their rebellion, rebellion, star of the sea and celebrated. All these meanings indeed characterised Miriam.

Her childhood

Miriam was the first child of her parents. She has two other brothers namely Aaron and Moses. Her parents were Amram and Jochebed.

As a young girl, she stood by the river watching over her baby brother who was so to say doomed since the pharaoh has forbidden the birth of sons to the Jews. And Jochebed their mother has taken Moses to the river bank after keeping him for three months.

Miriam stood by watching her brother, and she approached Pharaoh's daughter negotiating with her if it was okay for her to help her get an Israelite woman who can nurse Moses.

She was a sensible and responsible big sister who bore responsibility for her baby brother.

Her ministry

I met Miriam after the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt and the miraculous crossing of the red sea, she took a tambourine and sang unto the Lord, and the Bible says the women followed her. It is worthy of note that she was referred to as a prophetess in this Exodus rendition.

She worshipped the Lord and therefore the other women joined her. Maybe I should say she was the women's ministry leader; her example led the other women to praise the Lord. She was in full support of the leadership of her baby brother Moses. She knew at this junction that it was God who was working amongst them. She indeed manifested the meaning of her name as "celebrated"

Miriam was a worship leader and the leader of the women's fellowship. She served God alongside her younger brothers, Aaron and Moses. Her gender wasn't used against her, rather she was given the privilege to serve the God of all flesh.

Her misconduct

Miriam after years of leading the people failed woefully, was it that she wasn't keeping a check over her heart? In the space of time, jealousy and envy grew in her heart, and so was hatred of other races which we called today racism.

In Numbers 12, Miriam rose in opposition against Moses her younger brother, and also her leader in God's work. She and Aaron confronted Moses for marrying the Ethiopian woman.

The race of this wife of her brother became a trouble to Miriam, her heart was not large enough to accept all races as God's creation. And how this can be too in the work of ministry when preference is given to those of my descent or background. In Christ Jesus there are neither Jews nor Gentiles, we have the same blood flowing in our veins, which is the blood of Jesus. Our outward colour is only for identification purposes.

In this Numbers 12 verse 2, the matter Miriam and Aaron voiced out was that has God spoken only through Moses. So, the problem was contending Moses' leadership and authority. She only used the matter of her discontentment with the Ethiopian wife of her brother as a reason to strike and cause havoc in the fellowship.

She and her brother, Aaron conspired together to challenge Moses. I see that there was bitterness in her heart against her leader, Moses, which is another manifestation of the meaning of her name as bitterness.

Her punishment

Between verses six and seven God came to set the record straight with Miriam and Aaron. And in verse 10 God put His judgement on her and she became leprous. She was disciplined for insinuating bitterness against Moses, the servant of God who was her leader. And I think that she was the one who started whispering into Aaron's ears, hence why she has to bear the consequence.

Verse 25 shows me further that she was leprous for seven days, and as a result, she was isolated from the people, and the people of God could not move on. Her misconduct brought upon her a punishment which affected the movement of God's people. And this remains the problem to date amongst women leaders, sometimes we bring trouble upon the work of God and caused things to stand still. This is not good. I don't want to be this type of ministry wife.

Miriam a bad reference point

Numbers 20 tells me that she died in the desert of Zin before they entered the promised land. And there she was buried.

In Deuteronomy 12 verse 9, Moses reminded the people of God of Miriam's conduct and how God dealt with her. After her death, when she will be referred to, she became a reference point to remind those who want to be bitter, or rebellious.

Miriam started well as a woman created by God as His workmanship, she entered the good works God planned for her, but she ended badly. Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof. Ecclesiastes 7:8

Lessons for me

As a wife in ministry, God desires that I lead by example and not by compulsion. Just as Miriam stood up to raise songs to the Lord for His great deliverance, so must I be an encourager of the people of God. How I live will be how others will live too.

Unknowingly, many ministry wives are leading many astray through their conduct and choices. I must be careful. This brought Vashti to mind. The effect of my life will be evident in the lives of the women God has called me to serve.

The way I handle the misbehaviour of other leaders must be done humbly. While there may be times when leaders need to be confronted, how do I do this? It must never be done with arrogance.

Do I notice that my husband did something wrong as the leader of God's people, I must approach him in humility. Do I see the other leaders that God set over me doing wrong things, I must approach them in humility and not with arrogance.

Miriam started well, looking out for her younger brother, but as she progressed in ministry, pride took over her and probably felt that since she was older than Moses she has the right to gossip about him or stir up insurrection against him, but God would not accept that.

My mouth must not err against other leaders, it might be helpful to first take whatever I see about leaders to the Lord in prayer and from there God will direct me as to whether to approach or be quiet, and I have seen this many times in my relationship with the Lord, that oftentimes, He asked me to mind my own business. He probably knew that my motive for wanting to bring correction was wrong and would dishonour Him.

Maybe I am a prophet or have the gift of prophecy, or a worship leader or can lead songs so beautifully. And maybe I have been using these gifts to serve the Lord and His people, that is good, but I must not allow my gifts to turn me against other leaders or make me proud. For God resists the proud but gives grace only to the humble.

God desires to make me a godly reference point to others, and I must be careful about how I daily live my life. God will not only deal with me based on my righteousness or righteous deeds of old, but He will also look at my recent attitude to holy living.

Prayer

- Lord, thank You for starting me off so well.
- Please keep me on track with You
- Don't let me derail from Your ways.
- Help me not to disrespect leaders even when they may have missed it.
- Help me to approach them in humility of heart even when they have gone wrong.

15th January 2022

Bishops Court

03:16 pm

5. Eli's wife

1 Samuel 2:12

Though there is no mention of the name of the wife of Eli throughout the Bible. It brought me to the place of questioning her role in her husband's life and ministry. She also was a woman made as God's workmanship and with good works set aside for her to walk into.

Her children

It was recorded that her two sons Hophni and Phinehas were troublemakers of the people of God in the temple. How did she raise her children so that they became what they became? The Bible says that they were sons of Belial. Who raised them to be so? Or could it be that her husband didn't give her the privilege to be relevant in his life and the upbringing of their children?

Her husband

Eli, her husband was dealing with the boys and also with the absence of open vision in his days. Where was Mrs Eli? Could it be that she was already dead by this time? Or perhaps she died during childbirth or when her children were quite young?

While she was alive did she help her children to know that they are the priestly family and what God expects of them? Or could it be that as a result of her sudden death, while her children were young, the boys were deprived of a mother's input? Did she pray for her son's future? Many questions I would like to ask as I consider this woman.

I have nothing to write or glean from her life. But her husband's ministry and the life of her husband made me question her role in her home and her husband's ministry.

Down to me

In years to come, when people hear or read about me, what would they say? Which role am I currently playing in my home that supports my husband? Have I abandoned the upbringing of our children and the praying for my husband to himself?

I am not sure if Eli's wife was passive. This reminds me of Proverbs 24:30-33 which says *I went past the field of a sluggard, past the vineyard of someone who has no sense; thorns had come up everywhere, the ground was covered with weeds, and the stone wall was in ruins. I applied my heart to what I observed and learned a lesson from what I saw: A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest—and poverty will come on you like a thief and scarcity like an armed man.* NIV

Prayer

- Please Lord, help me to understand my role and responsibility in my husband's life.
- Concerning my children, let me not bring forth for trouble.
help me not to be idle over my home and the ministry You have committed us to.
- Let our lives not become bushes of rubbish and may our stone walls not be in ruins.

- Take over my children future Lord since You are ever-present
- Plant Your reverential fear in my children's hearts. Amen.

6. Phinehas's wife

Exodus 4:19-22

She was an unnamed woman, yet God's workmanship created also for good works as a wife in ministry. She was married to a perverse husband who sleeps with members of the church. Her husband dishonoured the Lord in all areas. I can't imagine what life would mean for this woman. Her brother-in-law whom she may have reported to was also perverse, so she must have learnt to take her burden to the Lord.

Nonetheless, she still performed her conjugal duty to her husband to the point that she conceived.

When the husband went to war with the Philistines and carried the ark of God with them, she was heavily pregnant and was in the last trimester; she was within the due date of her delivery, and she heard of the news of the slaughter of her husband at the battle with the Philistine, the death of her father in law and the taken away of the Ark, and she went into labour and she delivered and named her baby Ichabod meaning the glory had departed because the ark of God was taken away.

She was a woman that I believe knows the Lord and probably wanted to honour Him, But she was married to a man that dishonours the Lord. And there are ministry wives who fell into this shoe. Albert Lockyer's all women of the Bible helped to remember that the same thing that happened to her happened to Rachael who also died at childbirth and gave her son a name that reflects the circumstance.

Her concern seemed not to be the death of her husband, brother-in-law or father-in-law, but that of the ark of God that departed Israel. She seemed to be a woman that quietly believed in God, despite the perversion of her husband.

She hoped in God and the ark, so when it was taken away, it was a loss of hope for her.

Down to me

What is my attitude to the presence of God? Do I still cherish His presence? Or willing to go ahead without His presence which the ark signified?

Phinehas' wife could continue because the ark of God was still in their midst, but the moment it was taken away, she knew that the lack of the presence of God in a life is the end of such a life.

Prayer

- Lord, help me to seek Your presence
- Help me not to trade Your presence for anything else.
- I pray for other wives in ministry who are struggling with perverse husbands that You will step in for them. Amen.

7. Samuel's wife

18/01/2023

3 Bishops Court

02:24 pm

This was God's handiwork with good works assigned to her name and her life. Her name was obscured, and we knew nothing about her like the wife of Eli. But we know that Samuel had two sons namely Joel and Abijah who was appointed as judge over Beersheba. These sons didn't walk in Samuel's way. This again brought me to the place of wondering where Mrs Samuel was. Was she dead at childbirth? Or was she just passive?

She was married to a great man of God so to say whose word never falls to the ground. How come we have no mention of her name?

What could have made her two sons not follow in the footsteps of their father? The Bible did not reveal anything to me about her life. But again, I am seeing that the call to ministry is a call to be relevant first in my home as I raise my children to follow the God of their father.

Prayer

- Lord, help me not to fail as a wife and the mother of my husband's children. Amen

8. Acsah Othniel

Joshua 15:16-17, Judges 1:12-13

Her family background

She is from the tribe of Judah. And the daughter of Caleb. She was given to marriage to Othniel by her father as her father said whoever attacks and captures Kiriath Sepher, which Othniel did.

The name Achsah means anklet, adorned. And she was indeed an adornment to her husband though we didn't have much about her role as a wife in ministry.

She was God's workmanship, created for good works attached to her name. Serving alongside my husband is good work, I must never underrate it.

Her marriage

She was given in marriage to Othniel, who was the nephew of Caleb (her cousin) after the brave battle he had against the Kiriath Sepher and won.

Having gotten married to her husband, she understood that she is now under the leadership of her husband and would not request something from her father without the knowledge of her husband. Therefore, she asked her husband, Othniel to ask her father, Caleb for a field. I believe she was a ministry wife that lived in submission to her husband.

Her life as a ministry wife

In Judges 3 from verse 7, her husband was brought to my attention as a man in ministry. He became the judge of the rebellious Israelites. God raised her husband up as a deliverer to the Israelites from the hands of Cushan Rishathaim king of Aram Naharaim. They were subject to this king for eight years. But when they cried to God for help, God raised Othniel as a judge for them.

Her husband went to war, she must have known before now anyway that her husband is a warrior, is that not what husbands in ministry are, they are God's warriors here on earth, fighting the Lord's battle over the souls of men.

Her husband's ministry continued for another forty years having conquered the king of Aram.

Though her name is silent but very impactful as I look at her life through the ministry of her husband. She must have been supportive of her husband in ministry.

Prayer

- Please help me Lord to adorn Your Gospel quietly.
- Give me the grace to submit to my husband. Amen

19th January 2023

Bishops Court

02:25 pm

9. Deborah

Judges 4:1-10, 14, Judges 5:1-9

The Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible names defined the name Deborah as eloquent, an orator, bee, to speak, her speaking.

Deborah was God's workmanship, also ordained for good works. She was the one directly involved in ministry.

Her time

The children of Israel rebelled against God and HE gave them up to King Jabin of Canaan to oppress them. Jabin had nine hundred chariots fitted with iron and he had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years. And the time came when they cried to the LORD for help. And the way God heard their cry was to raise for Himself a woman amid the men. For the men in the days of Deborah were not taking responsibility, they were kind of passive in their roles and responsibilities.

As I think of Deborah, I thought of what could make God single her out amid many women in her generation.

The answer is found in Judges 5:4. She was a prophetess, a wife and then a judge. This format shows the priority of Deborah, and God saw this priority while Deborah was in the closet, and God brought her to rescue her people.

Deborah a prophetess

The Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words says that prophetess is the feminine of prophet, and a prophet is one who speaks forth openly, a proclaimer of a divine message. A prophet is someone who had close intimacy with God, a person carrying the spirit of God. Deborah had a closet life; she was in a deep intimate relationship with God.

Though her generation was in tumult, she didn't fail to take her place in the presence of God. And as she grew in her personal intimacy with God, God could rely on her as He wanted to respond to the cry of the Israelites. I can't go on in life without developing a close intimate relationship with God. This is the basis for ministry.

Deborah – a wife

The scripture mentioned that she was a wife, the wife of Lapidoth. We have nothing in the person of Lapidoth, but Deborah who was a wife in ministry brought her husband's name to the limelight as she must have faithfully served her husband in the secret. She wasn't a proud wife, nor arrogant to her husband.

Maybe she was more spiritual than her husband, but God could still find her as a submissive wife in her home. She was a helper to her husband. Her love for the Lord and her intimate relationship with God as a prophet was seen in her marital relationship to the point that the Bible penned her down as the wife of Lapidoth. I remember how God's pattern for Christian service says the order of service was her walk with God, her marriage, and then her ministry. Deborah honoured her husband.

This is very important for me now that my husband is unable to be active in the work of ministry, I must not forget that he is still my head, and by the grace of God, he was the one God used to build me up, and now that he is incapacitated, I must not take advantage of him, nor ignore his care and need. My ministry begins with him. I can't neglect his need and expect God to make use of me in ministry.

Her ministry

Deborah was called into ministry at a time when the Israelites were suffering the consequence of their choices. Life was difficult for them. The Bible accounted that village life ceased, highways were abandoned, travellers took to winding paths, and villagers in Israel would not fight; they held back, and not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel. It was a precarious time for a woman to step up.

I see that her ministry stemmed from her mother's heart. She said she arose as a mother in Israel. And this is one thing I have seen that ministry is done better when seen as a parenting ministry, God brought the lives of men to me to nurture and mature just as I would my children.

She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim connotes that she must have to walk miles uphill to her office. She was an active woman and would not allow the journey up the hill to hinder her. She had no car, aeroplane, taxi, train or bus that will take her to where she was going like I do in my days, yet, she would still go to the place of ministry so that she could make herself available for the people of God.

The moment she made herself available, the Israelites then went up to her to have their disputes decided. They were not concerned whether she was a woman or a man, all they wanted was to see their disputes resolved, they just needed someone to lead them at a such dark time in Israel's history.

In her ministerial role to Israel, she sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali who was the captain of Israel's life but had shrunk in because of king Jabin. Deborah was a woman leader at a time when men in the military were not confident of themselves or their weapons.

So, Deborah sent for Barak and told him that has the LORD, the God of Israel not commanded him to go and take with him ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them up to Mount Tabor. She was a ministry wife who had learnt to speak respectfully to her husband at home therefore she was able to speak respectfully to Barak even though he had abjugated his responsibility.

I also see that her intimate walk with God was put to display as God could communicate with her that he spoke to Barak to do, but he didn't do it.

As for me also, I see that to be an effective wife in ministry, how I address my husband at home will be revealed in the way I address other men outside my home.

My privilege of being in God's presence will help me to know God's mind for His people, and alps grant me access to the people's life so that I know the right word to say at any given season of their lives.

A ministry wife with an encouraging spirit

Deborah did not only remind or motivated Barak to step up and take responsibility according to the will of God for that season, but she stood behind Barak when Barak was not confident enough to go and confront the armies of Sisera who the chief captain of king Jabin's army was.

Barak declared that he won't go if Deborah won't go with him, and Deborah assured him that she will go with him. What made Barak desire the company of Deborah? Could it be his knowledge of Deborah's godly influence and intimate walk with God? Whatever it was, I am seeing that Deborah as a ministry wife was reliable.

The attributes of Deborah

- She was a praying woman
- She was a woman that pursues God
- She was approachable

- She was reliable
- She speaks in humility
- She was bold in the Lord
- She was a confident woman
- She was a prophetess
- She was a poet/singer/writer
- She was courageous

She was content in what she was called to do

When Barak said he won't go without Deborah, Deborah mentioned another woman, Jael who will take the honour of the battle. Deborah was not concerned about promoting herself or taking the honour. She was confident in what God has called her to do; she didn't feel threatened that another woman is coming who would take the glory.

Even when she needed to beckon on Barak, she did so, not seeking to assume the military office of Barak.

And this is a cause of friction among women in the church, and among wives in ministry. We develop low self-esteem, and bitterness against each other because we feel threatened that someone else wants to take our role or ministry, particularly if the person is capable or skilful. But looking at Deborah, another woman's skills or role in the Lord's battle was not a reason for her to be sad. She didn't hinder Jael from fulfilling a portion of the plan of God. She knew that she could only do the work God has prearranged for her before time, and others have parts to play too. She saw Jael as a co-labourer for God and she spoke of her ahead of time to Barak.

How many women have been hindered from fulfilling their portion in the service of God in many of our churches and ministries because of envy and jealousy? Or should I say because of an inferiority complex or self? Many of God's work is half done or left undone because one ministry wife felt threatened that another woman is brought in to play a part she is not meant to play, and if only I settle this in mind that I am not called to do everything, I have my part to play, and I must graciously give room for the other Jaels who must play their parts in the kingdom business so that we can fully achieve the heart of God in our generation.

Conclusion

Deborah's walk with God flew into her marital relationship and then into ministry. It was revealed in how she spoke to others and how she allowed others to play their part in the work of God. And as a result, the battle of the Lord was won, and the enemy of God was put to shame. She continued in ministry for another forty years; such was the ministry life of a wife in ministry who dug her root deeply into God.

Prayer

- Lord, one thing that challenged me in this meditation this afternoon is Deborah's giving space to Jael to fulfil her part. I have never seen it this way, Help me too.
- Cause me not to just be a Deborah by name, but rather make me a woman of Your presence.
- Let my intimate relationship with You be evident in my dealings with my husband and those outside my home. Amen.

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. Philippians 2:3-4 NIV

10. Jehosheba

23rd January 2023

Bishops Court

12:53 pm

2 Kings 11, 2 Chronicles 22:10-12

Her early life

Jehosheba was a princess, she was the daughter of king Jehoram and the sister to king Ahaziah. Her name means the Lord's oath or Jehovah is her oath according to The Exhaustive dictionary of Bible names definition. Here is a woman in covenant with Jehovah. She is indeed God's workmanship, created for good works, and she fulfilled the good works amid all oppositions.

Her ministry

Her husband was priest Jehoiada, the high priest at that time. This man was in ministry at a time of national upheaval as the mother of the late king, queen Athaliah usurped authority and took over the throne as she killed all her seed royals.

It must have been a difficult time for this high priest. And it was during such a difficult time that the Bible introduced me to the ministry of Jehosheba. She arose to rescue Joash who was her nephew.

Joash was only one year old, but Jehosheba had an eye that goes beyond the physical to see Joash as God sees him. She knew Joash is meant to be the future king. Therefore, she took the risk to pick up Joash and the nurse of Joash and kept them safe for six years in the chamber.

She was a skilful and courageous woman. Her ministry was that of a lifesaver. She saved Joash from untimely death, and thereby secretly raised a royal seed that will take the throne in the nearest future.

Her relationship with her husband

I believe Jehosheba had a good relationship with Jehoiada the high priest who was her husband. She must have constantly discussed and prayed about the situation of things in Israel at that time. She must have listened to her husband's suggestion, as she didn't single-handedly rescue Joash, she did so alongside her husband.

For me too

To be successful as a ministry wife, I cannot neglect my husband's input in what I am doing. I must share visions and dreams with him. I must share concerns and situations of things with him.

Also, I must be sensitive to the things happening in my environment just as Jehosheba was. I also believe that Jehosheba was a woman of few words, if not her mouth would have gone about telling others of her special plan of rescuing Joash. Many great things the Lord would have done have been aborted by too much talk. Mary the mother of Jesus hid many things in her heart. To be a life-giver, I must be ready to learn a lot but talk less. Sometimes, we dissipate and lose focus of God's vision as we gather committees to discuss a vision when actually such vision should first be kept in a secret place for in-depth prayer and perspective.

There are many youths that need to be rescued. Many children are under the siege of the Athaliah of today in schools. Curriculums are promoted to kill the lives of children, could it be this is why God has equipped me with the ability to write for young people, to write children's stories, and Bible study for teenagers and children at large?

Can I see the havoc the enemy is doing amongst the younger generation, and how am I going to be rescuing these younger generations that the enemy wants to distort their views of marriage, gender, God etc? Who knows whether I have come to the kingdom for such a time as this!

Conclusion

Many Athaliah would have been defeated, many Joash would have been rescued, and many thrones would have been rid of evil if only God finds Jehosheba who are willing to follow God's way.

I love how Thomas Nelson's women of the Bible made me see that Jehosheba made a choice as she could have gone the evil way of Athaliah or that of Ahaziah, but she chose to follow the Lord.

Walking with God is a personal choice. While it is good to come from a Christian home or Christian background, it is still my choice to choose what to do and which way to follow.

Herbert Lockyer's All Women of The Bible helped me to see that Jehosheba was the only Biblical princess that married a high priest. And for me, this shows me the depth of the love Jehosheba

had for the Lord. She loved God so much that she wanted to marry a pastor so that she can continue to grow in her love of God, and that she did.

I am ever grateful for my marriage to my husband. He was the vehicle God used to grow me and help me to love Him more.

Prayer

- Give me insight into Your ways.
- Help me to be sensitive to the events in my town, city and nation
- Help me not to be a novice to what is happening in the lives of the people that I am serving.
Help me to know what is going on in my generation and what I can do.
- Keep me in unity with my husband for united we stand and divided we fall.

11. Huldah

24th January 2023

Bishops Court

01:26 pm

2 Kings 22, 2 Chronicles 34

Her time

Huldah was a prophetess during Josiah's reformation. A time when the temple was being repaired. The people found the Word of the Lord, which means that the Word of the Lord was abandoned and kept in the dust while everyone lived as they chose. The Exhaustive dictionary of Bible names defines her name as weasel, i.e. from its quickness in getting into holes. It also means endurance, perpetuity

Her marriage

Huldah was the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas. Her husband was the keeper of the wardrobe. She lived in Jerusalem, in the New Quarter. Here I see a woman who was also God's workmanship created for good works.

She was under the leadership of a husband who was also involved in the work of God; he kept

the wardrobe. And she was God's spokeswoman to His people. Her office as a prophetess did not make her arrogant against her husband.

Her ministry

When the men of Josiah found the Word of the Lord and took it to him, he asked them to go and inquire of the Lord for him and the people about the Word written in the book of the law. And these men arose and went to Hulda.

There may have been many men prophets in that time, but it was Hulda they chose to go to.

Hulda was God's instrument to send the Word of the Lord to king Josiah. She was a prophetess to the king.

And I think she must be a woman of good reputation for the men to have sought her out.

She didn't mince words, nor retreat from telling them the truth.

For me

Huldah found herself as God's ministry wife at a time when her nation was going through reformation by Josiah. This kind of encouraged me too as we are thanking God today for the United Kingdom. It seems to me that God can raise for Himself a Josiah, who will bring reformation to this land.

And as a wife in ministry, whatever position I found myself must never be a reason to disrespect my husband or usurp his authority. I pray the Lord to help me. I also saw that God seeks a woman who tells the truth to those who come to her for counselling. I have people come to me here and there, I have premarital counselling that I run, can I sincerely say that I tell people the truth even if they don't like it? The truth that Huldah told the people to take back to Josiah brought the people to repentance and rededicating themselves to the Lord.

When I run marriage counselling, my view is usually not the secular view, and I remember the people I was counselling yesterday prayed, and in the prayers saying the things they were being told are not what they would naturally agree with, but God has helped them to accept as the truth. May I remain a voice for the Lord. Amen

Prayer

- Help me Lord to remain a constant voice for You.
- Keep me humble as a wife to my husband. Amen

12. The wife of the prophet

2 Kings 4:1-7

She was part of the wives of the sons of the prophet (NKJV). Some other translations call her the wife of the prophet, the wife of a man from the company of the prophets.

She was married to a prophet who was God-fearing, but I am meeting her after the death of her husband. The husband of this wife in ministry was in debt. What caused the debt I don't know, but after his death, the wife faced the consequence of her husband's indebtedness, for creditors have come to take away her two sons.

Her story depicts the predicament of some people in ministry. Some ministers are facing severe lack, I can mention a few names who are seeking to serve God in the holiness of life but are profoundly poor, and their poverty has made them creditors, or even touch the ministry money that is not theirs or dabble into money that was kept with them.

The reality of the husband's indebtedness is now on this widow post her husband's death, and she turned to Elisha who was like a discipler to the sons of prophets. She made her situation known to him. She was not secretive and die in shame or let her sons be taken away, instead, she arose and went to Elisha and explained the situation on the ground to him.

And Elisha asked her what is it that she has at home, and she responded that she had nothing except for a jar of oil. For her, this jar of oil is nothing significant that could even be used to meet her need and deliver her from this ridicule. But Elisha told her to go and borrow vessels and shut in with her sons and poured the oil, and she did likewise until there was no vessel to pour anymore and the oil stopped. She went back to Elisha and Elisha asked her to go and sell it and pay their debts, while she and her sons feed on the leftover.

As she walked in obedience to what her husband's discipler said, she experienced the fruit of obedience and she had enough to sort out her husband's debt and support her children.

She was indeed God's workmanship created for good works. But should I say that when a woman and her husband in ministry are unable to wait on the Lord for their daily need, they forfeit the privilege or hinder themselves from entering the good works God ordained for them?

But as this woman realised there was an Elisha and she went and approached him for her predicament, she indeed entered the good works we all remember her with by filling her jars with oil and selling and clearing her debt and then supporting her husband. Imagine if she had learnt to do this while her husband was alive. I also have my regrets as a young wife to my husband. I wish I know what I know today but thank God for His mercy that kept pursuing me.

For me

I see that God can use what he has deposited in me to meet my family's needs or to even rescue my husband. There are moments when husbands need the intercession of their wives. Ministry wives can be so lonely and helpless, but they need not be as God is available to help them, and this is why seeking an older woman is also key for them, so that they have someone they can open up to.

There are wives in ministry that are dealing with difficult situations with their children just as this woman was faced with her sons being taken away from her. Some ministry wives have children that are choosing alternative lifestyles, are not obedient to the faith, rebel and are untameable. And this type of thing can bother the mind of wives in ministry. We must not forget that we have an advocate in God whom we can go to over our case.

And there are husbands in ministry who are indeed fund of borrowing, and the wives seem helpless as they see their husbands borrow money from church members here and there, such a wife can talk to God about this malady, and also find time to talk to their husbands and if possible to their disciples if they have one.

My personal story

I remember when I have just gotten married too and my husband was in various debt, and I had to work with him to sort out all our debts, and I remember the day he stood at the pulpit and told people how he was in debt and how God used me to help him come out of debt totally and he is debt free. It was a joyous thing for me. As I write I believe I have made him glad as a wife.

Conclusion

Sometimes, as wives in ministry there're deficiencies we might see in our husbands, maybe it has to do with the h management of funds, we have that responsibility to work alongside them to be free from whatever has kept them bound and unfree to serve God. It is right for men of God to be in debt. Unfortunately, some of these servants of God are in debt as a way to meet their wives' high demands. No, it must not be so, wives in ministry must be content with the little God provided with, and when there seems to be a lack they must learn to turn to God first for divine provision. And God is faithful to meet their needs.

The need that came to the prophet while alive that took him to borrow could have been shared with his discipler, who was Elisha, and the solution would have been sought just as it was when the wife cried out.

We do ourselves more havoc if we don't learn and know how to take our needs to the Lord in prayer. Also, we bring reproach to the Lord if we go about borrowing, and not trusting God for our daily provisions.

Prayer

- Help me Lord to be a woman of contentment.
- Give me the grace to make use of whatever You have provided us with.
- Help my husband and I to take needs to You and not to people first.
- Thank You for how we have experienced Your divine provision. Amen.

26th January 2023

Bishops Court

02:23 pm

13. Elizabeth

Luke 1:5-25, 39-66

Her background

The Exhaustive Dictionary names of the Bible defines Elizabeth as the Greek form of Elisheba, which means God of the oath; i.e God is her oath; to whom God is the oath; God of the covenant.

She is from the same family line as her husband, she is from the Levite or a descendant of Aaron. She had a personal walk with God, a covenanted walk with God indeed through all life seasons. She wasn't depending on her husband's spirituality, instead, she had her own. The scriptures described her together with her husband as righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blameless.

Her challenges

Though a ministry wife who may have been privileged to see other people's children named and dedicated to the Lord, she was on the other hand barren, she had no child and she was of old age together with her husband.

This challenge didn't take her away from walking blamelessly before the Lord. It didn't affect her spirituality, rather, it deepened her walk with God.

Her husband

Her husband's name is Zechariah. He was a priest from Abijah's priestly division. Her husband Zechariah was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. He was the priest on duty to burn incense this particular day. On that particular day, the angel of the Lord appeared to her husband and reassured him that his prayers are answered and that his wife Elizabeth shall have a son. So, this woman was married to a man in ministry who though busy with God's work but never stop interceding for his wife.

The challenge of a muted husband

Apart from the challenge of barrenness, Elizabeth also went through a time when her husband could not speak, he couldn't verbally express his concerns to his wife. Her husband returned home from his priestly duty as a dumb husband who was unable to speak again. Imagine, how would Elizabeth have reacted. Could she have blamed God that her husband went to serve God, and this is how God returned him back home? No, Elizabeth had the testimony of being blameless before God. She was a woman that handled difficult seasons in life and in ministry really well.

And as a wife in that situation, I can imagine, but as hard as that would have been, Elizabeth pressed on in her relationship with her husband and with God. She was a woman that was looking unto God as the author and finisher of her faith. She was indeed dead to the flesh

Her motherhood

She entered motherhood at old age. After her husband returned home, she still offered her body to him though muted, and she conceived and for five months, she hid herself away, probably seeking God's face for the child God put in her womb.

Below is what the angel said concerning the child in her womb, no wonder she went hiding to fully comprehend what God's intentions are for her unborn child.

- He will be a joy and delight to them
- Many will rejoice because of his birth
- He will be great in the sight of the Lord.
- He is never to take wine or other fermented drink
- He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born.
- He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.
- He will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous - to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Thank God for a woman who understood these and went and besieged God as she went into hiding for five months seeking God's grace and wisdom for the season of motherhood she will be embarking on.

And when her son was delivered, and on the day of naming when families and neighbours came for the naming, they wanted to name her son contrary to the name God ordained for him, but Elizabeth spoke up for the life of her son and said what the name should be.

How many minister's children need parents who are speaking up for their children? Ministers' children need mothers who can first speak to the Lord about their children, then they can speak against the enemy concerning their children. Elizabeth did not quieten her lips when she saw a threat in the naming of her son, she spoke up, and what she spoke was in correspondence with what the angel of the Lord told her husband.

A spirit-filled woman

Elizabeth as a ministry wife was spirit filled. When Mary came to hers, she was able to discern that Mary was carrying the Messiah to come; she knew this through the help of the Holy Spirit within. Every ministry wife needs the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Mary came to her, what if she wasn't filled with the Holy Spirit, she wouldn't have been able to discern what was going on in the life of Mary at that season of life. In fact, she may have become a hindrance to Mary. Many women have been cut short by big sisters in the faith who through lack of sensitivity to the Holy Spirit quenched what God was doing or about to do through other younger sisters. Some have stopped the fire of God through jealousy and envy, and bitterness.

I can't be an effective wife in ministry without a fresh enduement of the Holy Spirit. There are people that will come to me whom I will need sensitivity to discern their state and what to say just like Elizabeth was.

She was able to impact the heart of Mary because she was an older woman, a ministry wife with God's spirit and thereby could discern the mind of God or the season Mary was in. Remembering that the angel of the Lord directed Mary's mind to Elizabeth. And Mary visiting her was a blessing to both Mary and Elizabeth. She was able to be a blessing, a godly pointer to Mary. She affirmed her and confirmed what the angel said to her. And through her interactions with Mary, a song came forth from the lips of Mary which we today call the Magnificat.

I want to be a ministry wife whose life puts godly songs on the lips of those that approach me. I want to be discerning, able to know the situation of those that come to me and the right word to say to them. It is my desire to see women build up and rebuild again. We have many ruined women, many ruined female folks, but fewer Elizabeths carry the Spirit of God to help refocus the many female folks both old and young to God's perspective and plans for their womanhood.

Prayer

- Lord, please make me a builder of waste ruins.

- Endow me with power from on High
- Make me a woman of discernment.
- Help me to speak up for my children when I needed to.
- Give me the grace to contribute positively to the lives of the younger generation of women. Amen.

27th January 2023

Bishops Court

01:33 pm

14. Anna

Her background

Her name means Grace according to the Exhaustive dictionary of Bible names. The Herbert Lockyer's All women of the Bible says her name means Grace or favour.

Anna was the daughter of Penuel or Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. The Asher is part of what is termed the lost ten tribes of Israel. She was a widow and very old, some translations says she was eighty-four or she was a widow for eighty-four years. Whichever one, she was old and in widowhood after seven years of marriage.

Her marriage

I have no Biblical record of her marriage than the fact that she was married as a virgin and was in a marriage for seven years before her husband died. And she remained a widow afterwards.

Her time

Anna lived in a time when people were seeking and searching for a redeemer, a consoler of Israel.

Her ministry

After the death of her husband, she stayed in the temple, and never left the temple, instead, she worshipped night and day, fasting and praying.

When the Lord Jesus was brought to the temple for dedication, she thanked God and spoke about the child to all looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Bible calls her a prophetess, a woman who hears from God and tells the people. She was God's spokeswoman, no wonder she spoke to the people who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. Her ministry was that of bringing comforting words or words of consolation as she pointed Jesus to everyone that sought consolation. She saw Jesus as the consolation of Israel. And apart from that, the way she told people that Jesus was the redeemer, or the consolation of Israel must have encouraged the heart of Mary at the temple after Simeon told her that a sword will pierce her heart.

The Albert Lockyer All Women of the Bible tagged her as the first woman to become a Bible missionary. I love that. Her widowhood was used for missionary purposes.

Conclusion

Anna was God's workmanship created with good works designated to her. And even in widowhood, she carried it out. She lived the rest of her life in the house of God, praying, fasting, worshipping and praising God. She didn't allow her life situation to snatch her heart from the Lord, instead, she immersed herself in her relationship with God and in the labour of God for her time.

There was no record of Anna having any child, and as a childless widow, she grew in her love and devotion to the Lord. There could be nothing between her and her saviour. She was a ministry wife; indeed, though her earthly marriage ended so early, she married herself to her Maker and buried herself and her heart in what concerns the Lord.

Prayer

- Lord, help me to love You in season and out of season
- Give me the grace to look unto Jesus the author and the finisher of my faith. Amen.

27th January 2023

Bishops Court

02:14 pm

15. Peter's wife

Luke 4:38-39, Matthew 8:14-18, Mark 1:29-31

Though not so much is spoken of Peter's wife in the Bible, neither do we know her name. Luke made me know that Peter's mother-in-law was in Peter's home, and the way the story was set made me believe that she lived with them. So I see a wife in ministry who had her mother living with her, and when her mother was unwell, she had the faith in Jesus that her mother's fever will be healed in Christ.

I also see her as a responsible daughter to her mother for taking custody of her at that time. Perhaps her father was dead, and was probably her mother's only child, or just felt she won't leave her mother by herself to fend for herself, therefore, she brought her into her home. I also see that her husband agreed with her in allowing her mother to come and stay with them.

From 1 Corinthians 9:5, I see that Peter's wife was a believing wife. And as a ministry wife, she went on mission trips with her husband, Peter. She was in support of her husband serving the Lord.

I love how Herbert Lockyer all women of the Bible called her a noblewoman who was a faithful partner of Peter during his years of fishing for a living and the long years of apostleship. This has actually helped me to see a woman who was willing to receive the change in her husband's vocation. She agreed for her husband to quit fishing and then serve Jesus in full-term ministry. Herbert Lockyer said she was a sympathetic, discreet and understanding woman behind her husband, Peter.

Her husband Peter wrote in 1 Peter 3:1-6 that *"Wives, in the same way submit yourselves to your own husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behaviour of their wives, ²when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. ³Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewelry or fine clothes. ⁴Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. ⁵For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to adorn themselves. They submitted themselves to their own husbands, ⁶like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her lord. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear."* (NIV)

Could this be the portrait of his wife? I believe so. Though her name was not disclosed, but I see a woman of a meek and quiet spirit who supported her husband in his kingdom service to the Lord.

Prayer

- Lord, help my life to be a supportive wife to my husband.
- Help me to also be hospitable or welcoming to those who need my home. Amen.

16. Phillip's wife

Acts 21: 8-9

Her background

She was married to Philip the evangelist, one of the seven brothers selected in Acts 6. Her husband was the one God used to turn Samaria upside down. He was the one used by God to reach out to the Ethiopian Eunuch. Great work and miracles were done by the Lord through his hands.

The wife of Philip was not mentioned throughout Biblical accounts, but a look at her husband and daughters tells me a lot about her. Again, she was God's workmanship, recreated anew for good works.

Philip was one of the seven men that were chosen in Acts six when there was a crisis in the discipleship labour in Jerusalem. I believe that the same criteria that Philip met would have also been met by his wife whose name we do not know, nor have a record of.

While we have no record of this remarkable woman, a look at Luke's account in Acts 21 may help us to know a little bit about her. When Luke was giving the account of their journey, he reported that they came to Philip's house, then mentioned Philip's four daughters, and then spoke on the famine that broke out that was prophesied by Agabus.

The mentioning of these four daughters of Philip pointed me to the kind of mother who raised them. She was a silent labourer. She was contented to allow her husband to sit at the city gate so to say.

Perhaps the wife of Philip took her home front seriously while her husband was heavily involved in the work of ministry. She released her husband to do the work of God with an undivided mind, while she focused on the home front, making sure that there was no spoil. How she was able to raise four daughters who all prophesied is a challenge for me. To have four daughters and all prophesied is not a joke, it is a serious work.

Seeing Philip's wife, though her name is unrecorded, I see that what makes a ministry wife useful is not that her name is known all over, but her works. Proverbs 31 says her work shall praise her in

the gate, and that is what the life of Philip's daughters did to my daughter. They are a kind of credit to the faithfulness of their mother in willingness to be unknown, unheralded, yet, useful in the plan of God, particularly in the raising of her children while her husband was heavily involved in ministry.

I guess Philip's heart was at peace whenever he was on the King's errand knowing that his home is secure as the wife takes her place in raising and nurturing the children. Philip had no need of spoil because his heart could wholly trust his wife.

For me

What about me? I have been a full-time housewife since my marriage to my husband. I have seen him travel on mission trips and I was left home with the children. He has had to attend leaders meeting here and there while I may be home with the children. Was my being home useful for the Lord at all?

She had four daughters; I have only half of what she had as I usually say to the Lord. I have two daughters, are they truly following the Lord? Can it be recorded of them that they were in a closely knitted relationship with the Lord?

The God who helped Philip's daughter is also the God of today, and He wants to help me too.

Conclusion

There is pressure on ministry wives to perform, to run a women's class, a women's group, they must have a kind of ministry alongside their husbands in the church. And this pressure has pushed many wives in ministry beyond their boundaries.

Many have abandoned their roles and responsibilities in their homes. I remember a pastor's wife that left her 3 months old baby to travel with her husband to another nation, even while the baby was at that age. The baby was left with a nanny so that they can go and conduct a family conference. Such action is not right, priority must be given to the minister's home.

There is a time and season for everything. The time will come when a woman that is so say dormant today will become active in the work of ministry outside her home. We must not sacrifice our homes for ministry. It is our walk with God, our marital relationships, our children, and then ministry.

Many minister's children are resenting ministry today or even Christianity today because they felt neglected by their parents as a result of their parent's involvement in ministry. The enemy also has

used the opportunity of absent parents in the ministers' homes to afflict and lure ministers' children into all manner of evil. Wisdom, Jesus said, is justified by her children (Matthew 11:19).

Prayer

- Lord, thank You for the privilege to be married to my husband
- Help me to raise for You outstanding daughters to Your glory. Amen

1st February 2023

3 Bishops Court

5:10 pm

17. Phoebe

Romans 16:1-2

Her background

There is little written in the Bible about Phoebe than the two verses in the last chapter of Romans. Her name means radiant. Her name is also spelt as Phebe and means shining, pure according to the Hitchcock Bible dictionary of names.

Phoebe was part of the congregation in Cenchrea. Cenchrea was a port town seven miles from Corinth.

I am not sure whether she was single or married, but whatever her marital status was didn't hinder her to be useful in the vineyard of God. If married, she became a ministry wife, and if single she was still a ministry wife unto the Lord since God is our real husband who gave us earthly husbands.

Romans 16:1 introduced her as a (deacon) servant of the congregation at Cenchrea. Paul commended her to the church in Rome, and that she should be offered any help she might need as she herself was a helper of many including Paul.

Some say she was probably the one Paul gave the epistle to the Romans to deliver it to them.

According to Thomas Nelson's Women of The Bible, Phoebe was a leader in the early church and a significant help to Paul. She probably had the gift of help, and she utilized it to the glory of God.

Her ministry

Her ministry according to Paul was that of help. She helped Paul significantly. She stood by him in his ministry in Corinth. And she also helped as many that needed her help in her local congregation in Cenchrea.

Paul commended Phoebe to the brethren in Rome. Phoebe was a woman of godly reputation that Paul could attest to. It is rather unfortunate that today, we have many wives in ministry who have become fraudsters; their character is maimed as they themselves are perverse, but Phoebe was a woman of godly reputation. And I cannot serve God and ignore my personal testimony. What would those around me say about me?

Prayer

- Lord, just help me. Amen

7th February 2023

Bishops Court

04:14 pm

18. Priscilla

Acts 18:1-3,18-19, 24-24, Romans 16:3, 1 Corinthians 16:19, 2 Timothy 4:19

The Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible names defined the name Priscilla as Little old woman, ancient.

Background info

She was first mentioned in Acts 18 between verses one and three. Her name was mentioned alongside her husband.

Her challenges

In this Acts 18 account, she and her husband were part of the Jews that travelled down to Corinth as a result of Claudius sending away the Jews in Rome. So she and her husband came to Corinth.

I am not sure how difficult it might be for Priscilla and her husband after facing deportation from Italy to Rome. Their story reflects the stories of many ministry wives in our time who are indeed facing deportation or one kind of immigration issue in their part of the world. Think of missionaries in other countries who are being pressurised by the immigration system of the country. Such was the situation of Priscilla together with her husband. So, after the immigration issue, they came to Corinth, and there they met Paul.

Her marriage

Priscilla was always mentioned alongside her husband's name. She was one with her husband. She must have been a submissive wife for her to allow Paul to stay with them in Corinth and to follow

him to Ephesus. I believe that there was a closeness between her and her husband. The scriptures noted that they were tentmakers. To me, that means she was involved in her husband's trade of tent-making. She and her husband were inseparable.

Her hospitality

I saw that Priscilla was a woman of hospitality. She accepted Paul into her home. Maybe they themselves were not even well settled in Corinth, yet, she didn't mind that Paul would come and stay with them. She allowed her home to become a house church in Ephesus allowing many to come in to encounter the Lord.

Her involvement in ministry

She was willing to follow her husband and Paul to Ephesus, and at Ephesus, Paul left them there. They probably came there for ministry opportunities together with Paul. While in Ephesus, they met Apollo, a certain Jew who was born at Alexandria, though an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, and instructed in the way of the Lord, fervent in spirit, spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, but what he thought was limited to John's baptism.

And When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. So, I see that Priscilla was a ministry wife that worked in conjunction with her husband to disciple other lives. When she saw an Apollo that loved the Lord and was passionate about Him but lacked little or no knowledge she was willing to contribute to the growth of Apollo. She wasn't thinking that Apollo will outshine her husband, no, she knew it was about the kingdom. Hers is a selfless service.

She would have probably hosted him in her house and offered him food and created time to take him through the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ so that He can fully understand what he received and so that he will be able to preach it accurately.

Usually, women are the ones whose mouth says all sorts of about people who are preaching but preaching inaccurately, but for Priscilla, when she saw that Apollo wasn't preaching accurately, it became a burden for her and her husband to reach out to Apollo. She wasn't going about spreading the news that see the man who wants to preach but lacked knowledge of the truth. Priscilla was a believer indeed in her conduct.

1 Corinthians 16:19 shows that they had a house church. So she and her husband pastored this church. She was a mother in Israel. She watched out for those who are just growing in the faith and helped them to grow in accordance with the word of God.

For me

When I see someone whose knowledge of the Lord is not accurate, what do I do? Gossip about them? Be annoyed with them, or be jealous of them? Do I go and correct publicly, which is what I may have probably done, I see that Priscilla was self-controlled and waited for the appropriate time to help Apollo. It is not right for me to disgrace a minister publicly unless He is blaspheming the name of the Lord, or leading people astray. But if it is a matter of knowledge, I can help such a one behind the scenes.

Conclusion

Paul wrote concerning this woman and her husband that they were his helpers or co-workers. She was in union with her husband in ministry. Her heart was not divided from that of her husband. They both laboured together for the Lord.

Prayer

- Lord, don't Your effort in showing me these ministry wives be in vain.
- Help me to be hospitable
- Help me to be willing to open my house to others for fellowship.
- I dedicate my home afresh to You for church gatherings. Amen

8th February 2023

Bishops Court

12:40 pm

19. Euodia

Philippians 4:1-4

The Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible names says Euodia means success, prosperous journey. She was one of the sisters in Philippi.

Background

Paul in his letter to the Philippian church told how much he missed them and the joy they brought to his heart. And that means Euodia was one of those people whose life once brought joy to Paul. She was one of those Paul said they should stand firm in the Lord.

In between verses 1 and 3 of Philippi 4 is the word of Paul mentioning Euodia alongside Syntyche. He was actually begging that these two sisters should agree as sisters in the Lord. They both laboured in the Gospel with Paul. So, I can safely say that Euodia was a ministry wife. Whether she was married or single I don't know as the Bible did not tell me anything about her marital status, but she was a wife of the Lord and laboured for her redeemer and husband.

Her ministry

She worked hard alongside Paul in the spreading of the Gospel together with Clement and other fellow workers. I can't imagine how she may have laboured in the Word of God. But it is recorded in the Bible that she laboured in the Gospel alongside Paul.

Her challenge

Euodia came to the place where her joy in serving with her fellow sister became seemingly reaped off. I am not sure what transpired between her and Syntyche, but their relationship became strained relationship. Her sister whom they used to labour together and gave her joy became someone that probably saddened her heart whenever she sees her. They could not see eye to eye. They became enemies of each other. Perhaps when Euodia saw Syntyche her heart jumps with hatred just as I have been in time past.

Why would we labour together in the faith and then become enemies of each other? What could cause a division between two ministry wives? Many things. I remember that for me then, there was a rift between us and our senior pastor, and this was a relationship that was meant to bring joy, we were close to a degree, and even her mother saw me as her daughter's junior sister. But unfortunately, a rift came. How we the people of God, particularly wives in ministry need to know that we are not each other's enemies. When things happened that cause rancour we need God to help us handle it with care. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. As I study Euodia my eyes are full of tears as I remember my own attitude and the destruction of my relationship with our Pastor's wife and the pastor, a relationship that was initially engaged to better each other and to further the cause of Christ.

How the enemy has come to destroy relationships amongst wives in ministry that would have been used to further the course of the kingdom. Gossip, jealousy, envy, or even a little misunderstanding have been used by the enemy to destroy a good relationship that would have furthered the course of the Gospel.

What could cause a rift amongst ministry wives?

- a. When we ourselves are no longer in union with the Lord, for our union with Him gives us joy and helps us to be in union with our sisters.
- b. When we give heed to the whispering of the devil which may sometimes come through others.
- c. When we desire a change in something, service, fellowship or the way things are done in church or in a ministry, and if care is not taken the enemy uses that to destroy relationships, and particularly amongst wives in ministry.
- d. When we felt neglected or abandoned with the project given to us to do.

We must create time to resolve anything that we are not happy with. One of the mistakes that I made was not seeking a one-to-one opportunity to express my dissatisfaction and receive the senior pastor's wives' perspective and then work together.

Sometimes, we focus so much on how things are affecting us and then forget that the other person might be affected also. I think this tells me again of the need not to look on my own thing,

but rather to look on the things of others. If I only think of what damage my action may cause another fellow sister in ministry, maybe it will help me to consider my action.

Conclusion

Euodia started really well, labouring for the Lord and with others in the work of ministry sharing and spreading the Gospel. Unfortunately, a rift came between her and another sister, and the rift persisted so long that Paul have to step in by sending a letter pleading that this relationship should be mended.

Her name was written in the holy Scriptures for my example, she was an example of a sister in contention with her fellow sister, and it seems to me that she wasn't keen on reconciling with her sister, Syntyche.

Prayer

- Lord, help me to be a bridge mender and not a destroyer.
- Help me to follow peace with all men
- Help me not to be difficult to appear to. Amen

8th February 2023

Bishops Court

4:16 pm

20. Syntyche

Philippians 4:1-4

This is the counterpart sister to Euodia. She was one of those two ladies who were not in tune with each other. The Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible names says Syntyche means fortunate, well met.

Her background

She was a sister in the Philippian church. She was part of the church, and actually part of the Gospel spreaders group.

I am not sure if she was married or single, but I have a feeling that she was a single woman.

Her ministry

She was a ministry wife to the Lord, serving Him in spreading the Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ. She laboured tirelessly with Clement, Euodia and many others there in Philippians.

Her challenge

She wasn't in agreement with Euodia. Here is a woman who has worked hard for the Lord alongside Paul, and in Paul's epistle to her local congregation, it was read that they should beg her to mend the relationship with her and Euodia. That is a stain in her name. How could she have laboured hard, and yet in so great a disagreement with her fellow sister in the fellowship? Could she be the one that wasn't willing to mend the relationship, or it was Euodia?

Whatever caused this strain in the relationship I really don't know. And this is a snare amongst wives in ministry. How can we walk together if we are not in agreement? How can we further the cause of Christ if we are in disagreement with each other? Jesus said a house divided against itself shall not stand.

Like I thought while looking at Euodia that there are many ministry wives who are in tune with each other. Though part of the same ministry, far apart from each other. Everyone wants to run their own ministry thing; none is willing to step down and cheer the other.

If the other is doing well in ministry, the other sister becomes jealous and envious and makes every necessary effort to frustrate the effort of the other wife in ministry to move the ministry forward.

This is a terrible spirit amongst ministry wives. How can we build each other if we are not building each other? How can we build women in the Gospel if we are torn apart from each other?

The senior pastor's wife is at loggerheads with the junior pastor's wife, and the junior pastor's wife is at loggerheads with the senior pastor's wife, therefore, the work of God will not move, instead, it is hindered.

For me

I am seeing that following peace with my fellow sister in the faith is key for the expansion of the kingdom. I can't be tearing down my sister and expecting that I will build God's Kingdom like that. If I have issues that I disagree with, I should approach the sister in humility so that we can resolve issues amicably.

For others to now have to be stepping to the point that my discord with my fellow sister in ministry is put into writing is a matter that I should be ashamed of. And was that not what I was indeed

as a young pastor's wife? I remember people who stepped in, even some women from our local church, I remember sister M who called both of us, but was I willing to surrender and mend the relationship? No, I wasn't.

A sister wounded is a terrible thing, and a sister wounded that can't forgive is a house of vipers, as she will not want reconciliation. And, unfortunately, we are having issues like this in the church. We are meant to be the pillar and foundation of the Truth. True relationship is meant to be seen amongst us. While all relationships have their pros and cons, we must be able to relate with each other and forgive each other's shortcomings with the heart of Christ.

Christ came to offer us reconciliation back to God and thereby closed all walls of partition between us and God.

And that is what we are to go and do in our relationships with other wives in ministry. The reconciliation I am given should be extended to another sister, for God has now given to me the ministry of reconciliation.

Until we reconcile and mend all broken relationships in the church, we will not see the move of God that we are seeking for.

Prayer

- Lord, help Your Church
- Heal the women in ministry in Your body.
- Mend our broken relationships.
- Humble our hearts Lord to be like You, for when we broke away from You, You sort for us in giving Yourself on the Cross.
- Help me to be willing to let go and seek forgiveness and give forgiveness whenever necessary. Amen

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing—Life forevermore. Psalm 133 NKJV