**PRAYING WITH THE WOMEN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**

**SESSION 3**

**Opening Prayer**: “**Our souls proclaim the greatness of the Lord, and our spirits rejoice in God our Savior. Lord Jesus, teach us to pray. Mother Mary, pray for us.”**

**QUOTE #1 Micah 6:4** “For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of bondage; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.”

**QUOTE #2 EX 15:20 -21** “Then Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and dancing. And Miriam sang to them: “Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.”

**QUOTE #3 Num 12:2** “… they said, ‘Has the Lord indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?’ And the Lord heard it.”

**QUOTE #4 Num 12:8** “With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in dark speech; and he beholds the form of the Lord. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?”

**QUOTE #5 HEB 11:31** “By faith Rahab the harlot did not perish with those who were disobedient, because she had given friendly welcome to the spies.”

**QUOTE #6 Josh** 2:9a, 11b-14 “I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us …for the Lord your God is he who is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. Now then, swear to me by the Lord that as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father’s house, and give me a sure sign,and save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.” And the men said to her, “Our life for yours! If you do not tell this business of ours, then we will deal kindly and faithfully with you when the Lord gives us the land.”

**QUOTE #7** **Josh 2:21:** “And she said, “According to your words, so be it.”

**QUOTE #8 JUD 4:4-9** “Now Deb′orah, a prophetess, the wife of Lap′pidoth, was judging Israel at that time. She used to sit under the palm of Deb′orah … and the people of Israel came up to her for judgment. She … summoned Barak the son of Abin′o-am… and said to him, ‘The Lord, the God of Israel, commands you, ‘Go, gather your men at Mount Tabor, taking ten thousand from the tribe of Naph′tali and the tribe of Zeb′ulun. And I will draw out Sis′era, the general of Jabin’s army, to meet you by the river Kishon with his chariots and his troops; and I will give him into your hand.’” Barak said to her, ‘If you will go with me, I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go.’ And she said, ‘I will surely go with you; nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, for the Lord will sell Sis′era into the hand of a woman.’ Then Deb′orah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.”

**QUOTE #9 Judges 4:14** “And Deb′orah said to Barak, ‘Up! For this is the day in which the Lord has given Sis′era into your hand. Does not the Lord go out before you?’ So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him.”

**QUOTE #10 JUD 5:1-3** “Then sang Deb′orah and Barak … on that day:

 ‘That the leaders took the lead in Israel,
     that the people offered themselves willingly,
     bless the Lord!

 ‘Hear, O kings; give ear, O princes;
     to the Lord I will sing,
     I will make melody to the Lord, the God of Israel.’”

**QUOTE #11 JUD 5:7** “The peasantry ceased in Israel, they ceased until you arose, Deb′orah, arose as a mother in Israel.”

**QUOTE #12 JUD 5:9** “My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel who offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless the Lord.”

**QUOTE #13 JUD 5:24** “Most blessed of women be Ja′el, the wife of Heber the Ken′ite, of tent-dwelling women most blessed.”

**QUOTE #14 JUD 5:28** “Out of the window she peered, the mother of Sis′era gazed through the lattice: ‘Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the hoofbeats of his chariots?’”

**QUOTE #15** “… so according to this history a woman … became a judge, a woman set all in order, a woman prophesied, a woman triumphed, and joining in the battle array taught men to war under a woman’s lead. But in a mystery it is the battle of the faith and the victory of the Church.” (St. Ambrose, *Concerning Widows*)

**QUOTE # 16** “Motherhood concerns the whole person, not just the body … *the motherhood* of every women … is similarly not only ‘of flesh and blood’: it expresses a profound ‘*listening to the word of the living God*’ and a readiness to ‘safeguard’ this Word.” (*MD*, 4, 19; emphasis in original)

**QUOTE #17** 1 Sam 1:6-8 “And her rival used to provoke her sorely, to irritate her … Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat. And Elka'nah, her husband, said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart sad? Am I not more to you than ten sons?"

**QUOTE #18 1 Sam 1:10-11** “She was deeply distressed and prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly. And she vowed a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant, and remember me, and give to Your maidservant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life."

**QUOTE #19 1 Sam 1:14** “How long will you be drunken? Put your wine away from you.”

**QUOTE #20 1 Sam 1:15-16** “But Hannah answered, "No, my lord, I am a woman sorely troubled; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD. Do not regard your maidservant as a base woman, for all along I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation."

**QUOTE #21 2 Cor. 3:18**:“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.”

**QUOTE #22 1 Sam 1:17** “Eli answered, ‘Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have made to him.’"

**QUOTE #23 1 Sam 1:26-28** “I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the LORD. For this child I prayed; and the LORD has granted me my petition which I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives, he is lent to the LORD."

**QUOTE #24 1 Sam 2:1-2** “"My heart exults in the LORD; my strength is exalted in the LORD ... ‘There is none holy like the LORD, there is none besides thee; there is no rock like our God.’”

**QUOTE #25 1 Sam 2:4-5** “The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble gird on strength. Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger. The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn.”

**QUOTE #26 1 Sam. 2:19-21** “And his mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year … to offer the yearly sacrifice. Then Eli would bless Elka'nah and his wife, and say, ‘The LORD give you children by this woman for the loan which she lent to the LORD’ … And the LORD visited Hannah, and she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew in the presence of the LORD.”

**Closing Prayer: “Father, Your word is a lamp to our feet and a light on our path. May it be done to us according to Your word.”**

**Personal Application**

Miriam

When Miriam raised her voice in the Israelites’ song of praise at the Red Sea, she expressed gratitude not only for herself but for all God’s people. This ability to think of ourselves as one of many is a powerful antidote to the self-love that always wants to sabotage our lives with God.

 Can you think of ways you might be able to practice this kind of humility in your own daily prayers?

Rahab

In the New Testament, when writing about the importance of our faith producing good works, St. James says this about Rahab: “You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. And in the same way was not also Rahab the harlot justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so faith apart from works is dead.” (**James 2:24-26**)

 Most of us are a bundle of good intentions, confident that we have faith in what the Church teaches us. Still, it’s always a good idea to check ourselves: Will my actions (works) today express what I believe (faith) to be true about God, my neighbor, and myself?

Deborah

Although Deborah was gifted by God for great influence in Israel, we remember her as a *mother* rather than a military leader or even as a prophetess. Although she went out into battle, she never picked up a weapon to fight.

 What are some of the traits of Deborah’s feminine genius that you believe can make a difference today in your life and the lives of those around you?

Hannah

in her prolonged agony over both infertility and persecution, Hannah turned *toward* God, not away from Him. When Eli judged her harshly, she responded with respect and humility, not lashing out in anger.

What do you think people who are close to you—family, friends, co-workers, etc.—see in you when you are misunderstood, judged harshly, or criticized?

Hannah “lent” Samuel back to the Lord, with no expectation or request for another child.

 Do you find this kind of generosity with God difficult?

After Hannah’s wholehearted generosity, God gave her many more children. She gained more than she lost, another great reversal.

Have there been times in your life when you let go of something and were later surprised about how God made that fruitful?

Is now a time when you know there is something in your life you need to let go of, to make it an offering to the Lord?

When Hannah prayed after the birth of her son, her prayer was anchored in praising God’s character, His faithful love demonstrated in the history of His people, His love of helping the helpless.

When you pray, do you *start* with praising God for Who He is and all He’s done for you, or do you begin with your own needs, requests, or feelings?