

Strength in Weakness

Judges 4:4-5

And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time. And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim: and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.

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In the Bible texts on open service to the LORD, we see that; a goodly number of the readings in the Bible seem to highlight the place of the male. Fortunately, that is not the totality of the revelation about service for the LORD. Sprinkled throughout the Bible, there are records of significant contributions of the women of God. As you review those contributions, I ask you to notice this: the women were not intimidated by their relative weakness, as it was set beside the power of the men. Actually, for the man of their pairing; the woman was a welcome complement in the assigned mission, as being an asset from the LORD. This is an important dynamic, to this day.

To gain insight into the complementary nature of the two levels of power, let us begin with the power of the men of the Bible. In this way, we will be able to identify the matching power that is of the woman, as consisting of the remainder of the requirement for congregational service for the LORD. The power of the men of the Bible is generally indicated by this requirement that the LORD placed on Israel.

And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of their names, every male by their polls; From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies.

(Numbers 1:1-3)

The men of the Bible are the warriors. Please, do not limit this to person-to-person conflict. The men of the Bible were also the warriors as against principles and practices. An example of that is seen in the architecting of the priesthood.

And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.

And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother for glory and for beauty.

(Exodus 28:1-2)

And this is the thing that thou shalt do unto them to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest's office: Take one young bullock, and two rams without blemish, And unleavened bread, and cakes unleavened tempered with oil, and wafers unleavened anointed with oil: of wheaten flour shalt thou make them. And thou shalt put them into one basket, and bring them in the basket, with the bullock and the two rams. And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water.

And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod: And thou shalt put the mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre. Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour it upon his head, and anoint him. And thou shalt bring his sons, and put coats upon them. And thou shalt gird them with girdles, Aaron and his sons, and put the bonnets on them:

and the priest's office shall be theirs for a perpetual statute: and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons.

(Exodus 29:1-9)

On the other side of congregational behavior, the women of the Bible are the protected ones. Also, the little ones of the Bible are protected ones; as they are, still, today. We need not consider the relative strength of the little ones; for, even today, there is no societal stigma attached to their dependence. However, unfortunately, in the modern day, it seems that, dependent women are looked down upon. That is an unfortunate and unwise attitude. Those ones that understand the power of dependence realize that; even in weakness, as one abides in the LORD, there is great strength.

Here, I am reminded of this strength in weakness, of the apostle Paul. The apostle Paul was vested with great strength of conviction, in his service as unto the LORD; as we see, here.

I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth

of me.

(2 Corinthians 12:2-6)

Even though, on the one hand, the apostle Paul had great strength; on the other hand, the apostle Paul had an offsetting, and proportionate, measure of necessary weakness. This is a lesson for each one of us; especially, for the ones that are numbered among those that want to rest in the strength of our blessing from God.

And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

(2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

The professional woman faces varying measures of reliance on the circumstances of her engagement, for receipt of service from others in the business world. In this dependence, she, too, can walk in strength . . . even, in weakness. The key to doing that is in, how the requests for assistance are framed. Let us proceed through an example of a positive framing of a request for assistance.

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*Then came the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of Manasseh the son of Joseph: and these are the names of his daughters; Mahlah, Noah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Tirzah. And they stood before Moses, and before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes and all the congregation, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying,*

*Our father died in the wilderness, and he was not in the company of them that gathered themselves together against the LORD in the company of Korah; but died in his own sin, and had no sons. Why should the name of our father be done away from among his family, because he hath no son? Give unto us therefore a possession among the brethren of our*

*father.*

(Numbers 27:1-4)

At this point, Moses needed to navigate some potentially conflicting requirements, as set in the inheritance specifications of the LORD'S Law. Among those requirements are these: all members of the congregation must be protected, as being holy to the LORD; and, all property delineations (inheritances) must maintain their integrity, as remaining in the family line to which it was designated by the LORD God. So, Moses did the only wise thing that can be done, in such matters.

*And Moses brought their cause before the LORD.*

*And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,  
The daughters of Zelophehad speak right: thou shalt surely give them a  
possession of an inheritance among their father's brethren; and thou shalt  
cause the inheritance of their father to pass unto them.*

*And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying,  
If a man die, and have no son, then ye shall cause his inheritance to pass  
unto his daughter.*

*And if he have no daughter, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his  
brethren.*

*And if he have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his  
father's brethren.*

*And if his father have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto  
his kinsman that is next to him of his family, and he shall possess it:  
and it shall be unto the children of Israel a statute of judgment, as the  
LORD commanded Moses.*

(Numbers 27:5-11)

The latter requirement was of particular interest to a certain portion of the children of Israel. That portion of the congregation of Israel is; the tribe of the daughters of Zelophehad. Their concern is as follows:

*And the chief fathers of the families of the children of Gilead, the son of  
Machir, the son of Manasseh, of the families of the sons of Joseph, came  
near, and spake before Moses, and before the princes, the chief fathers of  
the children of Israel: And they said, The LORD commanded my lord to  
give the land for an inheritance by lot to the children of Israel: and my  
lord was commanded by the LORD to give the inheritance of Zelophehad  
our brother unto his daughters. And if they be married to any of the sons  
of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then shall their inheritance be  
taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and shall be put to the  
inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall it be taken*

*from the lot of our inheritance. And when the jubile of the children of Israel shall be, then shall their inheritance be put unto the inheritance of the tribe whereunto they are received: so shall their inheritance be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.*

(Numbers 36:1-4)

A modern image of that caution is of this sort: when an employer of one company invests in the stock of a competitor. When this occurs, the competing company may inherit the loyalty of the investing party. Sometimes, the shift in loyalty is not even apparent to the investor. Sometimes, unconscious leaning occurs . . . as toward the competitor, and away from the employer. Surely, the employer has a vested interest in the behavior of the employee, as in any contact with a competitor. Surely, the employee-investor has a vested interest in safeguarding the appreciation in the value of the investment; especially, as to prevent any possibility of total loss. This is why; in most cases, such investments are prohibited by the guidelines that regulate employment.

In the situation in Israel; to provide for equity as pertains to those two requirements, the daughters of Zelophehad needed to allow for the views of the collective of warriors, the men. The daughters needed to have sons of Israel that would not produce a compromise, at all. That was accomplished, in a beneficent restriction, thusly.

*And Moses commanded the children of Israel according to the word of the LORD, saying, The tribe of the sons of Joseph hath said well. This is the thing which the LORD doth command concerning the daughters of Zelophehad, saying,*

*Let them marry to whom they think best; only to the family of the tribe of their father shall they marry. So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe: for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers. And every daughter, that possesseth an inheritance in any tribe of the children of Israel, shall be wife unto one of the family of the tribe of her father, that the children of Israel may enjoy every man the inheritance of his fathers. Neither shall the inheritance remove from one tribe to another tribe; but every one of the tribes of the children of Israel shall keep himself to his own inheritance.*

(Numbers 36:5-9)

The daughters were directed to only invest in wholly owned subsidiaries of the parent corporate entity (their tribe of Israel). Thus, the daughters did not resist the fact of their relative weakness, as might present itself in the time of the Jubilee.

Consider how the above situation might apply to split loyalties; of employment, and client, contacts. For instance; there may be a situation where, one is a member of a

certain group that is also a customer of ones employer. (Yes, this group can be the biological family.). In such an arrangement, one must apply the rules equally: as to one customer; so, too, to the other, likewise. Please, O woman, avoid compromising pressure from the men in your life. Please, wisely choose your relationships. We see this, in the daughters of Zelophehad, in that; by taking care in choosing, the daughters acquired the strength that was necessary to complete their move to a position of strength, in weakness.

*Even as the LORD commanded Moses, so did the daughters of Zelophehad: For Mahlah, Tirzah, and Hoglah, and Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, were married unto their father's brothers' sons: And they were married into the families of the sons of Manasseh the son of Joseph, and their inheritance remained in the tribe of the family of their father.*

(Numbers 36:10-12)

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The event of the daughters of Zelophehad was one of a pattern of such buttressing of relative weakness. In these cases; a champion was chosen, and equipped, by the LORD. In time, such champions started to anticipate the need for reaction to dependence. Such reactions to dependence can, and should, become habits. Surely, this is a part of being in the community of saints, as servants of God. Also, this needs to be a part of proper abiding in any other community of man. Here, we see a group that recognized a kind of, strength in weakness, which it had. The strength was in their specialized abilities: the weakness was, in their lack of fit with the perceived geography of the future Promised Land.

Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle: and when they saw the land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place was a place for cattle; The children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spake unto Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and unto the princes of the congregation, saying, Ataroth, and Dibon, and Jazer, and Nimrah, and Heshbon, and Elealeh, and Shebam, and Nebo, and Beon, Even the country which the LORD smote before the congregation of Israel, is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle:

Wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan.

(Numbers 32:1-5)

The reconciliation of that conflict required consideration of the stronger need as expressed for the sake of the included dependent ones, too.

And Moses said unto the children of Gad and to the children of Reuben,

Shall your brethren go to war, and shall ye sit here? And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them? Thus did your fathers, when I sent them from Kadeshbarnea to see the land. For when they went up unto the valley of Eshcol, and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, that they should not go into the land which the LORD had given them. And the LORD'S anger was kindled the same time, and he sware, saying, Surely none of the men that came up out of Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob; because they have not wholly followed me: Save Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, and Joshua the son of Nun: for they have wholly followed the LORD.

And the LORD'S anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation, that had done evil in the sight of the LORD, was consumed.

(Numbers 32:6-13)

In this situation, strength and weakness were co-mingled, in a kind of confusion about which side had which attribute. Thus, in the co-mingling, the entire situation seemed to be immersed in weakness (also known as; having no apparent, clear-cut solution).

And, behold, ye are risen up in your fathers' stead, an increase of sinful men, to augment yet the fierce anger of the LORD toward Israel. For if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness; and ye shall destroy all this people.

(Numbers 32:14-15)

Uncovering strength, in weakness: this is, absolutely, the way of the LORD. In this, you can rest . . . just as, these women and children were able to rest . . . when you yield your portion of strength, in passing it to the greater strength of the calling and election of the LORD God.

And they came near unto him, and said, We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones: But we ourselves will go ready armed before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place: and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities because of the inhabitants of the land.

We will not return unto our houses, until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance.

(Numbers 32:16-18)

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Sealing the Motivation

Be sure to base your strength on the promises of the LORD, as fitted to your life's election to service. This election is for the entirety of your life; and not just, for the life in the church. Know that; administrators and managers may be replaced. Therefore, base you continued pursuit of, strength in weakness, as rested on the promises you received for your development, as they came from the word of God, as through His Word. Then, you can, in meekness, remind any successor manager about the durable promise that exists. Such was the behavior of those daughters of Israel, the daughters of Zelophehad, as they delivered this reminder, here.

There was also a lot for the tribe of Manasseh; for he was the firstborn of Joseph; to wit, for Machir the firstborn of Manasseh, the father of Gilead: because he was a man of war, therefore he had Gilead and Bashan. There was also a lot for the rest of the children of Manasseh by their families; for the children of Abiezer, and for the children of Helek, and for the children of Asriel, and for the children of Shechem, and for the children of Hopher, and for the children of Shemida: these were the male children of Manasseh the son of Joseph by their families.

But Zelophehad, the son of Hopher, the son of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh, had no sons, but daughters: and these are the names of his daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. And they came near before Eleazar the priest, and before Joshua the son of Nun, and before the princes, saying, The LORD commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren.

Therefore according to the commandment of the LORD he gave them an inheritance among the brethren of their father.

(Joshua 17:1-4)

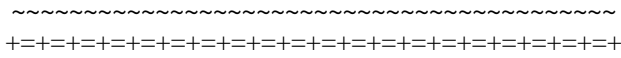
For your, strength in weakness, and for the, strength in strength, upon which it leans; for both of those conditions of life, this is the umbrella . . . as situated over all strength . . .

Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

(Philippians 4:9-13)



*Strength may be housed
In a thing that is placid;
Or, in as vigorous a thing
As, a most caustic acid:*

*Too many leaders pursue
The more aggressive course;
With little, to no, regard
For the depth of remorse*

*That their actions cause
In their charge's life,
Or, for the long-term risk
Of causing repressive strife.*

*O Woman; stands securely
In your most unique place,
As situated for mentoring
The whole of the human race;*

*For, you are conditioned
To walk in those ways
That produce good results,
Over many stressful days:*

*Think of how blessed it is,
To have such a wide berth;
Such as, to be in a position
To influence all the earth.*

*You are in that place
Which the Father set aside
For those precious ones
Who, in the LORD, abide;*

*Where, the benefit of being
In the path of meekness
Is, having God Himself, as
Your Strength, in weakness.*

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**Next In  
Election to Serve;  
Delicately**  
(Gracefully Extended)  
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