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Women's Bible Study

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Tuesdays at 6:30 PM

April 24, 2018

Subject: The Facilitators' Review – The Women's Retreat, April 13th Discerning Women of Distinction

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Numbers 27 New International Version (NIV)

Zelophehad's Daughters

27 The daughters of Zelophehad son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, belonged to the clans of Manasseh son of Joseph. The names of the daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah and Tirzah. They came forward ² and stood before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the leaders and the whole assembly at the entrance to the tent of meeting and said, ³ "Our father died in the wilderness. He was not among Korah's followers, who banded together against the LORD, but he died for his own sin and left no sons. ⁴ Why should our father's name disappear from his clan because he had no son? Give us property among our father's relatives."

⁵ So Moses brought their case before the LORD, ⁶ and the LORD said to him, ⁷ "What Zelophehad's daughters are saying is right. You must certainly give them property as an inheritance among their father's relatives and give their father's inheritance to them.

⁸ "Say to the Israelites, 'If a man dies and leaves no son, give his inheritance to his daughter. ⁹ If he has no daughter, give his inheritance to his brothers. ¹⁰ If he has no brothers, give his inheritance to his father's brothers. ¹¹ If his father had no brothers, give his inheritance to the nearest relative in his clan, that he may possess it. This is to have the force of law for the Israelites, as the LORD commanded Moses.'"

[New International Version \(NIV\)](#)

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Introduction:

Woman to Woman Workshop

In your opinion what does a “Woman of Distinction” look like? How do you define a “Woman of Distinction”? Are you a “Woman of Distinction”?

Throughout the Bible, there has always been “Woman of Distinction”, beginning with the book of Genesis right through Revelation, we find several women who could be “Women of Distinction”, of which many have not been named. Sure, we know their stories, but who were these women? There are well over 100 women that have been identified.

From generation to generation, women have been essential for the continuity of our peoples—men still cannot bear children. In addition, many of us are considered keepers of traditions in our homes as well as the church. Perhaps this may be one of the reasons we have been kept out of the pulpit. In doing so, many women have become more “masculine” in their approach to life.

Conversely, have you noticed how many women have come forward about abuse by those in authority? We see this as a result of the rise of the Me Too and Time’s Up movements. What do you think could be the reason for women to be so very outspoken about abuse?

Perhaps if more of our Sunday sermons across our nation dealt with women’s issues, there would be no reason for so many women to feel undervalued, disadvantaged and disappointed. Perhaps if more women were understood their covering, they like the daughters of Zelophehad they would understand that their covering comes from God. Is this one of the reasons we are seeing so many distressed? Nevertheless there is great opportunity for women to emerge and utilize their voice, vision and stand in their purpose. There is a cause and we ought to individually and collectively pursue it.

We will reference Numbers 36:1-13 for the purpose of this session (*read on your own*)

Numbers 36 New International Version (NIV)

Inheritance of Zelophehad’s Daughters

³⁶ The family heads of the clan of Gilead son of Makir, the son of Manasseh, who were from the clans of the descendants of Joseph, came and spoke before Moses and the leaders, the heads of the Israelite families. ² They said, “When the LORD commanded my lord to give the land as an inheritance to the Israelites by lot, he

ordered you to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters. ³ Now suppose they marry men from other Israelite tribes; then their inheritance will be taken from our ancestral inheritance and added to that of the tribe they marry into. And so part of the inheritance allotted to us will be taken away. ⁴ When the Year of Jubilee for the Israelites comes, their inheritance will be added

to that of the tribe into which they marry, and their property will be taken from the tribal inheritance of our ancestors.”

⁵ Then at the LORD’s command Moses gave this order to the Israelites: “What the tribe of the descendants of Joseph is saying is right. ⁶ This is what the LORD commands for Zelophehad’s daughters: They may marry anyone they please as long as they marry within their father’s tribal clan. ⁷ No inheritance in Israel is to pass from one tribe to another, for every Israelite shall keep the tribal inheritance of their ancestors. ⁸ Every daughter who inherits land in any Israelite tribe must marry someone in her father’s tribal clan, so that every Israelite will possess the inheritance of their ancestors. ⁹ No

inheritance may pass from one tribe to another, for each Israelite tribe is to keep the land it inherits.”

¹⁰ So Zelophehad’s daughters did as the LORD commanded Moses.¹¹ Zelophehad’s daughters—Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milkah and Noah—married their cousins on their father’s side. ¹² They married within the clans of the descendants of Manasseh son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in their father’s tribe and clan.

¹³ These are the commands and regulations the LORD gave through Moses to the Israelites on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho.

This is one of those stories that are usually glossed over on Sunday mornings (except for our Women’s Day!). It is not a difficult passage, but some of its meanings are intense and can be easily misinterpreted and/or manipulated. As we study this passage, the most important aspect is that these women were *brave*. They did something that was not usually done by women. They were willing to take a risk and demanded what they believed they were entitled. They stood up for what they believed.

Besides these fabulous 5— Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah and Tirzah, what other “Women of Distinction are you familiar with, that is besides Eve, Sarah, Hagar, Deborah, Rebecca, Leah, Esther, Ruth, Abigail, Lydia, Elizabeth, and Mary? How many women are you familiar with? What did these women do that was so different that Moses went to God on their behalf? Could it be that simple?

We can appreciate their distinctiveness even more so when we imagine their personalities aligned with the meaning of their names.

The Meanings of Each of the Five Daughters’ Names:

1. **Mah-Lah** – The eldest daughter her name means Disease. Meaning a disordered or incorrectly functioning organ. An abnormal condition that affects the body of an organism.

2. **Noah** – is the second daughter. Her name means Rest. A freedom from activity or later peace, ease and refreshment.

Noah appears to be the opposite of Mahlah -- one who is diseased. Or could she be –**Dis - Eased** with a particular matter or condition. Noah might be the one who can bring peace and rest in anxious situations. When thinking of this temperament we ought to consider what Jesus would desire for us. ** Jesus said in [Matthew 11:28](#) - Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

3. **Hoglah** - The third daughter's name means Partridge. A partridge is a stout-bodied old bird. Partridges are ground feeders – tree perchers, poor flyers but can run quickly when they are disturbed. DO YOU HAVE THE VISUAL YET?

With names that describe a personality or characteristic, we could imagine that perhaps Hoglah was limited in her capacity; but had potential to be effective within her limitations.

Perhaps Hoglah was not as statuesque or notable as her other sisters; but she was still effective!

4. **Milkah** – The fourth daughter's name means Queen or Counsel. A Queen is a female sovereign or monarch – a woman eminent in rank or power or attraction. She can offer counsel and advice.

Milkah *could have* been a sister in which the older and younger sisters may have depended upon for guidance. Milkah was one of the middle sisters and second to the youngest.

Milkah *might have been* a woman who walked in authority and possessed influence and had dominion over certain things.

It was clear that she worked with her sisters in submitting their petition and followed the protocol and custom of their day. Today, Milkah could have been a lawyer, community organizer or mother or coworker among her group impressing upon her sisters to go forward with a righteous cause.

[Proverbs 24:6 KJV](#) - For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety.

5. **Tirzah** – is the fifth daughter. Her name means Delight. Defined as a high degree of gratification, joy or extreme satisfaction something that gives great pleasure...

Tirzah seemingly appears to be the opposite of Mahlah -- one who is diseased (or dis-eased) with a matter or condition. Tirzah might be the one whom can bring approval or contentment to a matter or achieve an outcome that yields great satisfaction. When thinking of her name Delight, Psalms 1:1-3 comes to mind; delighting in the law of the LORD.

Main Points:

What is a covering?

What does it mean to be covered?

Strengthening Women to Women relationships—

Since the beginning of time women, have lived in their father's house, under his protection, until marriage. Normally, they did not inherit their father's estate because only males could inherit.

³ "Our father died in the wilderness. He was not among Korah's followers, who banded together against the LORD, but he died for his own sin and left no sons. ⁴ Why should our father's name disappear from his clan because he had no son? Give us property among our father's relatives."

The good news is, is that we are all under God's covering, but have somehow we continue looking for the "outward" covering that sometimes eludes us. Unfortunately, many of have not learned that lesson that there may be no Prince Charming or army coming to the rescue.

One may see it this a little differently in that, all along, they were under the covering of God. It is important to realize that with God you and I (we) are more than enough.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to be covered?
2. Do you think you need a covering? If so, why.
3. Who's covering you?
4. Can you identify the hinderances that block one's view of what covering can be?
5. Has the idea of not having a covering ever stopped you from doing what was placed in your heart to accomplish?
6. What can we do to be covered?
7. Do you see the collective strength and yet distinction of these women?