



THE MAKING OF A  
**KING**

*What every Man should know  
about the influence of a Woman*

D U N C A N   D O T S O N

# THE MAKING OF A KING

## King Maker

*“What every Man should know about the influence of a  
Woman”*

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# THE MAKING OF A KING

## King Maker

*“What every Man should know about the influence of a Woman”*

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## DEDICATION

*To my loving wife Dolores who has been an inspiration and a motivation to write this book. You are a true kingmaker. Your value is far above rubies and each hour you have invested in your King will forever be treasured.*

*Lisa who corrected and read through each page to be sure the grammar was correct reminding me I write like I preach. I hope you still have words left after expending them on this effort.*

*Dennis, Ryan, Barbara and many others who read the draft and added comments to be sure the idea was properly portrayed.*

*Troy and Vikki, thank you for pulling these words and images together to make them into an actual book.*

*To my church Family and This Is Your Season Ministry that gave me time to write, and have inspired me to go further to lead in this journey. I am forever grateful to convey the ideas I have shared with many before. This is by no means a complete selection of all those who influenced others in the Bible, but it gives us a perspective of looking at things thru the lens of another camera.*

*The words of King Lemuel,  
the utterance which his mother taught him;  
Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is  
far above rubies.  
The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he  
will have no lack of gain.  
She does him good and not evil All the days of  
her life.*

*Proverbs 31: 1, 10-12*

## Introduction

To every man that begins a journey of appreciating that which God brings to you, I must refer you back to that which has been a foundation to many men since the beginning. That my friend is the Word of God. It has been said a man's home is his castle, but we must understand the dynamics of the castle. And if the home is a castle then understand that castles are typically located in a kingdom. Let us then navigate a course to successfully rule in that kingdom.

To the men who read this I pray this gives you hope and understanding. To the women who are looking for answers about their men I refer you to *The Making of a King* and offer a perspective that will hopefully lead you to understand the dynamics of kingdom-minded men. There is a need for a level of understanding of both groups that men do not think like women and neither do women think like men. There is wisdom we can find in the Word. So as we go forward and examine these pages, I pray that you find the hope that was always intended for kingdom minded individuals.

For those of you who play chess you know the most versatile and mobile piece on the board is the Queen. She can move in any direction and as many spaces as necessary to fulfil her purpose, which is to protect the king. No matter how powerful the queen is on the board, if the king is captured the game is over. This is not a book to produce a chauvinist point of view but a hope that the design of working together will never be forgotten.

Note in life there are positive and negative influences. We will try to cover both as it relates to the kingmaker, but be aware that we cover the negative influences first to be able to end with hope. The influences are real and the hope we have is just as it was in the Garden, that God has a plan of redemption. So as you read through remember Hope is just ahead.

*Father as we begin this journey bless all that read these pages and may there be a bit of wisdom that can be garnished from these pages. Teach the men how to love and respect their wives and the wives to respect and love their husbands. May we all honor each other and the positions we hold and not resent one another, or the task set before us.*

## Outside Influence -Eve was Deceived

How did we get to where we are today and what is the foundation of that influence that we should be aware of? A good place to start is at the beginning which in the Bible is the book of Genesis. Here we see a Kingdom being established and God looked at it and said it was good. We see Adam walking in this garden in the image of a king having dominion and all was well. He was a creator just as the one who created him because he was created in His image. God set Adam in the Garden of Eden to have dominion and rule over it. That sounds like a kingdom and the role of a king. But what would cause the man to leave the sanctity of that kingdom, the peace he so longs for and abandon the perfect relationship with a friend and a creator? To give up the walks in the cool of the garden and walk away from his friendship and choose to give up the kingdom for his mate? Ladies understand your influence can create or destroy! It was in the garden when God put Adam to sleep and created and sculptured his help meet that Adam saw things differently.

*“Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” (Genesis 2:24)*

This statement shows the level of commitment that would be required and sustained in a relationship where two are to become one. There was not a mother in the earth at this time, so the statement related to the generations to come

and the pattern that would be established to maintain unity even when there was rebellion.

Then in chapter two of Genesis, we experience something that is essential to understanding Adam's later decision. God looked at his King being alone, and he decided it was not good. This is the first time we see God examining His creation and seeing something that was lacking. Adam had a fantastic relationship with his creator, and he walked and talked with him in the cool of the garden. But there was nothing that was comparable that could help Adam rule and create. God then puts man to sleep and forms from an internal part of man his help mate.

It is important to note that men have been put on the spot for years to get in touch with their feminine side. I would like to share with the reading audience as a man I do not have one. Note it was God who looked at man and said it was not good for him to be alone. Adam began this journey without a help meet and it was not Adam's decision to go and find one. Men, please wait on God to bring you the mate that he will form for you to help exercise every option under heaven to help you fulfill your destiny. In the garden God operated on Adam and removed the woman (feminine side) from within him, and for years many are trying to put her back in him.

I would like to note that the female side of me I married several years ago and everything lacking in me is in her. Her name is Dolores. Her name means pain or sorrow translated in Spanish. We always share, that during that period, at the beginning of our relationship, she lived up to the name given her at birth. In a perfect relationship

there is not a need for anesthesia to remove the pain due to an operation. We were not under Kingdom principles in the beginning and we caused each other much pain. Also note there was never any mention of scars or a healing process for Adam. That is because when we allow God to do the operation there is no pain. When we choose to operate on ourselves or let someone else operate on us there is always pain involved. There was peace in the kingdom because it was within God's timing. There is a period where God will allow you to walk alone, to examine you, and then to let you see where you are. Don't miss this opportunity to grow by producing your own help meet. Allow God to form her and shape her to help you succeed.

There from the beginning Eve was in the garden and the serpent deceived her. Note the man was not deceived but the woman. I hear the words, you are saying, the man was just as deceived as the woman. Well the bible helps us in this matter,

*“For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.”*  
(1Timothy 2:13-14)

The man was so in love with the woman rather than be separated he took from her the forbidden fruit (knowledge) and did eat. See there is a part of Adam that is no longer physically located within him. I believe Adam perceived that Eve, thought liked him, reacted like him, and ruled as he did. There was a new influence in the Garden, and it was not the serpent. The woman sometimes saw things from a different perspective and could hear

what the man could not hear. The beauty of a relationship with the one we were called to walk with, is that they don't always see what we see, or hear what we hear, but the different perspective allows us, if we communicate, to see more than we can see if we were not with the one designed to bring fulfillment. I can only reflect on the many times Dolores and I saw things differently. Sometimes she was right, sometimes I was, but as we learned to trust God first, and then each other, we grew from our differences.

After that fall, his friend is then walking in the garden, looking for him. Let's continue,

*"Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." (Genesis 3:12-13)*

Notice that she knew she had been deceived. It is important to note that many men have used this as a reason not to trust or listen to their wives. There is a feeling that this influence will destroy them and take them from the safety of the kingdom they created. Notice I said the kingdom they created not God. There is no comparison to the kingdom God creates and the one that a man will establish. Now we have a foundation that allows mistrust and separation which adds to disunity. We must admit, that in this case of the deception that Eve fell into, caused them both to lose their place in the paradise (kingdom) created for them. Yet we understand that was the influence she had with her mate. This influence is established with trust and love. When a man gives his

entire heart to a woman and allows someone to come close then there is a place of vulnerability. No man wants to appear to be weak, so he carefully allows only a few into his kingdom. Remember Eve was a part of Adam although at this point her name was Adam also. The two were one and the enemy's influence and deception caused a separation that was never intended. Now amazingly the punishment of man was specific,

*"Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life." (Genesis 3:17)*

Heeded the voice or listened to your wife.... hmmmmm. I would like to present an alternative here that could possibly help us understand the heart of a man. Adam's desire not to be alone was established by God. Remember that was the only thing God had looked at in his creation and said it was not good. I can see Adam taking out his tool kit to fix that which was broken so he can keep from losing the thing he was given to look after and treasure. He then ate of the fruit knowing the consequences. When Adam saw what was wrong and did not take a stand then it put the two of them in a situation. Adam's lack of communication, in which most men are guilty, could have overcome a bad decision by one that had influence in his life. My friend, this takes wisdom. The type of wisdom Solomon had to exercise when his mother almost turned

the kingdom over to his brother. That is covered in a later chapter.

Men we must understand the influence that the women in our lives have and know there is a perfect design on how to work within the guidelines set by the Creator. What can we learn from Eve who was created to be a kingdom maker? Let's start with the deception. The serpent said to her, God did not want her to eat of the fruit because it would make her like God. Her rightful position was a help meet, one to come along side and help the man to fulfill the purpose for what he was created. It is always the voice of the enemy in the lives of God's creation that causes them to lose their way.

*"For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." (Genesis 3:5)*

This statement holds the answer to the deception of the enemy. The answer is clear and as one created in His image the first thing to grasp is that we are already like Him, created in His image, and not Him. The word image can be defined as a representation of the external form of a person or thing, a likeness. A likeness is not the original but only a representation of the real thing. Eve is dealing with the external in her listening to the enemy and that is how the enemy works. He changes our focus on the external things and thereby missing the things that are of importance.

Ladies please hear me, you were created not to be your man's God, but his help meet to complete the design for

which he was intended. Men the influence that she was given was not to be an idol or showcase that is worshipped but a created being called to walk in unity with the purpose you were created for and to be comparable. The thought presented here is that the men in your life need you not to rule over them but to walk beside them and shut off the other voices. What we can learn from Eve. ***Remember what God created is always better than what the devil promises.***

Secondly, we must understand that we must be the voice that our woman of influence is listening to. Who is speaking into the ears of your queen? We can say there was a breakdown in communication for Eve was now hearing from a source not sanctioned by her king. We will touch on this subject repeatedly, but did Adam give his wife an avenue to discuss what she was seeing and hearing?

I am not making any excuses for her, what she did was wrong, but where is Adam during these conversations in the garden? There is always a place where we must evaluate the kingdom, we live and what voices are speaking in our kingdom. The voice that is contrary to the will of the God, who created it, must be eliminated and in that provide protection for those who have an influence in our lives. Note I said contrary to the plans of God. I am not talking isolation but note incorrect influences ultimately leads to division and destruction.

The very first act that Eve did after she ate was to give the man a desire and taste for the things she had been introduced to. Once the influence of the enemy was put

in motion, the kingdom was now in disarray, and ultimately death of the kingdom was necessary. The very kingdom that was created for this couple then came the necessity to evict them from it for their own wellbeing. That battle for the place of authority is best represented in the walk of Jezebel which we will discuss next.

*Father our prayer is this, we repent for trying to change your design and for listening to voices that do not represent you. Even our own thoughts betray us. Let us learn to walk and be satisfied with what we have been given. Keep us from the evil one and lead us not into temptation. Help the men to rightly rule and eliminate all voices contrary to the will of God. Let the woman hear only the voice of God to help their mates to become a true king in the Kingdom God created.*

## Evil Influence - Jezebel

Of all the women of influence that we will discuss, Jezebel is the vilest of them all. As the queen, she was arrayed in a robe of misguided and destructive influence. Her marriage to King Ahab, one of the many ruling kings of Israel, was evil personified and one of a political strategy for dominance, territorial gain and power. Ahab dominated most of the area around Israel and is believed to be one of the most powerful kings of his time. This proves that although strong, this man was weakened by the influence that was standing beside him.

*“Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who were before him. And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.” (1 Kings 16:30-33)*

What an introduction! Ahab is presented in the Scriptures as having committed more evil acts than all the kings who reigned before him. No wonder, he was surrounded by

many ungodly influences in his life that negatively affected how he ruled. First, his father, Omri, committed grave evil in the sight of God. Secondly, his deceased mentor, Jeroboam. Ahab, like his father, followed in Jeroboam's ways of idolatry. And lastly, Jezebel, his wife, who among her many evil acts, religiously practiced pagan worship. She was influenced so much and set in the traditions of Baal that she influenced her husband to build a temple for him in Samaria.

*“Omri did evil in the eyes of the Lord, and did worse than all who were before him. For he walked in all the ways of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin by which he had made Israel sin, provoking the Lord God of Israel to anger with their idols” (1 Kings 16:25,26)*

*“For so it was, while Jezebel massacred the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah had taken one hundred prophets and hidden them, fifty to a cave, and had fed them with bread and water” (1 Kings 18:4).*

Often holding the reins to the kingdom of Israel, Jezebel not only misused the authority of Ahab to rule, but also displayed her relentless ability in unethical tactics. Jezebel was not your average girl; she was deadly. And Elijah, the prophet, would soon be added to the list of those who feared her wrath. It happened just after one of

the greatest demonstrations of the power of God on Mount Carmel that Elijah had all prophets of Baal seized and executed. Word of the annihilation was reported to Jezebel, and in response, she sent a message to Elijah that seemed to shout loud and clear, *Watch out, Elijah! I am a force to be reckoned with.*

*“And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.” And when he saw that, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there” (1 Kings 19:1-3).*

Did you notice who reported the news to Jezebel of what Elijah had done? It was King Ahab. If he was offended by Elijah’s actions, why didn’t he do something about it himself? Just as it was in Ahab’s case to avoid confrontation, I have noticed that some men will allow their wives to take the lead and implement directives in situations that they themselves have not confronted or addressed. Ahab had stood face-to-face with Elijah on the mountain and could have proclaimed an irreversible edict against him for his actions, but he failed to say a word. Perhaps his silence was out of reverential fear, uncertainty, or maybe even personal cowardice. Regardless of the reason, one thing was certain: Jezebel was a fierce dictator and by telling her what happened, she

would boldly challenge the prophet and his God... even if Ahab wouldn't.

A person might argue that their marriage made them one flesh and therefore, by that covenant agreement, she had the right to speak on his authority as it pleased her. I beg to differ. Gratifying self should never be an aim for any man or woman, especially in a marriage. We must understand that everything we do, in one way or another, affects everyone around us. Men consider your decision to buy the item that you dreamed for without regards to your wife will ultimately affect her and the trust you have one for another if she is not included in the decision. Women consider the purchase you make and keep secret from your husband. Those new pair of shoes hidden in the closet and when questioned you revert to deception to avoid conflict. Consequences or our failure to consult with those in authority can adversely affect those around us. Please hear me. Just because a man is silent does not mean that he agrees with his wife's decisions. To honor her king, the queen must hear his heart, then wait for instructions from God; rather than come irrationally to his rescue, unaided by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. We will discuss more about this in another chapter.

Jezebel seized every opportunity to rule in the king's place and to make kingly decisions, although authority had not been legally bestowed on her. Accompanying her arrogant actions were unfiltered emotions that justified her disrespectful spirit and lack of fear for God and Elijah, the man of God. The episode surrounding the slaughter of the

prophets of Baal was the first of two specific accounts where Jezebel overstepped her jurisdiction and paraded her power in the royal position belonging to the king. The next occurrence that we will explore regarding Jezebel's reign concerns a man named Naboth and his vineyard.

Ahab was no different than any other man, possessing both strengths and weaknesses. However, in the following passages of Scriptures, his weak character might better be likened unto a two-year old pouting over a broken toy. Perhaps in his own eyes, his union to Jezebel made him stronger, but in all reality, her rule slowly eroded Ahab's authority and progressively shifted the scepter from his hand to hers.

*"So Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food. But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said to him, "Why is your spirit so sullen that you eat no food?" He said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite, and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you another vineyard for it.' And he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.' " Then Jezebel his wife said to him, "You now exercise authority over Israel! Arise, eat food, and let your heart*

*be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite" (1 Kings 21:4-7).*

Did you catch that? Jezebel tells the king what to do- *you exercise authority*; and she also tells the king what she will do: *"I will give you the vineyard of Naboth."* Jezebel barks out the orders, and men follow her dictates. There is no apparent power struggle between Ahab and Jezebel; obviously, she is in charge and that suits Ahab just fine. Let's keep reading.

*"And she wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who were dwelling in the city" (1 Kings 21:8).*

Is anyone paying attention to what just happened? Jezebel just took over the kingdom! Concealed as King Ahab, she deceitfully penned letters in his name, used his royal seal, and sent the letters out, bearing instructions to have two scoundrels witness falsely against Naboth. This treacherous plan was conceived in her cold-blooded heart, and when it was reported to her that the mission was accomplished, and Naboth was killed, Jezebel rejoiced in the deadly victory. Full of pride and arrogance, she then matter-of-factly instructs Ahab to arise and take the vineyard because Naboth is now dead. What power! What control. What supremacy she displayed to all in the Kingdom of Israel. I'm convinced that if Jezebel was around, every man in that kingdom lived under constant threat.

Hands down, Ahab was an evil king; but the Bible says Jezebel stirred him up or in other words, she influenced him.

*“But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up” (1 Kings 21:25).*

Sometimes as men, we listen to advice that is more detrimental than beneficial and make swift decisions that we later regret. This was true for Ahab in his dealings with Naboth concerning his vineyard. To his shame, Ahab relied upon Jezebel’s evil and manipulative guidance, whereby an innocent man was murdered. She manufactured a conspiracy so monstrous, that it gained the attention of God and warranted a divine visit from the prophet Elijah, who condemned Ahab’s actions. Yet God, in His sovereign mercy and grace, gave room for him to repent and humble himself, and to his credit, he did.

And what became of Jezebel? Physically, she died a gruesome death, but the foul spirit of Jezebel still lives today. In the book of Revelations, the depravity of her influence on the church of Thyatira was not a trivial offense to God.

*“Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols” (Revelation 2:20).*

Wow! What influence. Listen to me. If a man intermingles with or marries a woman of the world, he should concern himself with the true source of her influence, among other things. While on the other hand, a man who is married to a godly woman should not live in fear of the influence God has given his wife. Genuine godly women are submitted under the authority of God. They understand their purpose is to help their men grow closer in their relationship to God by the life of holiness they live and the prayers they pray. When a marriage is submitted to the standards set by God, husbands and wives can live together in peace and successfully help one another enjoy the kingdom of God.

The next chapter deals with a series of bad decisions that not only brought about division in relationships, but also challenged the authority of the king. Let's look at Vashti and Michal and their actions of disrespect, another tool that destroys a king.

*Father we stand convicted for not consulting first you and then one another in decisions we make that affect one another. Please allow us to be sensitive to the kingdom you have set us in and to guard our hearts against anything that allows an influence in our lives except you. Father allow you kingdom to come and let it be on earth as it is in Heaven, let your peace rule in our homes and teach us to respect one another.*

## **Rebellious Influence - Vashti Authority Challenged**

I have a tendency, to couple men who strongly desire to understand the thought of a king and those in his kingdom that serve him with the Book of Esther. This book is a powerhouse of revelation that is most beneficial to men who rule in their castles, and to women who understand the dynamics of the castles where their kings' rule.

In the book of Esther, we find King Ahasuerus hosting a great feast for “all his officials and servants - the powers of Persia and Media, the nobles, and the princes of the providences.” The Who's Who in Shushan that were in attendance would be served the finest delicacies on platters crafted by the best craftsman, and they would drink the choicest of wines from goblets of gold fashioned in one-of-a-kind designs. They would plunge their appetites in rich food for 180 days, never experiencing lack because of the abundance provided by the king.

The second feast that followed, in comparison to the first, lasted a mere seven days but the surplus of wine continued, which was liberally consumed without restraint. On the final day of this feast, King Ahasuerus sent for his beautiful wife, Queen Vashti, to join him in the courtyard of the garden that he might display her beauty before the multitude of men- all intoxicated, including the king. However, in that moment, rather than representing the king, as a queen ought to do, she chose to declare her independence from him by refusing to come.

Before we continue, let me say that from an influential

stance, we must bear in mind that someone is always a witness to our character, our actions, and our words, even when we think no one is watching or listening. Such was the case with Moses when he killed the Egyptian.

*“Now it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. So he looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. (Exodus 2:11-12)*

Take notice that Moses looked this way and that way before proceeding in his actions to deliver his own brethren from harm. Now, assuming there were only two people present in the struggle when Moses arrived, and knowing that he killed one of the two, by reason of deduction, that only left Moses and the one he saved as witnesses. As the story continues, we further read:

*“And when he went out the second day, behold, two Hebrew men were fighting, and he said to the one who did the wrong, “Why are you striking your companion?” Then he said, “Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?” (Exodus 2:13-14)*

Here is where I would like to pose a question. If Moses

didn't confess his crime to anyone, who told? Is it possible that it was his own brethren, the one he saved from the hand of the Egyptian, who reported to the others what Moses had done? I think it is very possible, and it is also a reminder that our fruit is subject to inspection daily by both God and man. In some instances, it is not always what we say that matters, but the way it is said. Equally impactful in our communication with one another, is our body language and our facial expressions. The Bible does not record what Vashti said or if she said anything at all to the eunuchs who were sent for her. However, we do know that some form of communication was exchanged because her rebellion enraged the king.

*“On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus, to bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing her royal crown, in order to show her beauty to the people and the officials, for she was beautiful to behold. But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command brought by his eunuchs; therefore the king was furious, and his anger burned within him” (Esther 1:10-12).*

Let's approach our subject, rebellious influence, from two viewpoints: One from the woman's side of the story and the other from the man's side.

## **From the Woman's Standpoint**

As men, we must realize that our queens should never be a trophy won that we can take off the shelf to display as we see fit. Likewise, they are not to be pushed aside as if they no longer hold any value to us. This kind of insensitivity and disrespect comes from being under the wrong influence, and King Ahasuerus' influence was a heart merry with wine. When we are moved to action by negative influences, we can foolishly do and say things that impair tensions or even provoke others to rebel. The king's drunken actions incited Vashti to rebel. The greatest influence that any man can come under is that of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God can teach us through the Word of God how we are to treat every woman in our lives. However, if we refuse the counsel of God and are not mindful, alert and sober, then these same damaging influences will sway us, leading to great regret.

Vashti would have no part in the king's command, and as a result of her rebellion, she was not only dethroned but also banished from the presence of the king. Men we can learn a valuable lesson from her. When dealing with women of influence, our decisions can box them into a corner and cause them to come out fighting in their desperation to assumedly protect themselves. If we force them into feeling vulnerable, then we are responsible for the seeds of bitterness that will eventually sprout resentment towards us. This does not justify her actions but presents a perspective that gives room for thought. The thing to take away also is during an internal conflict there are no winners and losers there are only regrets.

## From the Man's Standpoint

Ladies, there is nothing more dangerous than for a king's authority to be defied in his kingdom in the company of his friends. If his authority is challenged by you, he instantly prepares himself for battle with little concern for feelings or casualties. Let me say that men are trained to conquer and whatever the task of competition they feel they must win. Have you ever watched a man driving from point A to point B? There is a competition to get there in the least amount of time and on the next journey there is an effort to beat that time. *Competition!!!* Vashti's unwillingness to follow the king's instructions, put him in a very compromising position. All of those present respected him and knew the command he gave for Vashti to come. When she failed to appear publicly, all eyes were now on him. If not properly dealt with, he would be viewed as weak, and no man wants to carry the stigma of being a weakling.

*"Then the king said to the wise men who understood the times (for this was the king's manner toward all who knew law and justice, those closest to him being Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven princes of Persia and Media, who had access to the king's presence, and who ranked highest in the kingdom): "What shall we do to Queen Vashti, according to law, because she did not obey the command of King Ahasuerus brought to her by the eunuchs?" (Esther 1:13-15)*

Here we see that the king sought the advice of his most trusted advisers, wise men who understood the times, to determine what needed to be done to Queen Vashti. Her lack of respect simply could not be tolerated by those in the king's court. These same wise men witnessed the incident first hand and understood, if gone unpunished, her influence would spread rebellion and wreck the entire kingdom. Too much was at stake, and Vashti never stood a chance win this battle. Vashti would also affect the other women relation to their own husbands. This position of influence held by the queen could put in jeopardy all the marriages in the kingdom and cause a division in the kingdom.

*“And Memucan answered before the king and the princes: “Queen Vashti has not only wronged the king, but also all the princes, and all the people who are in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus. For the queen's behavior will become known to all women, so that they will despise their husbands in their eyes, when they report, ‘King Ahasuerus commanded Queen Vashti to be brought in before him, but she did not come. This very day the noble ladies of Persia and Media will say to all the king's officials that they have heard of the behavior of the queen. Thus there will be excessive contempt and wrath.” (Esther 1:16-18).*

Disputes, great and small, happen between the best of us. However, they should never draw a crowd like an Olympian sport in Ancient Greece. There is a better place

and a proper time for differences to be resolved than in front of a wide-eyed audience, especially when the opposition occurs between two people of influence. Ladies be careful of the battles you fight, and when and where you choose to fight them.

*“Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand?” (Luke 14:31)*

Let me also say that there is nothing wrong with a retreat in battle. It will give you an opportunity to regroup and better think through your strategy. Although Vashti was his wife, those who had the king’s ear were more influential than her. The fact that he asked for guidance from the wise men tells me that he was struggling with the situation at hand. I believe the wrestle that was taking place inside of him was between a man, who was the king, and the king, who was a man. And both the king and the man was dealing with pride, humiliation, and the perceived thoughts in the minds of those who witnessed this act of rebellion. In all essence, the matter between King Ahasuerus and Queen Vashti was a public display of a disagreement that should have never taken place openly. Now her sentence would have to fit the crime, if the king was to save face. Therefore, because she rebelled openly, her punishment would also be made public.

*“If it pleases the king, let a royal decree go out from him, and let it be recorded in the laws of the Persians and the Medes, so that it will not be altered, that Vashti shall come no more before King Ahasuerus; and let*

*the king give her royal position to another who is better than she” (Esther 1:19).*

I was once told that a wise man learns from his mistakes, but a wiser man learns from the mistakes of others. Ladies learn from Vashti’s mistake. If you publicly humiliate your king, he may no longer give you a place in his kingdom. I am not talking about him leaving the marriage as much as I am stressing that the relationship will change. The enjoyment you once brought him, will no longer be his desire. He may even go as far as avoiding your presence all together.

Let’s take a brief look at another example that may help me to drive my point home. Do you remember when David entered the city, bringing in the Ark of the Covenant and dancing in a linen ephod? Michal, his wife, was looking out of a window and when she saw his public display of joy, she felt contempt for him.

*“Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart” (2 Samuel 6:16).*

Her emotions were spiraling out of control. The closer he got to where she was, the more she was bent on confronting him and his public behavior which she deemed as undignified. Michal was so blinded by her own resentful soul and hard heart, that she approached the king in a disrespectful manner while slinging insults and accusations.

*“Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of*

*Saul came out to meet David, and said, "How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!" So, David said to Michal, "It was before the LORD, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel. Therefore, I will play music before the LORD. And I will be even more undignified than this and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor." Therefore, Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death" (2 Samuel 6:20-23).*

Wow! David was opposed by his helpmate while on the way to bless his household, of which Michal was a part. This same woman helped David escape from her father, Saul when he was ready to kill David. What changed? What happened? Her words and tone not only put David on the defense, but it also brought the hand of God against her. She would remain barren until her death. I'm sure Michal was not thinking that her words would ensnare her. After all, she was merely speaking her heart, right? Let's pull at a few possible snagged threads, such as bitterness, past hurts, and unresolved conflict that may have still been hanging loosely from Michal's heart. These kind of scars and wounded heart issues, if never mended, can lead a man or a woman to despise even the very person he or she was created to help in life. If Michal and Vashti would have

received motherly wisdom from an older woman, like Paul encourages in the book of Titus, perhaps the end of their stories would have turned out differently.

*“...that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, **obedient to their own husbands**, that the word of God may not be blasphemed” (Titus 2:4-5).*

Some women today are being influenced by a rebellious spirit. Here’s what I mean. It has been verbally expressed that if a husband has not earned or does not deserve to be respected, then his wife is under no obligation to be obedient or submitted to him. Although this is totally contrary to what the Word of God teaches, some women have sworn their allegiance to uphold it. Well, I guess if you were the kind of woman who was not interested in being a kingmaker, then this thought process, although damaging, would seem acceptable. But to those queens who want to create an atmosphere of love, where the blessings of the Lord abound and the enemy is defeated, then I beseech you to perfect the art of respecting and honoring your king.

Ladies, did you notice that these two women lost their blessings because they rebelled, despised, or disrespected their husbands? Whether the same end that befell them will happen to you should you adapt their ways in your marriage is not the point. The thing I want you to see is that such a nature cannot produce anything good, and in some cases, cannot produce anything at all. A barren wife cannot reproduce, and the wounded husband cannot bless. Disrespect, lack of honor and not understanding the king

can cause irrational behavior. Such is the case in the next chapter as we look at a woman of influence who said to her king in the making,

*“Do you still hold fast to your integrity?  
Curse God and die!” (Job 2:9)*

*Father guide us down a path of love. Not holding resentment, past hurt or disrespect in our hearts. As men let us not operate in a foolish state of pride nor speak things, we will later regret. As women don't let us react in dishonor that will cause all who see our actions to cause rebellion in their hearts. Forgive us Father for not respecting and honoring one another for you said love covers a multitude of sin. Let our thoughtlessness be forgiven as we move forward to become one in heart.*

## Frustrated Influence - Job's Wife

Did you ever notice that Job's wife remained nameless throughout the historical recordings of the Bible? It's true. In fact, in retelling the events surrounding Job's life, the writer refers to Mrs. Job as "his wife", and Job himself refers to her as "my wife." How notable it is to be mentioned by name or referenced in the greatest Book ever written, yet how sad when the legacy you leave behind is not one to be modeled after.

In the Book of Job, we find the enemy's fingerprints on the scene just as they were found in the Garden of Eden. Once again, the helpmate of man would be the open-door Satan would use in his attempt to sabotage the purposes of God. When we are first introduced to Job's helpmate, immediately we see that her heart and soul are engulfed in the enemy's nature just by the oppressive words she spoke. Wait! I'm getting a little ahead of myself. Let's travel back in the story to where Job is the topic of discussion in heaven.

*"Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD. And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it." Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and*

*upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause." (Job 2:1-3).*

I don't know about you, but when I read that there is a meeting between God and Satan that takes place in heaven about a man in the earth, who knows nothing about it, I must stop and ask myself: *Does God have meetings in heaven about me, too?* If so, I hope I would be as well-spoken of as Job.

*"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil" (Job 1:1)*

Wait a minute! Did I read that verse of Scripture right—that it was God who said, "Have you considered my servant Job?" Perhaps a better question to ask might be, so why Job? All I can conclude is that God must have confidence in those who belong to Him, those whom He knows intimately. He knew the integrity of Job would not wane in adversity, but the enemy thought differently. Pay close attention to what he said to God:

*"So Satan answered the LORD and said, 'Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and*

*he will surely curse You to Your face!”*  
(Job 1:9-11)

I want your eyes to focus on the following words, “...stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to your face.” Clearly, we can see that the enemy was counting on a repeat performance of treason with Job, as it happened with Adam and Eve in the garden. Not only that, but there is something else that I see as a trend in his crafty plan. To make my point, I need to go back for a moment to look at the conversation Eve had with the serpent:

*“And the woman said to the serpent, ‘We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”* (Genesis 3:2-3)

Did you find anything in common in these two passages of Scripture? Let me give you a hint by rephrasing my question: What is it with *touch* that intrigues men and women, and satisfies the enemy? One of the Oxford definitions of touch is “handle in order to manipulate, alter, or otherwise affect, especially in an adverse way.” In Job’s case, the enemy planned to use touch to ruin Job’s integrity. Basically, Satan was saying, “God, if you disrupt Job’s perfect little world, it will alter his righteous character so much that he will blaspheme Your name to Your face!”

In Eve’s situation, the enemy would use her own words to ensnare her. The words, “nor shall you *touch* it” are not even found in God’s verbal commandment to Adam. Yet,

Eve told the serpent that was what God said. The serpent seized the opportunity to use touch as a type of bait-and-switch. What she ended up with in the end was inferior, to say the least, to what she was promised in the beginning. Can you imagine what was going through her mind when she touched the fruit with her hand, but did not die? There was Eve defying God and still breathing; Adam was standing there looking on, equally engaged; and both were full of intrigue from the touch before they even tasted what was forbidden to eat. The enemy understands, far more than man can comprehend, that temptation is heightened once touch is introduced. Note also how the sin we have is given to others. Eve took of the fruit and gave to Adam. Be careful ladies of the influence you hold and the consequences of that misused influence. That which appeals outwardly may be the very thing that causes you to disrupt the kingdom.

Another weapon in the hands of the enemy that works against us is our words. When you are under the sway of the wicked one, he will use your words like arrows to provoke an attack, especially between you and someone you love. When these attacks come by way of anger, bitterness or accusation, for example, from someone who is in close relationship to you, the destruction caused by the sharp arrows is more devastating than the arrows of a stranger.

I'm sure Mrs. Job was beyond frustrated; her husband's life was radically change, and it affected her in every way. In her mind, she was probably screaming, "*Hey, I didn't sign up for this!*" But then again, Job didn't sign up for this either. One of the hardest things for a woman of influence to do is to watch her king suffer, and although

she may want to nurture him, she finds there are some occasions where she can't do anything to ease his pain and discomfort.

Here was a man who, at the onset of his trial, had wealth, a wife, children, and was in good health. Then one day, without any warning, he was dealt one blow after another as the news was brought to him that he had lost his property and his children. But the enemy wasn't about to stop there, he was determined to touch all that Job had; after all, that was the agreement between him and God. Next on his list was Job's health and his wife. The Bible says Job was "*struck with painful boils from the soles of his foot to the crown of his head*" (Job 2:7). And when his wife came to him, Job sat in the midst of the ashes from where he had taken a potsherd and scraped himself (Job 2:8).

*Then his wife said to him, 'Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!'"* (Job 2:9)

I wonder how long Job had been in that same position, sitting among the pile of dry scrapings of his own flesh? I can see how all of what he was going through affected her. Suddenly, she was robbed of financial security and motherhood, and she was left with a husband who was physically unable to fulfil his obligations as a husband and as a man. What a great and effective door the enemy broke through, using her frustrated influence to aggravate Job, and she would be none the wiser.

"*Curse God and die!*" she exclaimed. But do you really think she knew what she was saying? Job's wife spoke irrationally to him without considering the consequences

she would face as a widow, if he took her advice. Widows were typically financially bankrupt and at the mercy of those around them. Since, in this situation, the family's livestock was gone, and his sons were no longer alive to care for her, she would be left to beg for handouts. But would anyone extend a hand to help the wife of one who was accused of sending widows away empty and crushing the strength of the fatherless (*Job 22:9*)? There was no insurance policy in place for Mrs. Job. If Job were to die as she encouraged, there was nothing ahead for her but a hard life.

Sometimes, our reaction to a situation only makes things worse than they were before. Favorably for Job, his response was delightful as he holds fast and defends his integrity.

***"I will teach you about the hand of God; What is with the Almighty I will not conceal. Surely all of you have seen it; Why then do you behave with complete nonsense? "This is the portion of a wicked man with God, And the heritage of oppressors, received from the Almighty: If his children are multiplied, it is for the sword; And his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread. Those who survive him shall be buried in death, And their widows shall not weep"*** (*Job 27:11-15*).

Neither Job nor his wife was aware of the spiritual battle that was taking place in the background of their lives. Still, everything that was spoken and done during the trial would affect the outcome of that spiritual battle. We must

learn that as Christians, the race we are in is a marathon that is won by endurance. Therefore, we should not be so easily influenced to change teams or go in another direction simply because a storm is brewing overhead. Up until the final trumpet blows, there is still time for the vision, hope and future God has planned to come to pass.

Job's wife, although speaking the enemy's words, did not move Job to retaliate with counter words. Instead, of adding insult to injury, he chose to glorify God with his words rather than defend his own honor.

*"But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips" (Job 2:10).*

Men, if we can overcome the trials God has purposed for our lives and escape the arrows of hurtful and condemning words spoken by those we love, we will be able to see that our kingmakers are not the enemy. How awful it would have been for Job to respond then the way some men in this generation would have replied: "Fine, you go right ahead, and curse God and you die! As for me, I am going to hold fast to my integrity and get what God has for me!" Okay. Maybe none of the men you know would say that, but I know some who at least would have thought it. Here are some take away values both men and women can learn from the life of Mr. and Mrs. Job.

Men, no matter what you are going through, there is never any reason for you to either curse God or curse your wife.

In fact, when your relationship with her is a healthy one, you are better able to see just how much she is intertwined in your destiny. Remember that in a marriage, the two shall become one, and the destiny that one experiences, the other will also experience.

Women, sometimes, while your king is being tested by God, the best thing you can do is practice the art of quietness and master the power of prayer. It is difficult for a man to go through the test of his life and find the one that he expects the most support from standing in opposition to him rather than in agreement with him. Whether you know it or not, believe it or not, your words can carry enough weight to oppose and win victory over a man's strength. Remember, it was Delilah's words that wearied Samson until he told her the source of his strength (*Judges 16*).

As kings and kingmakers, we cannot allow our vision to be distorted or lose sight of the God that we serve. In the next chapter, we will further explore how the loss of vision can destroy a king.

*Father as we go through the test of this life let us never cause one another to curse you and hold unto the hope you have given to those who call upon your name. Things will not always go the way we think but give us the ability to accept those moments and learn to accept the good as well as the bad as they are dealt to us. As with Job remind us our latter days can be greater than our former days if we remain faithful to you.*

## **Deceptive Influence - Delilah Removing Vision**

Even the strongest men have weaknesses. I am reminded of my childhood years spent reading about Superman. He was strength personified in the form of a superhero flying around in blue tights and a red cape who brought justice to the people of Metropolis. He was invincible against the strongest elements of the earth; however, his unmatched strength fell prey to that which he was most familiar with from his own kingdom- Kryptonite.

The glowing, dark green substance known as kryptonite had the ability to turn the man of steel into a weakling. Interestingly, his arch enemies not only knew his vulnerability to kryptonite but also had access to it. If Metropolis' hero stayed guarded from kryptonite, the substance had no power over his strength. For us today, the problem isn't kryptonite, perhaps our "substance" is pride, lust, insecurity, or unforgiveness. By whatever means we define our "substance", if we are driven for or by it, then it will have the same ability and power to make us weak. If, however, we stay spiritually guarded and not become overly familiar with people or things that can weaken us, then we will not subject our strength to the enemy. It is important that we understand that God gives us strength for His kingdom purposes. However, when that strength is not valued or is compromised in any way by our own doing, we lose our vitality.

Let's continue our journey to the book of Judges where we read about one of the strongest men in the bible- Samson. As we follow his story, we discover that his unbridled

passion for women started him down a path that eventually led to his undoing. Samson could not see that each woman he entangled himself with caused him to progressively lose more than his strength- he also lost his vision.

*“Now Samson went down to Timnah, and saw a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines. So he went up and told his father and mother, saying, ‘I have seen a woman in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines; now therefore, get her for me as a wife.’ Then his father and mother said to him, ‘Is there no woman among the daughters of your brethren, or among all my people, that you must go and get a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?’ And Samson said to his father, ‘Get her for me, for she pleases me well.’” (Judges 14:1-3)*

Perhaps by now, some Bible scholars are yelling, “Did you read verse 4? It says what Samson was asking for was of the Lord!” But before we agree to disagree, let me tell you what the name Timnah means: Forbidding. Forbidding means “unfriendly or threatening in appearance.” Unlike many of God’s chosen people whom He *sent* to specific places for His kingdom purpose, Samson *went* to Timnah on his own accord and saw something there that he liked for his own intent and purposes. He was so driven by what he saw that he quickly dismissed the concerns his parents voiced and refused their guidance to help him walk out his God given purpose in life. Although blinded by what he wanted, God was so determined to destroy His enemies,

that he used Samson's unwise decision to accomplish His will.

The influence of those who have your best interest at heart should always be considered before making life changing decisions. Whenever a man is set on getting his way, nothing can deter him from making a poor decision, not even godly counsel. And if by sheer stubbornness and determination he does get what he wants, the end results can be catastrophic. Any man that is driven by and goes after the forbidden things, has clearly lost his way to the path that God paved for him.

Let's look again at Samson's request to his parents: "*Get her for me, for she pleases me well.*" In other words, "Mom. Dad. I have seen a woman from a forbidden place and no matter the consequences, she is the one that I want. Get her for me at all cost!" As men, we need to understand that because we are visual by nature, our point of vulnerability often starts with what we see. Samson's attraction to this woman was based on her outward appearance, not an inner, godly beauty. Here's an important note worth remembering: Men, when it comes to women, we cannot afford to be captivated by their outward appearance only. We need to wait patiently and allow time to reveal their heart for us to discern wisely. Here is a prime example of what I mean. Now men there is a point to note in Samson life. His Nazarite vow was walked out by his mother before him in that she could not drink any fruit of the vine or eat anything unclean. So, after killing the lion and returning and seeing the corpse with honey he did eat and then gave some to his father and mother. Samson sin not only affected him, but he also brought it to his parents that they may eat and yet they

were unaware of the sin that he had committed. Men please note that the sin you commit will bring judgement to those that you love, and they may be innocent of your sin but guilty for partaking in your sin.

*“He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave some to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.” (Judges 14:9)*

That which Samson desired the most would also be his greatest challenge. The wife he had married betrayed him to save her life and the life of her family or, so she thought.

*“But it came to pass on the seventh day that they said to Samson's wife, ‘Entice your husband that he may explain the riddle to us, or else we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Have you invited us in order to take what is ours? Is that not so?’ Then Samson's wife wept on him, and said, “You only hate me! You do not love me! You have posed a riddle to the sons of my people, but you have not explained it to me.” And he said to her, “Look, I have not explained it to my father or my mother; so should I explain it to you?” Now she had wept on him the seven days while their feast lasted. And it happened on the seventh day that he told her, because she pressed him so much. Then she explained the riddle to the sons of her people.” (Judges 14:15-17)*

Samson was clueless to the character of his wife and probably never gave any thought to the idea that she would trade his secrets with his enemies. But her betrayal of Samson was no accidental blunder; she was desperate to save her own life. Through persistent nagging, she seduced him to reveal the answer to his riddle. When he did, she eagerly handed the information over to his enemies; but never could she have imagined the turn of events that would soon follow. Samson became enraged at the way the Philistines acquired the answer and returned to his father's house but not before settling the debt he owed the Philistines for solving the riddle- thirty linen garments and thirty sets of clothes from the Philistines.

Now while Samson was away, his wife was given to his best man. When he attempted to be reacquainted with her, Samson was met with unyielding opposition by her father. An infuriated Samson once again took matters into his own hands and destroyed the Philistines grain fields, vineyards, and olive groves. In their displeasure over Samson's actions, they attributed their loss to his wife and followed through with their initial threat by burning her and her father's house with fire. Because of their terrible crime, God used Samson to destroy even more Philistines, proving again that God is more than able to use even our weaknesses to fulfill His purpose.

Remember how Samson was moved in his first relationship by what he saw? Now we will look at the second woman the Bible mentions Samson was entangled with and again, he acted based on what he saw.

*“Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her. When the Gazites were told, “Samson has come*

*here!” they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. They were quiet all night, saying, “In the morning, when it is daylight, we will kill him. And Samson lay low till midnight; then he arose at midnight, took hold of the doors of the gate of the city and the two gateposts, pulled them up, bar and all, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill that faces Hebron.” (Judges 16:1-3).*

His physical gratification with a harlot was no trivial matter; it exposed a further weakening of his sight and strength. You see, history reveals that harlots were more than just unchaste women; they used prostitution as a service to their god. He went from marrying a woman from Timnah who *offered sacrifices to her god* to a woman who *was the sacrifice for her god*. Samson, who knew he was a Nazarite unto God from his mother’s womb, willfully yet blindly proceeded down a path that would lead to further betrayal.

Now onto the third woman recorded in Samson’s life, the infamous Delilah. As we further read, we will find many of the same shortcomings previously displayed by Samson continuing, resulting in a more devastating outcome. The old saying about doing the same thing the same way but expecting different results...not going to happen!

*“Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her,*

*"Entice him, and find out where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred pieces of silver." So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength lies, and with what you may be bound to afflict you." (Judges 16:4-6)*

Delilah, whose name means languishing (weakness or deteriorating), was hired by the lords of the Philistines to learn the source of Samson's strength and how they could afflict him. Men, from the beginning Delilah was upfront about what she was after: *"Please tell me where your great strength lies, and with what you may be bound to afflict you."* But why couldn't Samson "see" that the intent of this woman's heart was to afflict or cause pain or suffering upon him? I'm convinced that before Samson physically lost his sight, he had already spiritually lost his vision.

Each time Delilah interacted with Samson, it was for one purpose and one purpose only... to get the secret of his strength so she could betray him. Three times she pressed Samson to tell her the secret to his strength, and each time he let her get closer to the secret he held in his heart.

*"Then she said to him, "How can you say, 'I love you,' when your heart is not with me? You have mocked me these three times, and have not told me where your great strength lies." And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was*

*vexed to death, that he told her all his heart, and said to her, "No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man." (Judges 16:15-17)*

And then it happened! Although Samson resisted telling her the truth the first three times, her fourth attempt at enticing him was successful. Men, hear me, often we are so focused on celebrating our strengths that we don't think we will ever stumble in our weaknesses. This is a spirit of pride at work in us, and *"pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall"* (Proverbs 16:18).

The daily pestering of Delilah, who really had no love for him, caused Samson to tell her his heart just as it had been with his first wife.

*"When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart." So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand. Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. (Judges 16:18-19)*

Delilah must have noticed that something in the countenance of Samson was different than the other times he had pretended to tell her the secret she sought. Once

she knew for sure that she had the secret of his heart, she also knew she had him. The most tragic part of this story is that after she rocked him to sleep and had his head shaved, **then** she began to torment him.

Samson experienced betrayal time and time again but did not learn from the experiences. Moving forward, we must look at the path we've traveled and learn from the mistakes we've made. If not, we most likely will repeat the mistakes until the lesson is learned. Each time Samson was deceived by a woman, and each time the Philistine men were involved, waiting to gain control over him. Men be careful with whom you share your heart with. Letting one's heart be known by a woman of influence who belongs to another kingdom opens the door of torment for you.

*“And she said, ‘The Philistines are upon you, Samson!’ So he awoke from his sleep, and said, ‘I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!’ But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him.” (Judges 16:20)*

In order to capture his strength, the enemy first had to conquer his weakness. I have watched men who were under the influence of women, forget who they were and what they were called to. They thought they could share their heart while holding onto their freedom, but not so. These women of influence from another kingdom with ulterior motives, bound them with chains, tormented them and caused them to lose their vision. No matter how hard they tried, these men could not shake themselves free and be victorious over the enemy. Like Samson, by the time

they came to, they were without strength and the presence of God had left them.

*“Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he became a grinder in the prison” (Judges 16:21)*

The enemy, after capturing, binding, and tormenting Samson, then took away his vision (*put out his eyes*). Vision represent the plans we received from God to fulfill the purpose we have been given to complete in the earth. We always talk about Samson not realizing in the last incident that God was no longer with him, but I don't want us to overlook an invaluable lesson from all of what we just learned: We can't expect to retain our vision or fulfill our mission if we share with the enemy what God has entrusted to us.

The enemy worked not only through Samson's weaknesses, but also the weaknesses of the women in his life: they were driven by their other lovers. His first wife loved her own life more than Samson's life. Delilah loved the money offered to betray Samson more than she loved him. An affection for other lovers would prove to be a common denominator in the downfall of mankind throughout history. Remember Gomer in the Bible? She was very well-known for going after her other lovers. Let's turn to the next chapter to examine how she influenced the life of her king, Hosea.

*Father help us learn from the mistakes of our past and don't let us fall into temptation. Again, deliver us from the evil one. Each day we pray for your presence and your strength. Let not our arrogance lead us down a path that will blind us and cause us to lose vision for what is right. Help us to be sensitive to the advice of those who have our best interest at heart and finally help us stay focused on what is important to you and not that which pleases us well.*

## The Unfaithful Influence - Gomer

Imagine if God wanted to use you to be the example, He needed to make a point to a nation who had forgotten Him or to live as a warning to an unfaithful and idolatrous people who were going further and further away from God with each passing day. This was the surrendered life that Hosea, the prophet, was called to live. God instructed His prophet to marry a harlot named Gomer, who was just like the nation God was prepared to judge. The first response from most men including the author, “that is not God speaking, God would never tell me to do such a thing.”

As a newlywed married to a woman whose sins mirrored those of the nation of Israel, God challenged Hosea to become His living messenger. He would then be responsible to reveal to Israel their spiritual condition, as well as convey God’s unyielding love for them. The account of Hosea and Gomer is such a vivid recording of God’s redemptive love story for Israel.

As the book of Hosea opens, we are invited to walk alongside Hosea as he marries, and the birth of his children are announced.

*“When the LORD began to speak by Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea: ‘Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry And children of harlotry, for the land has committed great harlotry by departing from the LORD’, so he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.” (Hosea 1:2-3)*

Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, lived a life of harlotry and enjoyed reaping all the material benefits that came with the occupation. Whatever enticed her to become a prostitute, also controlled her to stay in that lifestyle. What was Gomer looking for as she agreed to marry Hosea? Was it security or was there something that Gomer saw in Hosea that caused her to believe she could remain faithful. One of the biggest mistakes we make as kings is believing we can change our queen. One of the biggest mistakes the kingmaker makes is believing that they will be satisfied in the lifestyle of the king and not be drawn away by outside influences. The very security she was looking for would later be removed as her king becomes frustrated with her actions. But what did all of this mean for Hosea? Embarrassment? Humiliation? Desperation? Hosea must have experienced a myriad of emotions because of Gomer's infidelity. If ever there was a word that could destroy a relationship and unravel a king, it would be the word adultery. This king walking on a path of success was now dealing with all the emotions of a relationship that has gone wrong.

*“Say to your brethren, 'My people,' And to your sisters, 'Mercy is shown.' "Bring charges against your mother, bring charges; For she is not My wife, nor am I her Husband! Let her put away her harlotries from her sight, And her adulteries from between her breasts;...  
“(Hosea 2:1-2)*

Hosea could identify with how God was feeling. After all, he was a husband whose wife was bowing to every other

man's needs and ignoring his. How he must have pleaded with Gomer to do away with her adulteries just as God was pleading with Israel. As God's mouthpiece, everything he was feeling in his heart concerning his wife had to be filtered through God's heart and spoken to God's people, and God had plenty to say. Israel could ignore God, the invisible wonder who had been their saving grace from the beginning of time, but Hosea was a man of flesh and blood that they could see and touch and hear. But would they listen? Just as Gomer's adulterous affairs had created an environment of mistrust and frustration in the home, Israel's unfaithfulness had created a similar change in the atmosphere of the nation.

From Old Testament time until now, we have called adultery by different names to make it seem more glamorous or exciting. One such term we use today is having an affair as if by saying "affair" it somehow makes it acceptable in the eyes of God. Whenever adultery is committed, it promotes disrespect and dishonor over love and respect and leaves the faithful spouse devastated.

Surely Hosea had seen on occasion, Gomer preparing herself and dressing desirably to go out to be with her lovers. Carefully selecting her garments, charmed bracelets, and the fragrance of choice to entice the men she sought after. Each word he spoke to the children of Israel must have been voiced with Gomer, his beloved, in mind.

*"I will punish her for the days of the Baals to which she burned incense. She decked herself with her earrings and jewelry, And went after her lovers; But Me she forgot," says the LORD" (Hosea 2:13)*

God's words to Israel, "and went after her lovers; but me she forgot," also resonated with Hosea. Hosea was not at the forefront of her mind which would explain why when she went out, she failed to come home. And what about their children? What was Gomer teaching her daughter, Lo-Ruhamah, about being a faithful wife? Would her son, Lo-Ammi, learn how a woman should be treated or loved by watching her lifestyle? She had no thought or care of how her actions were adversely impacting the children. Likewise, Israel's actions were negatively influencing the next generation, teaching them a way of life that was unacceptable to God. There was no remorse expressed or turning away from their sins for either Israel or Gomer. Still, no matter how much pain Israel had caused God or Gomer had caused Hosea, there was an unstoppable love burning on the inside of their hearts for their beloveds. And God planned to restore them both! The same applies today. How far we have come away from God's purpose? We now focus on our own desires. Yet there is always the hope of restoration or fixing that which is broken. The King wants to fix his bride and the men of influence want to fix their wives. A broken kingdom which seems out of control yet the next verse issues in hope. There has always been a plan and both kingmakers and kings must have a plan for restoration or recovery.

*"Therefore, behold, I will allure her, Will bring her into the wilderness, And speak comfort to her. I will give her her vineyards from there, And the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; She shall sing there, As in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of*

*Egypt. "And it shall be, in that day," Says the LORD, "That you will call Me 'My Husband,' And no longer call Me 'My Master,' For I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, And they shall be remembered by their name no more" (Hosea 2:14-17).*

God devised a plan to redeem what belonged to him. He wanted to bring Israel out of the world where she was being influenced and into a secret place where He could speak words of comfort to her. He longed to bestow gifts on her and lavish her with such deep love that melodies would flow from her the wells of her inner being and she would sing again as she had once done before.

He then instructed Hosea to redeem Gomer by paying whatever it would cost for her return.

*"Then the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans." So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver, and one and one-half homers of barley. And I said to her, "You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man—so, too, will I be toward you."*

I can see Hosea going from place to place, searching for her. Perhaps she was just as surprised to see him as he was to find her. Maybe this time, she was certain he wouldn't

take her back, but he did. And he made it clear to her that things were going to be different.

Communication in a relationship goes a long way, and how we speak to one another, especially in a crisis has a lot to do with the outcome of the discussion. I shared previously how the conversations in the earlier years of our marriage were always heated because we both wanted to get our points across. We simply didn't know back then a truth we've learned today: there are two sides to every story and then there is the truth. We were so busy seeing things through our own eyes and justifying our actions that we had little to no regard to what the other person was seeing or feeling.

Today, however, experience has taught us that the best time to address concerns is when we are both able to think clearly and not in the moment of a disagreement. When we do, we are better able to hear each other's heart, rather than be moved by the words that were spoken.

The last point I want us to look at before we move on to the next chapter is the shift in Israel's position with God and even Gomer's position with Hosea.

*"And it shall be, in that day," Says the LORD, "That you will call Me 'My Husband,' And no longer call Me 'My Master...'" (Hosea 2:16)*

Now, let's read a passage where we find a similar context.

*"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all*

*things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:15)*

Did you notice the significant progression in the fellowship God had with Israel? Now God would be called “My Husband” instead of Master.

My friend, does the one walking beside you realize her position as a helpmeet instead of a servant? Once she understands the difference and that her position is as a helpmeet then you two can truly become friends. In the early years of my marriage, I made a very grave mistake. I told Dolores I did not need her as a friend but as a wife. I had already had friends and was not interested in her friendship.

How wrong I was as I had no idea of kingdom principles and without training there was no understanding of her position. We often discuss in marriage seminars how we went to the courthouse for a license, but instead of a marriage license, we picked up a hunting license. And for the first years of our marriage, we aimed our weapons at each other and fired round after round of ammunition, wounding each other deeply. If it had not been for God’s divine intervention in our hearts, not intervention in our marriage, we would not be who we are today and now, willing to die for each other.

Here at the closing of this chapter is where I must advise the men that anything worth having is worth the investment. If you want a great marriage, invest in it. But know this. What it took for you to captivate your kingmaker is what it is going to take to keep her. Ladies, you are worth the price to be paid. If you want a great

marriage, invest in it. Be intentional in your marriage to be husband and wife, not master and slave.

Until now, we have mostly centered our attention on wives, but what about other women of influence? Can a daughter influence a kingdom by her actions? I am glad you asked that question because now we will look at a daughter and the type of influence she had on her father.

*Father give us the ability to remain faithful to one another. Always knowing that it will cost us in a relationship to walk a path most refuse to walk down. Let both men and women understand the devastation of an unfaithful mate and the pain it causes to the entire family. Let us not run after other lovers but be content to build that which you have put together. Finally let us see through your eyes the hope of restoring that which seems impossible because you are the God of the impossible.*

## Negative Influence - Herodias

When teaching Biblical principles to men, I stress it's important for them to understand the dynamics of the kingdom in which they rule and how their decisions, especially those decisions under the sway of negative influence can impact their entire family. Words spoken are binding and powerful; therefore, you must proceed with caution because the words you speak can have costly consequences.

Our person of interest for this chapter is Herod. But first, let me give you a brief overview of his controversial marriage. Herod married Herodias, who divorced her husband, Phillip, Herod's half-brother, in order to marry him. Regarding this union, John the Baptist rebuked Herod, and Herodias became so angry, she wanted John dead.

*'For Herod himself had sent and laid hold of John and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her. Because John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not; for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just and holy man, and he protected him. And when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly' (Mark 6:17-20)*

Herodias was so blinded by her wrong that she couldn't see that John the Baptist was right in what he spoke. In his attempt to appease his wife, Herod put John in prison with no parole in sight, but it simply wasn't punishment enough. She was determined to not only make John sorry for what he said, but she would also personally see to it that he paid for it with his life. Herod would later learn of the evil brewing in Herodias' mind; she wanted the death penalty for John, and she was not going to stop until she got what she wanted.

All too often I have seen men who are trying to keep the peace in their home, come to the defense of their wives and side with them in their error, rather than take their kingly position to discern justice. By no means am I saying that husbands should not stand up for their wives. I am, however, saying that if your wife improperly uses her influence to get her way, even if you are the beneficiary, don't agree with her or keep silent about it. Just as kings are challenged to live their lives according to the Word of God, so should kingmakers be challenged as well. And men, you can do so in a manner that still honors her without bringing disgrace to your kingmaker. Supporting your spouse does not mean agreeing with what is not right.

As we continue reading, we come to the part of the story where the powerful influence a mother has in her daughter's life proves to be disturbing. Ladies, please know that your children, especially your daughters are

watching you, and they will take their lead from you as the mother.

*“Then an opportune day came when Herod on his birthday gave a feast for his nobles, the high officers, and the chief men of Galilee. And when Herodias' daughter herself came in and danced, and pleased Herod and those who sat with him, the king said to the girl, "Ask me whatever you want, and I will give it to you." (Mark 6:21-22)*

The purpose for this feast was Herod's birthday. I'm sure the last thing he wanted troubling his mind was that whole rebuke episode with John the Baptist. Since it was a time of celebration, he would deny any thoughts that would infringe upon his right to enjoy the occasion at hand. *No, not now. Now is time to celebrate; a time to enjoy the festivities. More wine. More laughter. More dancing.*

Dancing at a celebration was to be expected. But when Salome, Herodias' daughter, came in herself and danced, it was something Herod and the other men were looking forward to seeing. Perhaps this was at Herodias' request. After all, she was plotting to use Herod's birthday as the opportune time to gain access to Herod's authority for the demise of John the Baptist. Her daughter's dance pleased the king so much that he was willing to give her whatever she wanted, whatever she asked for, up to half the kingdom.

*“ He also swore to her, “Whatever you ask me, I will give you, up to half my kingdom.” So she went out and said to her mother, ‘What shall I ask?’ And she said, ‘The head of John the Baptist!’ Immediately she came in with haste to the king and asked, saying, ‘I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.’” (Mark 6:23-24)*

It appears that Herodias’ daughter had no idea what her mother was up to or what to even ask for until she consulted with her mother. Little did Herod know that when the young girl returned with her request, it echoed the voice and vengeance of her mother. The misguided use of her influence caused her daughter to make an alarming request. Since Herod gave his word that she could have whatever she wanted before he ever heard her request, there was no turning back on his word. Moments later, the head of John the Baptist was delivered to Herodias’ daughter on a platter.

Anger and lust for power can be so misguided that we began to do the unthinkable, like Herodias use of her daughter like a chess pawn to promote her own personal interest. In addition, history reveals that *“Herodias also urged her husband to attempt to discredit her brother Herod Agrippa I, who had recently received the tetrarchy of Batanaea and Trachonitis, to the east of the Sea of Galilee. Their efforts antagonized the emperor Caligula, however, and they were banished in ad 39.” (Britannica, 1998)*

In this chapter, I want to take a closer look at another rash vow that was made to show how the actions that followed affected not only this father but also his innocent daughter. You may remember reading about Jephthah, a man who loved his daughter deeply and would do nothing to cause her harm. But he made a vow without thought of what it would cost him, as was the case with Herod. If we could talk to Jephthah today, he would tell of the overwhelming grief that followed his reckless vow.

*“And Jephthah made a vow to the LORD, and said, “If You will indeed deliver the people of Ammon into my hands, then it will be that whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the people of Ammon, shall surely be the LORD's, and I will offer it up as a burnt offering.” (Judges 11:30-31)*

Jephthah, who was a judge in Israel when there were no kings, made a vow to God that specifically pertained to his household. As the king and head of his home, the words of his vow were not only binding but also devastating and irreversible.

*When Jephthah came to his house at Mizpah, there was his daughter, coming out to meet him with timbrels and dancing; and she was his only child. Besides her, he had neither son nor daughter. And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he tore his clothes, and said, “Alas, my daughter! You have brought me very low! You are among*

*those who trouble me! For I have given my word to the LORD, and I cannot go back on it." (Judges 11:34-35)*

The first thing out of his house was his only daughter, his only child. Perhaps in times past, only his animals greeted him when he came home. Never in his wildest imagination did he think that his daughter, the love of his heart, would be the first thing to come out of the door. If he had known his vow would cost him his only child, I don't believe he would have made such an impulsive oath. Not only did his decision affect her, but also the words he spoke upon seeing her coming out of the house, "*You are among those who trouble me!*"

Can you imagine what might have been going through her mind? *What did my father mean when he said I was among those who troubled him? What did I do wrong? Should I not be happy that my father has returned safely from his battle against the people of Ammon? My father always loved it when I danced and played the timbrels, why is this time any different?*

She was clueless of the vow her father made to God and understandably puzzled by his sorrow at what should have been a joyous occasion. It would take some explaining on his part for her to realize that her father was troubled by the vow he made and not by her actions. You can continue reading the story of Jephthah in your Bible to find out what happened to his daughter. I'm sure you'll be as equally impressed with her bravery and submission.

Although we end this chapter celebrating the moral character of Jephthah's daughter, we begin the next chapter with the last of the negative influences. Stay with me as we turn the page to read more about a grandmother who was so driven to rule on the throne that she destroyed all the heirs in her son's bloodline for the sake of preserving her own personal legacy.

*Father our words are so powerful, yet we speak without understanding that which is bound on earth is bound in heaven. Forgive us for the selfish motives we have that would cause us to influence our children by our request. We have mistaken the power of influence and used it in the wrong way to get what our heart desire. Teach us your ways that we may not hurt others and that we might be able to bring peace and unity to our lives. We pray we understand the words we speak are not only for this generation but generations to come.*

## Dominant Influence - Athaliah Reigns in Judah

Internal takeovers aim to overthrow the rightful power ruling in the kingdom to set up a counterfeit domain. At the end of Ahab's dynasty, the Kingdom of Judah was under siege, but the take-over was not from a power outside of the kingdom but from a power within. Hands down, the ruthless acts of Queen Athaliah puts her at the top of our list of negative influential women.

Let's go to the book of 2 Chronicles where we find how the reign of Queen Athaliah began. We'll begin our reading in verse 9 of chapter 22. At this point in history, Jehu was executing the last of Ahab's lineage according to the word of the Lord.

*“Then he searched for Ahaziah; and they caught him (he was hiding in Samaria), and brought him to Jehu. When they had killed him, they buried him, "because," they said, "he is the son of Jehoshaphat, who sought the LORD with all his heart." So the house of Ahaziah had no one to assume power over the kingdom. Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the royal heirs of the house of Judah” (2 Chronicles 22:9-11).*

With Ahaziah dead, there was “no one to assume power over the kingdom.” Yet, Athaliah, who had by now set

her eyes on ruling the kingdom, knew she needed to take immediate action if she was indeed going to rule Judah. The untimely death of her son and the kingless throne left no room for reasoning or emotional attachments. To possess the throne, the dreadful and brutal act of wickedness was her only hope against anyone or anything that posed a threat to *her kingdom*.

You see, only one thing stood in her way, and she would remove it at all cost: the next generation of royal heirs to the throne. To secure her position as the reigning Queen of Judah, Athaliah assassinated her grandsons. The ability to take a kingdom by overthrowing the natural heirs should be something we all are concerned with. This grandmother showed no desire for the next generation and without understanding her position she was setting the kingdom up to not have any future heirs. The actions we take now are not always thought through and the pleasure for the moment will leave devastating consequences for the future. Do not be alarmed God had a covenant relationship with David and a promise.

What could influence a grandmother to act so evil that she would kill her grandsons just to take over the kingdom? Bible Scriptures teaches us that Athaliah was the granddaughter of Omri (*2 Kings 8:26*), one of the wickedest kings in the history of Israel who came to the throne. Omri was an evil ruler whose actions surpassed the evil acts of those who had reigned before him (*1 Kings 16:25*). Had Athaliah not followed in the evil footsteps of her grandfather, she could have fitly positioned herself to prepare the next king of Israel to rule. Instead, she took over the power, with no regard for the lives of her

grandsons. Even though her character and deeds were hateful, we can still glean from the wayward life of Athaliah.

Whether we are destined to be kings or kingmakers, we must realize that God designs boundaries for us and has given authority to those He has called to lead. In the model prayer, Christ Jesus taught His disciples to pray in this manner, “Thy will be done as it is in heaven”. These words demand, among other things, that we stay within the boundaries that He has established. Should we usurp authority and illegally advance ourselves into a leadership position that God has neither given us nor recognizes, then it will only be a matter of time before we lose whatever measure of influence we once had and a rightful ruler is inaugurated.

During the massacre ordered by Athaliah and without her knowledge,, Joash, her grandson, was hidden. As it was in the case with David, who God brought forth from among the sheep when Samuel arrived to anoint a king, so it would one day be with Joash, the only surviving heir to the throne. Six years later, Joash emerged from under the shadow of the Most High and rightfully took legal possession of the throne as the King of Judah.

The kingmaker responsible for saving his life was Jehoshabeath, a little-known person who was married to Jehoiada the priest and was also Joash’s aunt. Her actions were heroic and unquestionably divinely inspired. Because of what she did, God’s promise to David that he would always have a seed to sit upon the throne was fulfilled.

*But Jehoshabeath, the daughter of the king, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons who were being murdered, and put him and his nurse in a bedroom. So Jehoshabeath, the daughter of King Jehoram, the wife of Jehoiada the priest (for she was the sister of Ahaziah), hid him from Athaliah so that she did not kill him. And he was hidden with them in the house of God for six years, while Athaliah reigned over the land. (2 Chronicles 22:11-12)*

In unrestrained difficulty, Jehoshabeath risked it all by taking the necessary actions to preserve the next true king. Now that is a true kingmaker!

*Then all the assembly made a covenant with the king in the house of God. And he said to them, "Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the LORD has said of the sons of David. (2 Chronicles 23:3)*

Her decision to hide the child and his nurse led to one of the greatest kings in the history of Israel. She was able to show us the true place of a kingmaker and the influence of her husband on this king is noted as he followed the Lord all the days of his uncle's influence.

*Joash was seven years old when he became king, and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Zibiah of Beersheba. Joash did what was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest. (2 Chronicles 24:1-2)*

Positive influencers, such as Jehoshabeath, can truly make the difference in the life of a king. While we started this chapter with the last of the negative influencers in a king's life, we did end it on a positive note. This transition from bad to good naturally leads us into the next segment of the book: the positive influential kingmakers. Turn the page with me so we can look at the powerful, influential words of a mother that shaped her son to be a wise and honorable king.

*Father teach us to stand for what is right and not take what is not rightfully ours. Help us guide those who are to be in a place of influence and not destroy them or try to take their place. We pray for those that will take the rightful place to protect the kingdom at all cost including their lives and stand in the gap for those who cannot stand for themselves.*

## **Influence of a Mother - Proverbs 31**

### **A Mother's Prayer**

For years, we have looked at Proverbs 31 as a blueprint for being an exceptional woman. And there is nothing wrong with this woman being a role model for other women. However, if we look at Proverbs 31 in the context in which it was written, we find that the words penned are the advice of a mother to her son. Yes, King Lemuel's mother is a role model for other women but not in the context of a wife. From my prospective it fast forwards to the time they too become mothers and assume the role of counselor and consoler. The lineage of parent/child relationship can be summed up in four words "Daddy's girls" and "Momma's boys". So, it is with King Lemuel.

*"The words of King Lemuel, the utterance which his mother taught him: What, my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows? Do not give your strength to women, Nor your ways to that which destroys kings." (Proverbs 31:1-3)*

Would you believe this was the chapter that started me down the path to write this book? I realized her role in King Lemuel's life was not only as a mother but also a kingmaker. She understood the influence of a woman in a man's life. Perhaps the fall of kings in times past of those who walked away from God and followed the gods of the women they loved explains why she told her son not to spend all his time and effort on women nor his ways on

that which destroys kings. Men we need to know what are ways that destroy kings.

Knowing the star qualities that every king should possess, she continued pouring out her wisdom like the widow's oil.

*It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink; Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted. Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to those who are bitter of heart. (Proverbs 31:4-6)*

A king's judgement should be sharp and his mind clear. If not, he will not only pervert justice, but his words will adversely affect those who are listening. Remember when King Ahasuerus was merry with wine at a feast, he held and summoned Queen Vashti, but she refused to come? When his wrath dwindled, and he was no longer under the influence of his choice wine, he thought about what he had pronounced against her.

*After these things, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus subsided, he remembered Vashti, what she had done, and what had been decreed against her. (Esther 2:1)*

What exactly does this mean? I think it is quite possible that King Ahasuerus realized that Vashti would never again come before his throne or into his chambers because he had decreed it to be so. As a man, the thought of his wife's absence in the kingdom may have moved his heart. But as the ruling king, those who counseled him instructed

him to re-assert his authority and power by punishing her rebellion lest it appear she reigned over him and his throne. If only Vashti had the voice of one like King Lemuel's mother speaking into her life.

The Bible does not give any details about King Lemuel's father or any nuggets of wisdom he might have shared with his son. However, whatever things his mother learned as a queen was certainly passed along to him with the intent to guide him with wisdom and insight each step of the way. A wise son can be guided by his wise mother.

*Open your mouth, judge righteously, And  
plead the cause of the poor and needy.  
(Proverbs 31:9)*

The role of a parent in the life of a child is a vital one. Mothers, your words are lasting in the ears of your children. Your wise counsel has a way of playing back in their minds at just the right moment in their lives, especially when they are faced with a decision. Fathers, remember, you are kingmakers also. You establish the path and make the way right for your sons and daughters. Not only are you being established as a king in the kingdom, but you are also leaving a legacy for the kings that will follow you.

Now, let's explore what has been taught for years as a woman's proverb. I just want to touch on a few of her many great qualities. If we were looking for a template for a female kingmaker, Proverbs 31 is a great roadmap of what a man should look for in a wife or what it would take for a woman or a wife to be a kingmaker. This virtuous

woman was what any man would desire to have beside him as a mate to carry out his role as king.

*Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeks wool and flax, And willingly works with her hands. (Proverbs 31:10-13)*

*For her worth is far above rubies.* Let me share with you a little piece of information I read about rubies. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, *rubies are formed when the mineral corundum is exposed to chromic oxide in metamorphic environments between 1148 to 1238 degrees Fahrenheit. On a carat for carat basis, rubies are worth more than diamonds of similar size and weight. The reason that rubies are more expensive is the fact that it is much rarer for rubies to be found without faults than it is to find a flawless diamond. Did you catch that? Rubies are worth more than diamonds...because it is much rarer for rubies to be found without faults than it is for a flawless diamond.*

Men, do you see the value of the ruby God gave to you? The one who is standing with you, willing to sacrifice whatever it takes to make you a king? If not, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to show you her worth. After all, just as heat is used in the process of making a ruby, she will also be subject to fires of testing to become what you'll need to be a great king. But if you don't see the value of the kingmaker in your life or know that her worth is greater than rubies, you won't treasure her.

Let me turn my attention to the women for just a moment. Ladies, do you resent the heat that it takes to make you a precious gemstone? Do you resent the heat that is producing something good inside of you? Remember the old saying, and maybe you've even heard your grandmother say it, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen!"? Well, I'm here to tell you to stay in the kitchen. The heat is increasing your value, making you a rarity among women.

You see, not only does the king have to understand your value, you also must understand what it takes to make you invaluable. The woman who was virtuous was willing to sacrifice for and be submitted to the life chosen for her by God, and in that life, she not only delighted but also prospered. Always remember, there are no shortcuts in creating rubies or kingmakers.

*The heart of her husband safely trusts her.* Men, can your heart trust the one you're with? I mean really trust that her best endeavors benefit you both and your family? Without this trust, you might be deceived to think that she is out to get you, destroy you or take you for everything you've got. In a similar way, not having the confidence that your heart trusts in her might make her feel like what's the point or why should I even bother? Such should never be the thinking pattern of a king or a kingmaker. If husbands and wives could grasp this truth in their marriage- that they are on the same team- the amount of confusion, disorder and disagreements would reduce significantly.

*She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.* Working in corporate America, often, there were days that

I came home still in my work mode or should I say, fighting mode. I guess you could liken my job to that of a firefighter. When something went wrong with the projects at work, I was called in to put out the fires that other people started. Sometimes, the fires intensified instead of dying down to mere smoldering embers. In those days, I saw the people around me as an enemy, bent on destroying what I was working hard to accomplish. Because I lacked understanding, I left no room for any human errors or earnest mistakes, and I let that be known.

I can remember this one day. I came home from work, and as soon as I stepped inside my home, it was as if I heard the bell ding. This time my sparring moves were displayed before and against my wife. But being a wise woman, she restrained me with these simple words, “take your boxing gloves off! You are home now.” I didn’t even realize that I had allowed that which disturbed me in the work environment to follow me home into my kingdom.

Men, once again I encourage you to take note: Your wife is not your enemy. So, take off the boxing gloves! The longevity of your marriage greatly hinges on your belief and assurance that she really does intend to do good towards you and not evil all the days of your life. Remember, flawless rubies are of great value because they are difficult to find.

*“She girds herself with strength, and  
strengthens her arms. She perceives that  
her merchandise is good, And her lamp*

*does not go out by night.” (Proverbs  
31:17-18)*

*She girds herself with strength.* Notice this is not a weak woman. She girds herself with strength, meaning she is diligent about her work. Take note, possessing this strength does not come without sacrifices: laboring long hours and personally investing in her work. Somewhere in her being, she must have had an understanding that acceptable sacrifices always yield fruit. Therefore, she could continue her rigorous regimen as a wife, mother, and businesswoman without registering a complaint. Her work ethics brings back to my mind these words I heard when I was growing up, “*A man may work from sun to sun, but a woman's work is never done.*”

*...and strengthens her arm.* The translation of this line in another Bible version indicated she was well able to do what was put before her. From the needs of her husband to her children, and from her maidservants to the poor and needy, she strengthened her arm to work and to gather, to help and care for those in her realm of influence. From first-hand experience, I would say when a kingmaker is able to give her king rest amidst the burdens of his day, even if it's only for a moment, she exemplifies great beauty and strength.

The last of the recorded words this mother told her son were very important. I will cover them quickly as they are a jewel for kingmakers to behold and a treasure for kings to understand.

*Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land (Proverbs 31:23).* This woman's

diligence provided the time for her husband to take his place among those who were influential in the city and to be known by them. They knew the details of his life and family and had watched this man live in his community, bearing notable traits of honor and integrity. Surely, his wife was granted credit for the great man that sat at the gate among them. Women, as you walk alongside of your king, remember, you are making a lifetime investment in him. Who you are will be reflected in him, so be careful how you make your king known at the gates of your city?

*She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on  
her tongue is the law of kindness.  
(Proverbs 31:26)*

Before she speaks a word, she has already considered what she is going to say. When she does open her mouth, out flows wisdom and not arguments and accusations. But how often have you had something of value to say but kept silent out of fear that your words would be unheard or viewed as unimportant? Oh, the volumes of unspoken words of wisdom that are shelved inside of those who remain silent when God has given them *the law of kindness on their tongue*.

On the other side of that same coin, I must caution against an unruly tongue that achieves the opposite results.

*Even so the tongue is a little member and  
boasts great things. See how great a forest  
a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a  
fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so  
set among our members that it defiles the*

*whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. (James 3:5-8)*

Ladies, how are your words used in your relationship with your king? Does your tongue speak blessings and affirmations or spew curses and judgments? To avoid the same entrapment that ensnared Eve and caused her to inhale and exhale the words of the serpent, we need only speak God's words in our lives and every situation we face. There was a song we sang growing up that taught a powerful message.

*O be careful little mouth what you say  
O be careful little mouth what you say  
There's a Father up above  
And He's looking down in love  
So, be careful little mouth what you say.*

There is no better closing for this chapter or greater introduction to the next chapter than the next two verses of Proverbs 31.

*Her children rise up and call her blessed;  
her husband also, and he praises her:  
"Many daughters have done well, but you  
excel them all." (Proverbs 31:28-29)*

As we factor in these verses, we can imagine that always of the day, she heard praises from those who meant the most to her. Her dedication and hard work, and the deep love she had for others were always on display before her king and her children. These efforts proved rewarding as she was the subject of discussion for her children with their friends, and the object of the king's affection as he praised her for who she was and what she accomplished.

Every king should let his kingmaker hear the praises of appreciation he has for her- and frequently. I am as guilty as any other king who is willing to admit that our kingmakers do not hear praises enough from us for what they do from sun up to sun down. To every kingmaker who is surpassing in her role according to God's instructions, let me say the same words to you that are found in Proverbs 31, *many have done well but you excel them all.*

Let's now examine another kingmaker who truly exceeded them all as she set in judgement of Israel as a judge and was the only woman to hold that position.

*Father we thank you for rubies and what you allow for us to experience. We repent for not trusting you through the heat and trials of life. As this mother gave instructions to her son, let us receive this instruction to strengthen the kingdom for his name sake. As men let us appreciate what you have given us as a kingmaker and as women understand our greatness in fulfilling the plan you have in our lives. Now let us trust you for you know the plans you have for us.*

## Strong Woman Influence - Deborah a Judge

Many kingmakers fear they will lose their identity if they spend their lives creating an environment for their king. The writer of the Book of Judges was careful in the introduction of Deborah to include the fact that she was among many things, a powerful, authoritative figure in the Kingdom of Israel, who held the position of prophetess, judge and most importantly, *wife of Lapidoth*.

*“And she would sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the mountains of Ephraim. And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.”*  
(Judges 4:5)

Having a tree named after the kingmaker instead of the king might create some unwanted tension. If Deborah’s husband had been insecure or jealous of her fame, he might have gone out and cut down that palm tree while she sat under it! The truth of the matter is, her role as the judge did not take away from his position of authority nor was he dishonored or disrespected because of her gift. When a king is mature, he doesn’t feel threatened should his kingmaker excel in any area because he understands her notoriety is shared by them both. This point for men is an important one. I have seen men struggle when their wives make more money or were put in positions of authority. What sometimes is overlooked is that the benefit gained is not only hers but also his. When we learn that God created us to complete a task then the competition will cease and

the note that she was created to help him in his position of king.

There are gifts within my wife that I do not possess, but as her king, I get to enjoy the fruit of those gifts and the same is true for her enjoying the gifts within me. There is no competition between us as far as the giftings go. Whatever gift she was given and whatever gift I was given was a part of the package deal when we became one. When the king and kingmaker walk together in their marriage and in team ministry, her gifts are his gifts and his gifts are her gifts, and when combined, their gifts are a powerful blend. If, however, each takes ownership of their gifts and selfishly keeps them or abuses their gifts, it will lead to destruction and division of the kingdom purpose for which God joined them together.

*"Then she sent and called for Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, 'Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded, 'Go and deploy troops at Mount Tabor; take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun; and against you I will deploy Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude at the River Kishon; and I will deliver him into your hand'?" (Judges 4:6-7)*

As a prophetess who could hear from God, Deborah's influence went beyond the four walls of her home and into her community with great impact. Her voice carried a commanding sound that called out the leaders in the men

of Israel and instructed them by the words of God. If, however, those who she was called to lead would have rebelled against her, the outcome in the days in which she judged would have been drastically different.

Do you remember the prophetic words of wisdom and encouragement Deborah spoke to Barak? Well, despite the reward promised, fear paralyzed him from riding on the wind of her words and fulfilling the charge given him to destroy the enemy.

*“And Barak said to her, ‘If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go!’” (Judges 4: 8)*

The liberty of the nation of Israel depended on the wise counsel of Deborah, as a judge, and initially, rested on the obedience of one man, Barak. However, when called upon, Barak made it perfectly clear that unless Deborah went with him, he would not go to battle against the enemy. His response did not cause her to waver in the task at hand. She was prepared to move forward with God’s agenda no matter what and that was exactly the kind of judge Israel needed. Clearly, Deborah wasn’t just a gift given to Lapidoth as his wife, she was also a treasure given to the nation of Israel.

Many kings are afraid to take the advice of their kingmakers. Can I take a moment to speak to the kings? There is no reason for you to fear the words of a kingmaker, especially when the words she proclaims come from the heart of God. What is the prophetess in your life speaking but fear or lack of confidence has kept

you from moving forward in that word? Barak's inability to see the bigger picture, that God desired to remove the yoke of bondage from His people, not only stifled his leadership ability but it also demanded that Deborah declare a different outcome for him than originally intended. The glory and honor that would have been bestowed on him would now go to a woman. Please understand Deborah was not telling him she would receive the credit. Contrary to the belief it went to another woman whom we will discuss in a moment.

*So she said, "I will surely go with you; nevertheless there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." (Judges 4:9)*

The clearest observation that can be drawn is that Barak still went to battle, still lead the army, and still was victorious in battle, but he did not get the glory because God did not allow it. Regardless of the terms and conditions, as presented by Barak, Deborah was nonetheless obedient to her leader and went with him to Kedesh as requested.

*"However, Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; for there was peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite" (Judges 4:17)*

In the song of Deborah, Jael, another woman of influence, is recognized as the one who destroyed the enemy of Israel and as declared, received the praise for doing so.

*"Most blessed among women is Jael, The wife of Heber the Kenite; Blessed is she among women in tents. He asked for water, she gave milk; She brought out cream in a lordly bowl. She stretched her hand to the tent peg, Her right hand to the workmen's hammer; She pounded Sisera, she pierced his head, She split and struck through his temple. At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still; At her feet he sank, he fell; Where he sank, there he fell dead." (Judges 5:24-27)*

As I considered the life of Barak, I pray for all the kings, myself included, who might question the position of the kingmakers who speak as God leads. You see, I have pondered the race Barak was chosen to run, the way he ran and how he finished. Perhaps, like Barak, you stumbled at the starting line of your race and have thought that you will never catch up with the other runners. Maybe you didn't follow God's instructions in the past, and the glory God specifically had for you was given to another. May I take a moment to encourage you? Not only is there still hope for you in your position as king, but the race isn't over. This is still your race to run, and as long as you run your race well- full of hope, promise, and assurance- then a prize awaits you.

*"Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize?"*

*Run in such a way that you may obtain it.  
(1Corinthians 9:24)*

Before we close this chapter of the book and move on, let me point out that when we have Deborah's on our team who demonstrate strength and power, we can sometimes forget that they are the weaker vessels, created to be cherished and loved, and their worth is more valuable than rubies. Although a great leader she still had a husband who would treat her as the weaker vessel. One, who would nurture her and give her a shoulder to cry on. This woman who led the army of Israel was also a mother wife and a delicate object of beauty.

In the next chapter, we will see the delicate nature of a kingmaker who must totally trust in the God of Creation to answer her cry. Hannah, will you pray?

*Father we pray for the times we have ignored what you have said through your vessel, our wives or mother's. But we ignore your command because of pride or uncertainty. We sometime do not honor what has been given to us and doubt the outcome which brings fear and doubt in our heart. Father as women allow understanding of what is done important and of great value. Do not allow a haughty or prideful spirit to rise up against our leader. Do not allow the position from which we called to walk along side to be overlooked no matter how great we become nor forget what we were created to accomplish in the earth. Forgive us both for demeaning the positions you have for us.*

## Promise Influence - Hannah

No written work on the power of prayer and the influence of a kingmaker would be complete without a chapter dedicated to Hannah, mother of Samuel, the prophet. Hannah was a kingmaker with the odds stacked against her, so much so, that neither her husband and king nor the prophet Eli had the power to change. What started out as a deep cry from an unhappy woman in the prayer room of the temple ended with a song of praise for an answered prayer.

*“And he had two wives: the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.” (1Samuel 1:2)*

We are first introduced to Hannah as one of Elkanah’s two wives who was barren. Her case of barrenness was not an unusual state for women written about in the Old Testament. However, Hannah’s story takes on a more personal feel as we continue to look further into the deep sorrow of her soul. The author strategically wrote her story, building detail upon detail until the buildup of her life brought her to the end of herself. We will see that a little later in Scripture. Let’s continue to read.

*And whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an offering, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. But to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah,*

*although the LORD had closed her womb”.*  
*(1Samuel 1:4-5)*

There was nothing that either she or her husband had done that caused her to be barren; it was all God’s doing. And although Elkanah loved Hannah dearly, not even his love for her could reverse the condition of her closed womb. Before you shout *unfair*, I invite you to look at her situation from a different perspective. In fact, it is my hope that you will begin to look at your own “*unfair*” and see it from this same vantage point as well. As a kingmaker in the making, Hannah was being groomed by God to know firsthand the power of prayer. He hedged her in until she sought His face, the only One who could change her circumstances. She was going through the fire to produce a prized ruby.

In the Book of Genesis, we find another case of barrenness with Rachel, one of Jacob’s wives. The difference in the approach that these two women took concerning their unfruitfulness was remarkable. Hannah, being led by the Spirit, approached God in prayer. Her example still witnesses to us today that when God’s hand overshadows mankind’s best efforts to accomplish his own desires, the only position we can take when you are wrestling through is on your knees.

On the other hand, Rachel is led by her flesh. Rather than appeal to God to make her petitions known, she turns to man, who is not the giver of life, and demands children from him. Her discontentment expressed through her flesh arouses Jacob’s anger because as a man, he could not fulfill the request of the one he loved so much. How often

do women request something from their kings they cannot grant because it is outside of their jurisdiction?

*“Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, “Give me children, or else I die!” And Jacob’s anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, “Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?” (Genesis 30:1-2)*

Ladies, nothing frustrates your king more than not being able to fix what is wrong or supply what is needed or desired. In either case, the solution is never to press or demand of your king something he has no control over. Not only will this anger him, but it will also frustrate you to the point that you may speak against your king and accuse him of being less than or unable to provide.

As though being barren wasn’t hard enough for Hannah to bear, she also had an adversary who was near her on a day-to-day basis.

*“And her rival also provoked her severely, to make her miserable, because the LORD had closed her womb.” (1Samuel 1:6)*

Peninnah, the provoker, made Hannah’s life one of grief and misery. Although the mission of our enemy is to wear us down until we self-destruct or are destroyed, God’s orchestrated trials do not have the same mission. God uses our trials to bring us to a place of humility and brokenness, where we cry out to Him. Are you crying unto the Lord

for wisdom in your circumstances or are you shaking your fist and blaming him for them?

Out of the bitterness of her soul, Hannah made a request that shook the doors of heaven.

*“And she was in bitterness of soul and prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish. Then she made a vow and said, ‘O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.’”*  
(1Samuel 1:10-11)

In her plea, she made a promise *to* God in return for a promise *from* God. The kingdom of Israel was without a prophet that demonstrated character and integrity, and Hannah was without a child, more specifically, a son. If God would be so gracious as to answer her prayer, she promised to give Him the king of her womb to serve God all the days of his life.

God, in His infinite wisdom, created this opportunity for Hannah to fulfill both His heart and hers. Hannah’s request was not a selfish one to simply get what she wanted and then walk away from God. No, this was a covenant agreement between her and God that was binding. What is it that you are willing to offer or sacrifice to the Lord to fulfill His heart?

In times past, Hannah had spoken out of her many afflictions. By now, however, she had moved into the realm of asking based on promise rather than launching a complaint.

*“Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now.” (1 Samuel 1:16)*

We live in a world where grumbling and complaining have become a normal way of life, and not too many Christians realize how the spirit of complaining robs them of seeing the genuine goodness of God. For Hannah, she couldn't rely on her complaint and grief to open heaven's doors; something had to change. If she wanted influence with God, she would have to produce a sound that was acceptable to Him and worthy of His response. And that is what she did! It was a cry from a different place in her heart that produced a sweet aroma that pleased God.

Whether you are a king or a kingmaker, note that you will never be victorious in the things of God by complaining, even if you get what you want in the end. Why? Because the spirit of complaining is not of God, and as children of God, we must not adapt to the ways of this world but resist them completely and all of its temptations and passions.

*“So it came to pass in the process of time that Hannah conceived and bore a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, ‘Because I have asked for him from the LORD.’”  
Now the man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the LORD the yearly*

*sacrifice and his vow. But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "Not until the child is weaned; then I will take him, that he may appear before the LORD and remain there forever." So Elkanah her husband said to her, "Do what seems best to you; wait until you have weaned him. Only let the LORD establish His word." Then the woman stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him. (1Samuel 1:20-23)*

I would imagine that it must have been difficult for this first-time mother, who was finally holding her answered prayer, nursing and caring for him, to one day take what she had asked God for (which is the meaning of Samuel's name) and give him to another to raise up? If the temptation to back down on her word existed when the time came for her to pay her vows, she denied its influence over her. Hannah was a kingmaker through and through, and nothing was going to get in her way. Even her husband trusted her to keep the vows she made to God. I took special note of his response. *"Do what seems best to you; wait until you have weaned him. Only let the LORD establish His word."* He was saying, I am with you girl, just let this be of God and nothing that you are trying to make happen.

We make contracts with God all the time, promising what we will do if He will do such and such. But when He comes through for us, we tend to fall short when it's our turn to make good on the vows we made. Our words to

God mean a great deal to Him, perhaps even more than they mean to us. Jesus warns us:

*“But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” (Matthew 12:36 - 37)*

When we contract with God, it is a binding agreement, and God will require us to give an account for what we vowed but did not honor.

Year after year, Hannah would make a robe for her son and take it to him. The Scriptures do not give insight as to the significance of the robe, but I believe there are just somethings a mother knows in her heart that she must do, and so she does them.

*Moreover his mother used to make him a little robe, and bring it to him year by year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "The LORD give you descendants from this woman for the loan that was given to the LORD." Then they would go to their own home. And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the child Samuel grew before the LORD. (1Samuel 2:19-21)*

Hannah's sacrifice yielded a great reward, but the conditions of her sacrifice were of a greater cost. Hannah

had given her firstborn over to the priesthood, to be raised and trained in the temple of the Lord by Eli, the priest of that day. But the environment Samuel entered was spiritually hostile. Eli had failed as a priest and a father because he had not dealt properly with the sins of his two sons who were wicked and did things publicly that were not pleasing to the Lord. As a result, Samuel's predecessor and teacher, Eli, along with his two sons, Hophni and Phineas, would soon come under God's judgment. God needed a willing vessel to agree with Him and His purposes. Hannah agreed to bring forth Samuel so that the next generation of kings could be established.

There are some Hannah's reading this book who need to understand that they must be willing to release back to the Lord what they asked of Him. To you, kingmakers, I ask this question. Can you pray for the promise and then allow God to establish His word? Men of influence, I have a question for you as well. Who has invested in your life and what great price did they pay for you to be on the path of kingship? As in the case of Hannah and Elkanah, we too must be in one accord with what we are going to do with what has been given us. This is what being Kingdom-minded looks like. Investment sometimes means to walk ahead to produce an example. Let me illustrate this by bringing up another unnamed kingmaker. Manoah wife, the mother of Samson, was given a life to lead while carrying her son who was to be a judge in Israel. Her lifestyle reflects the life he was chose to live and before he walked this path his mother walked it before him. King maker does this bring excitement to you to know

sometimes God has you to walk this out before the chosen king walks it in the natural.

*She may not eat anything that comes from the vine, nor may she drink wine or similar drink, nor eat anything unclean. All that I commanded her let her observe." (Judges 13:14)*

The power of prayer and understanding the promise can empower you to do miraculous things. In the next chapter, we will discuss a kingmaker, who at the risk of her own life gained an audience with the king on behalf of her people. Not only did she please her king, but her willingness to perish for what she believed in pleased the King of kings.

*Father how often we forfeit those things we could have only because we do not bring them to you in prayer. Often, that which is withheld from us only prepares the way for those that follow. Produce a spirit of patience that we may pursue you with our whole heart. Like Hannah let us cry out in our bitterness to be able to produce a leader after your own heart. Teach us Father that you have already guided us and know the plans you have for us. We have been chosen to do great exploits if we can be obedient and patient to let you visit us.*

## Esther - The Right Influence

The kingmaker in this chapter was unique, and by far, the most promising of all those who influenced kings. Esther was a woman of influential talent that greatly affected those around her, setting a pattern that could be followed. As we look at her beginning years, you might say she had little chance of success, considering the start she began with in life. As we continue to study this kingmaker, you will see how God gave this kingmaker beauty for ashes.

At a young age, both her mother and father died, and she was taken under the guidance of her older cousin, Mordecai, who raised her as his own daughter. This kingmaker was shown mercy and given hope and because she received instruction from one under the right influence, she was able to justly influence others throughout her life. The honor that this young woman showed in life would be carried into the kingdom she was destined to be a part of.

*“And Mordecai had brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman was lovely and beautiful. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter. So it was, when the king's command and decree were heard, and when many young women were gathered at Shushan the citadel, under the custody of Hegai, that Esther also was taken to the king's palace, into the care of*

*Hegai the custodian of the women.”*  
*(Esther 2:7-8)*

Take note, the situations of our life do not limit us nor do it nor hinder us when there is a purpose for us. With the right influence you can dream and watch the impossible happen in your life. This kingmaker was shown hope and because she received the right influence, she was able to distribute that same influence throughout her life. You might even say because she was comforted, she lived a life that comforted others.

Esther had been taken to the palace with other young girls contending for the royal title as Queen of Persia. To Esther's advantage, however, she had the influence of Mordecai, a man of reputable character and integrity; the favor of Hegai, the king's chamberlain; and the hand of God, which was on her life from the foundation of the world. Throughout her upbringing and training, Esther remained both humble and teachable.

The king had already been met with frustration and disappointment when he removed the former queen from the throne. Now, he had to decide who would reign beside him, knowing that if he chose wrongly, he could risk reopening past wounds. Thus, the young woman who would win the honor as the new queen would need to follow protocol or the king would have to take drastic measures to eradicate all forms of defiance. The replacement for Queen Vashti would serve her husband, the king with such utmost honor and respect that it would cause others to revere his position in the kingdom as well.

*“Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.” (Ephesians 5:33)*

The actions and reactions of the new queen would be carefully monitored by those closest to the king who had access to him. Notwithstanding the added pressure of being married to the king, the queen would also need to help her husband heal from the scars left by past relationships. We call this excess baggage, and as his wife, she would need to help her king unpack whatever undesirable pains or experiences he had come to stuff over time.

All too often, however, this part of a wife and kingmaker’s role is negated and voiced as unwanted or unfair rather than embraced. Kingmaker, can I tell you something that may help you accept this privileged position more readily? Over time, when a woman gains access to a man’s heart, she will discover parts of him, if not all, lived from behind the walls he built to guard his heart. Helping him tear those walls down is vital for growth in the areas of trust, communication, intimacy, and unity. If you don’t help your king unpack his bags, all that he has pushed down and covered up will eventually take you both on a trip in different directions. However, if you will take the time to comfort him by helping him empty out his baggage, you will unlock the greatest potential your marriage could ever experience.

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in*

*all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)*

In the case of King Ahasuerus, Vashti had already defied his authority, causing him to pack more unpleasant memories and emotions in the compartment bags in his heart. Therefore, Esther would need to tread lightly around the kingdom out of respect more so than fear, careful not to provoke his anger. After all, the progression of consequences deepens when the same or similar action is repeated. If you recall, when Vashti disrespected the king, she was banished from the kingdom. But when Haman disrespected him, they immediately covered his head and hung him on the gallows.

Whether it was acts of kindness or words of kindness spoken, there was just something about Esther that pleased Hegai.

*“Now the young woman pleased him, and she obtained his favor; so, he readily gave beauty preparations to her, besides her allowance. Then seven choice maidservants were provided for her from the king's palace, and he moved her and her maidservants to the best place in the house of the women.” (Esther 2:9)*

Considering that, Esther received beauty preparations beyond what every other young woman received. Plus, she was given seven choice maidservants and was moved

to the best place in the palace. How is that for divine favor? Before she ever met the king, her warm disposition was first shown to Hegai, one who knew the king well, whose position was regarded with a high level of trust and confidence.

*“Each young woman's turn came to go in to King Ahasuerus after she had completed twelve months' preparation, according to the regulations for the women, for thus were the days of their preparation apportioned: six months with oil of myrrh, and six months with perfumes and preparations for beautifying women.”*  
(Esther 2:12)

Each of these women started with equal preparation time to meet the beauty requirements of Persian royal customs. But Esther had such favor on her life that she was set apart from among all the young women. Her cascading beauty was not limited to her outward appearance alone; she possessed a quiet beauty that poured from the inside out. As I mentioned previously, it is quite possible that Esther acquired favor because of her kindness. I have witnessed the battles fought when there is not an agreement of the king's closest advisors. It can be stated each one of you have the right to do what you want but the key to success is even if I have the right, I choose not to exercise that right. Now that is true power.

It was now Esther's turn to go before the king. Like every other young woman, she had the right to take whatever she wanted with her when she went before the king. But Esther chose not to exercise that right. Instead, she chose

to walk in the freedom of submission, something her right could never earn her. Let's continue reading.

*“Now when the turn came for Esther the daughter of Abihail the uncle of Mordecai, who had taken her as his daughter, to go in to the king, she requested nothing but what Hegai the king's eunuch, the custodian of the women, advised. And Esther obtained favor in the sight of all who saw her.”*  
(Esther 2:15)

Esther, under the advisement of Hegai, requested the one thing that was needed to please the king. No extra fanfare was required. No hidden agendas. Just a selfless act that represented the pure intentions of her heart. Her willingness to submit to one in authority made a statement, *I have been prepared for one purpose: to please the king.* By listening to the wisdom of Hegai, Esther was given the key to unlocking the door leading to the king's heart. The statement was the other candidates took with them what pleased them. Imagine showing up in the chamber not with what pleased you but only what was pleasing to the king. No hidden agenda just that which was a selfless act that represented your true intentions. That makes a statement, “I am here to please and stand with my king when he calls.” Remember that when he called Vashti, he was specific in what he wanted.

*“The king loved Esther more than all the other women, and she obtained grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins; so, he set the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.*

*Then the king made a great feast, the Feast of Esther, for all his officials and servants; and he proclaimed a holiday in the provinces and gave gifts according to the generosity of a king.” (Esther 2:17-18.*

What a great honor to have been chosen, especially when you consider this young woman was probably voted least likely to become queen of a vast kingdom. Yet, she not only won the heart of the king, she won his love and not just in words but deeds too. Kings, are you listening? Accompany the words, *I love you*, with tangible evidence of your love for your kingmaker. King Ahasuerus made a feast and proclaimed a holiday in Esther’s name and for her honor. He recognized her. Acknowledged her. Gave honor where honor was due. Hear me, kingmakers, all of this came to Esther because of her being obedient to the authority of both Mordecai and Hegai. Kings, are you taking notes? Recognizing the achievements and the position of the kingmaker in your life should always be at the forefront of the king’s heart. Kingmakers are you taking notes? The desire of women to be recognized for their achievements and the position they play in the life of the one they serve is always foremost in the heart of the kingmaker. The king set aside a day to celebrate the one that pleased him and notice the audience that was called to see her beauty.

*“When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow or pay him homage, Haman was filled with wrath. But he disdained to lay hands on Mordecai alone, for they had told him*

*of the people of Mordecai. Instead, Haman sought to destroy all the Jews who were throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus—the people of Mordecai.” (Esther 3:5-6)*

There comes a time when every relationship will be tried and what you believe will be tested. We now come to that part of the story where Esther is faced with the greatest challenge of her life. When the word of Haman’s wicked plot to annihilate the Jews spread, Mordecai took his position at the gate in sackcloth and ashes in hopes of getting Esther’s attention. He didn’t need sympathy from his daughter, he needed the Queen of Persia to rise and bring justice to her own people. No matter the price she would have to pay.

*Then Esther spoke to Hathach, and gave him a command for Mordecai: "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that any man or woman who goes into the inner court to the king, who has not been called, he has but one law: put all to death, except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter, that he may live. Yet I myself have not been called to go in to the king these thirty days." (Esther 4:10-11)*

Esther understood the law and that her king was the writer of that law. If she went before him and he had not summoned her, regardless of his love for her, the penalty was death. She just needed her father to understand that the predicament his request had put her in was awkward.

*"So they told Mordecai Esther's words. And Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:12-14)*

Mordecai's scope wasn't narrowed to just see one person, it was broad, encompassing the whole nation of Jews whose lives were at stake. He needed Esther to see that if she was willing to lose her life, she would find it. It was now up to her to trust his guidance just as she had always done before.

*"He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it."  
(Matthew 10:39)*

The question Mordecai posed, *"Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"* must have caused Esther to ponder her miraculous journey from an orphaned life to royalty. Why, out of all the young women that were brought to Shushan that day, was she the elect one? What if everything that had happened to her didn't just...*happen*. Mordecai made it very clear that if she didn't do something, deliverance would still come to the Jews, but she and her father's house would perish. Wait. This whole time, Esther was concerned about dying if she went to the king without his consent, but here

Mordecai points out that even if she didn't go, she and her father's house would perish. Did you catch that? It was becoming clearer to Esther. Death was inevitable. She had to be willing to die to herself.

There are times when we can no longer remain silent when wrong is present. We are required to take an action when God has put us in the position to do so. Mordecai was not about to back down because Esther was afraid. He challenged fear with boldness and took it head on. If ever there was a time for her to imitate her father, it was at that moment. The position of a kingmaker may or may not always be clear from the beginning but be assured that the kingmaker's role is a critical one and vital to the success of the kingdom and the inhabitants.

*"Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai: "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!" (Esther 4:15-16)*

*If I perish, I perish* finally became Esther's resolve. Once she realized that the royal position, she had been granted was for the sake of herself and the survival of her people, she put her foolproof plan in motion. Esther called for the Jews throughout Shushan and rallied her maidservants to fast and pray. The dynamic power of fasting and prayer is an atomic bomb that cannot be defused. Likewise, the combined efforts of an entire nation with each one committed to doing their part cannot be defeated.

There are numerous, persuasive pressures in life that can make it difficult to finish your race, especially when you feel as though if one more thing was added, your legs would surely give way. But somehow, when God gets involved, things stop spiraling downward and suddenly, we have a hope of a better ending than how we began. This is evident in the life of a woman who experienced loss, betrayal, and uncertainty. Although forgotten while she waited on the kinsmen redeemer she was promised, she is now remembered in the lineage of Jesus Christ, the ultimate and greatest Redeemer.

*Father we often forget what past relations do to the heart of those we are called to be with. Forgive us if we look to what pleases us instead of what pleases the one, we have come to influence. We often judge others by what our experience has dealt us so forgive us in our relationships if we do not treat each other with respect. Let those who have been influential in our own lives lead a path for us to protect help and cherish. Help us to unpack the bags of unforgiveness and discouragement and walk forward in the light of truth and hope.*

## Tamar -The Righteous Influence

The story of Tamar has a rocky beginning. Here was a kingmaker, a woman who had been able to make a king, but unforeseen circumstances made it nearly impossible for her to fulfill her role. The turn of events in her life was so complicated that no one could have predicted what was coming next. After the death of her first two husbands who were brothers, Tamar was then promised but never given their younger brother, the third son of Judah, to become her husband once he reached maturity.

*"Then Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and the LORD killed him. And Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and marry her, and raise up an heir to your brother." But Onan knew that the heir would not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in to his brother's wife, that he emitted on the ground, lest he should give an heir to his brother. And the thing which he did displeased the LORD; therefore He killed him also." (Genesis 38:6-10)*

Her husbands, the sons of Judah, were not decorated soldiers who were killed in battle, they were wicked men who displeased God, so much so that He killed them. Their actions not only cost them their lives but threatened the livelihood of Tamar. Her future looked bleak, without a husband how would she survive? Undoubtedly, their

death put her future in a risky position and such a position would require some ingenuity on her part if she was going to be restored. Tamar was obedient to her father in law as he was now the central figure in her life.

*“Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, “Remain a widow in your father's house till my son Shelah is grown.” For he said, “Lest he also die like his brothers.” And Tamar went and dwelt in her father's house.” (Genesis 38:11)*

For Tamar, a grieving widow, it appeared that her father-in-law had given her some hope for redemption. But I wonder... were Judah's words, *“Lest he also die like his brothers,”* spoken aloud with the intent to be heard or simply the quiet whisper of his heart heard only by him? Could he have blamed Tamar for the loss of his two sons? Either way, Shelah was Judah's last living son and the only remaining heir and losing another son to Tamar was not going to happen if he had any say so in the matter. Little did she know or suspect that when the time came for Shelah to be covenanted with her, Judah would break a promise on his word. Left as a widow in her father's house, though a widow, and with an optimistic future within her reach, Tamar followed Judah's instructions and went back to her father's house and waited for Shelah. Sometimes we view situations as hopeless but what we don't understand is that God has a plan.

*And it was told Tamar, saying, “Look, your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep.” So she took off her widow's garments, covered herself with a*

*veil and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place which was on the way to Timnah; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given to him as a wife.” (Genesis 38:13-15)*

Shelah was the promised kinsman redeemer, but he had not been offered to Tamar. If you were a kingmaker under similar circumstances, perhaps you would have continued wearing your mourning attire until justice had been served. Not this kingmaker. Remaining in her current condition was not going to bring about the justice she sought. When she learned of Judah’s path to travel, she realized it was the perfect opportunity she needed to right the wrong she had suffered. In exchange for her widow’s garment, she veiled her face, concealing her identity from Judah. This step of action played a major role in Tamar’s story becoming one of the most fascinating narratives recorded in the Bible.

The story continues as Judah saw the woman whose face was covered; he supposed she *was* a harlot because, during that time, harlots were known for covering their faces and positioning themselves publicly. She never claimed that role as in the life of Gomer it was her intent to see her father-in-law. Gomer pursued her lovers with the intent to be unfaithful. This kingmaker pursued what was promised to her and note she went to the one who made the promise. Bitterness toward men who failed to keep their promises have caused many kingmakers to become harsh and vindictive toward all men. Ladies exam your hearts was there a promise by a father not kept and it has caused you to become bitter? Was the love a father promised withheld

and now this has caused you to feel you must be vindicated or even to remain in a widow state? This abandonment now forces you to withhold your heart from others. Tamar is an example to those who should not give up hope and live in the widowed state. Judah had no idea that the eyes he investigated, beyond the veil, belonged to his daughter-in-law, Tamar. The importance of being men of integrity and keeping one's word is the foremost point to every man reading this chapter. No matter if you are a father or a husband or a brother your words impact the future generations. Tamar depended on the father's word and men we must realize when we make promises it is important to fulfil that which we pledge. Getting back to Judah, after he determined the price, he was willing to pay for the services she was to render, Tamar secured a pledge from Judah for the agreed upon terms.

*“Then he gave them to her, and went in to her, and she conceived by him. So she arose and went away, and laid aside her veil and put on the garments of her widowhood.” (Genesis 38:18-19)*

Now pregnant and unmarried, Tamar caused quite a stir around town. Even Judah, when he learned of her then present condition, became heavily involved in determining her outcome for the perceived sinful acts she committed. I would like to venture that once she came out of widowhood she returned to that state before pregnancy. Although she looked the same there was new life within her. We often think our circumstances will cause our outward appearance to be different. Many men expect when the circumstance of the kingmaker change it will

bring and immediate change to the outward disposition. The truth of the matter is that it is a process and this nine-month journey that Tamar was on would reveal a different woman and we must also note that outward appearances of her being a harlot was not the truth of who she was.

*And it came to pass, about three months after, that Judah was told, saying, "Tamar your daughter-in-law has played the harlot; furthermore, she is with child by harlotry." So, Judah said, "Bring her out and let her be burned!" (Genesis 38:24)*

Judah was furious by her actions and was probably thinking he had done the right thing by not giving his son, Shelah, to this woman of harlotry. In his mind, she had already caused enough damage to his family, after all, his two sons died while married to her. Now, people would associate him with her because of her shameful acts. Judah declared a death sentence on Tamar for playing the harlot, but was this kingmaker guilty of being a harlot?

Before I answer that question, I want to point out something I found to be interesting about this king and this kingmaker. At the beginning of this whole ordeal, Judah had failed to communicate honestly to Tamar about Shelah. And rather than Tamar telling Judah how she felt when he broke his promise, she veiled herself and took matters into her own hands. And now with the ball back in his court, Judah was ready to burn Tamar at the stake, again without saying a word.

Listen, if there is one thing that we can walk away with from this saga, it's how the lack of communication can destroy relationships. What makes communication effective is when that information or news to be exchanged is shared with the right listening party. Judah and Tamar had not communicated with each other since the day he sent her back to her father's house. If, however, they had taken the time to do so, much of their family disturbance and misunderstandings could have been resolved. They would have been resolved privately and not a public display that involves others that would not play a part in the family decisions.

Now, back to the statement and question mentioned earlier. Judah declared a death sentence on Tamar for playing the harlot, but was this kingmaker guilty of being a harlot? Let's read on.

*When she was brought out, she sent to her father-in-law, saying, "By the man to whom these belong, I am with child." And she said, "Please determine whose these are—the signet and cord, and staff." So Judah acknowledged them and said, "She has been more righteous than I, because I did not give her to Shelah my son." And he never knew her again. (Genesis 38:25-26)*

Judah had a sudden change of heart when Tamar brought forth the items given her as a pledge. Perhaps all the events surrounding his daughter-in-law all began to play back in his mind at once. When he traced the thread back

to the beginning, it was his unfulfilled promise to her that created that desperate situation for Tamar. Now in front of a crowd of witnesses, he could make things right from that point forward. And his first step in doing that was to admit that those things in the clutch of her hand belonged to him.

Men, to be a great king, you must first be men of great character and integrity. Be determined to keep the promises you have made. Never forget that people are relying on you to keep your word, especially your kingmaker and your children. Ladies learn to exhibit patience in every situation. When you are faced with deciding, don't be in a hurry or feel rushed to finalize a deal. Time really is your friend, so learn to wait. Wait until the matter can be spiritually discerned or you can receive wise counsel. I am a firm believer that patience will always lead to the destiny God has chosen for you.

The story of this kingmaker continues with a new generation emerging. The birthing of the offspring of Judah and Tamar was like the birth of the twins, Jacob and Esau: a race to be the first to come forth.

*And so it was, when she was giving birth, that the one put out his hand; and the midwife took a scarlet thread and bound it on his hand, saying, "This one came out first." Then it happened, as he drew back his hand, that his brother came out unexpectedly; and she said, "How did you break through? This breach be upon you!" Therefore his name was called Perez.*

*Afterward his brother came out who had the scarlet thread on his hand. And his name was called Zerah.” (Gen 38:28-30)*

Kings understand that your lineage and offspring are influenced by the kingmaker you are in covenant with. Imagine if Tamar would have quit and given up; the history of the life of Judah would have been changed. Although the story began with the death of the two sons of Judah who were so wicked that God killed them, it ended with the two sons that God honored and recognized in the bloodline of Jesus. God is a god of restoration and you never lose in this kingdom.

*“Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram. Ram begot Amminadab, Amminadab begot Nahshon, and Nahshon begot Salmon. Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse, and Jesse begot David the king. **David the king** begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah.” (Matthew 1:3-6)*

The path chosen for kings and kingmakers is one of honor. Even the trials and tribulations you face are uniquely designed to make you stronger for the mission that lies ahead. Through patience and perseverance, Tamar obtained a place in history that few women hold. Her obedience to go back to her father’s house and remain there was significant. For without submitting to that

command, she would not have reached the point of desperation that led to her roadside encounter. King, what woman of influence is waiting for you on the roadside to bring your name into the heritage that awaits you in Christ Jesus?

The influence of this righteous woman brings us to the next kingmaker who learned how her voice had the power to influence her king.

*Father thank you for the various trials we face and the opportunities that are presented when we choose to not stay in an abandoned state. Help us to overcome the spirit of fear as it causes us to make decisions that will possibly destroy the generations ahead. Let this chapter in our lives be one of forgiveness and understanding one another. The importance of communication with those we are in covenant with and that your hands of mercy are always there to support us. There is nothing that is impossible to you and if we persevere there is hope.*

## Sarah - The Voice of Influence

As Sarai became impatient in the wait to conceive, she yielded to the temptation to do things her own way to get what she wanted. The action she took seemed to be the right decision, even Abraham thought so and listened to her voice of influence, but what was really demonstrated was a lack of faith in God's promise. Sarai is a wonderful example of a kingmaker who learned to put her confidence in God.

*Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar. So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai. (Genesis 16:1-2)*

To those who are waiting on God to fulfill a promise He made, let me say God does not need our assistance to produce His promises. When we interfere with God's plans, we make matters worse. And such was the case with Abram and Sarai. The relations between Abram and Sarai's maidservant, Hagar, resulted in a child of flesh, not a son of promise. The new addition to the family caused a rift in their household that pits master against the slave, and wife against husband.

*So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please."*

*And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence. (Genesis 16:6)*

Kingmakers be careful when making decisions out of desperation, and expect opposition when you do so, even opposition from your king. Remember, you have the influential voice that can move the heart of the king by whatever you decide to do, and ultimately, that decision will have a direct impact on his kingdom. So, choose wisely because once the trust your king puts in your decision-making skills is broken, any future judgment calls you make will be questioned.

Wrong decisions are not as easy to reverse as you may think. So often, our poor choices require God's divine intervention to make that which we made crooked straight. No matter how simple the solution may seem, it can still be difficult to execute. Abraham pleaded with God regarding Ishmael; a plea that was contrary to what God had promised him and, as we will read about later, was contrary to what Sarah was demanding of him.

*And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!" Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But My covenant I will*

*establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year." (Genesis 17:18-21)*

We needn't try to convince God to see things from our emotional or irrational point of view or expect God to replace what He intended for a cheap imitation. There is no substitution for God's original plan in our lives; however, His redemptive work has the power to use our mistakes and bring us back to what He initially promised.

Ishmael may have brought joy to his father, Abram, as would be expected whenever a son is born to a man; however, for Sarai, he only brought grief and was a constant reminder of her lack of good judgment.

*And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing. Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac." And the matter was very displeasing in Abraham's sight because of his son. But God said to Abraham, "Do not let it be displeasing in your sight because of the lad or because of your bondwoman. Whatever Sarah has said to you, listen to her voice; for in Isaac your seed shall be called." (Genesis 21:9-12)*

When it came to dealing with Hagar, Abraham left all matters up to Sarah to do what seemed best to her and as

she saw fit, but Ishmael was another story. When Sarah commanded him to put them both out of their camp, it not only displeased Abraham, but it wasn't even sensible. Men, you must understand the power of influence that your kingmaker has in the decisions that you make. That influence can be good or bad, creating a blessing or a thorn to you and your offspring forever. For Ishmael, although he was sent away for ridiculing his brother, Isaac, he remained in the life of Isaac and they buried their father together. Kings note God told Abraham to listen to the voice of his wife. How difficult that must be for him as his heart was set on his son Ishmael. For those who think the voice of a woman plays no part in your decision-making take heed. Every king should have a voice he can trust and one that will provide an alternate view to what we see.

Now, if you will permit me, I want to turn the tables for just a moment. When we look at Abraham and Sarah and see the direct correlation between his reaction and her response to the promise God made to them, we recognize the king's influence in the life of his kingmaker. Let me make it plain. Did you know that Sarah wasn't the first to laugh at the promise of Isaac? Let's read on.

*And I will bless her and give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her." Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, "Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who*

*is ninety years old, bear a child?" (Genesis 17:16-17)*

If we widen the lens to look at a king in a kingdom, for example, we can see how his influence vastly affects so many because, in many ways, the king is being duplicated in the lives of those who serve him and are in constant contact with him. In fact, we can say the same about our Lord, Jesus Christ, the King of Kings. The more time we spend with Him and let Him lead our lives, the more our actions and reactions will be like His.

Now, back to Sarah. In this next passage, we will see how she responds to the same news that Abraham received.

*And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which was behind him.) Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; and Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" And the LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I surely bear a child, since I am old?' Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son." (Genesis 18:10-14)*

The angel asked why Sarah laughed, even though *she laughed within herself*. We don't have to express out loud what we think about what God has spoken. He can hear our silent thoughts. Every part of our being must believe God in order to please Him. He measures our faith by what we do and say and by what we don't do and say. Listen, no matter how unreachable, unthinkable or unbelievable God's promise may seem, we, like Abraham and Sarah, and all the great faith walkers who have gone before us, must learn to trust that God can do the impossible.

Before I close this chapter, I want to venture into two places in the Word of God that speak of the authority given to and provision made for kings to alter a vow made by a kingmaker.

*“Or if a woman makes a vow to the LORD, and binds herself by some agreement while in her father's house in her youth, and her father hears her vow and the agreement by which she has bound herself, and her father holds his peace, then all her vows shall stand, and every agreement with which she has bound herself shall stand. But if her father overrules her on the day that he hears, then none of her vows nor her agreements by which she has bound herself shall stand; and the LORD will release her, because her father overruled her.” (Numbers 30:3-5)*

But you would say this is only for a father and daughter.  
Not so, keep reading.

*"If indeed she takes a husband, while bound by her vows or by a rash utterance from her lips by which she bound herself, and her husband hears it, and makes no response to her on the day that he hears, then her vows shall stand, and her agreements by which she bound herself shall stand. But if her husband overrules her on the day that he hears it, he shall make void her vow which she took and what she uttered with her lips, by which she bound herself, and the LORD will release her." (Numbers 30:6-8)*

Ladies, there is protection under the wing of a Godly man. Please do not resent this position in your life. That place of influence can protect guide and ensure you have a proper covering.

The second place I want us to look at is in the Book of Genesis. Men, there you need to not only understand the position of your mates, but also be prepared to take the necessary action when the influence of her position is threatened by her emotions, discontentment, or even death.

*"And so it was, as her soul was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-Oni; but his father called him Benjamin." (Genesis 35:18)*

Here, Rachel was dying and the pain that she experienced caused her to name her son sorrow. Hearing the announcement of his son's name caused Jacob to act. Rather than let his son live out his life under the banner of sorrow, he changed his name to Benjamin, which means son of my right hand.

All throughout history, we see how a simple name change from God is a meaningful gift of His grace; it can change a person's entire nature and destiny. For my wife, she went from being a woman whose name meant sorrow or pain to a woman whose name now represents strength and joy. Equally as powerful as a name change from God is God's ability to make the impossible possible. The circumstances in the life of Esther, the old age of Sarai and the conditions surrounding Rachel were all platforms that God used to display His influence as King in each of these kingmaker's lives.

The confidence we have in God and the patience we demonstrate in waiting on Him always shows what we truly believe. And there is no one better to illustrate this than a woman who walked away from everything she knew and believed to trust a God she did not know. In the next chapter, we will examine how the nature of obedience in the life of Ruth gained her the power of influence as a result.

*Father, You are God. You hold the power to change our name and our circumstances, and You alone can make the impossible possible. God, we trust in You. Let every king be unafraid, yet willing to bring the influential words*

*spoken by their wives before You to be weighed so that they can take each step with complete confidence in You. Let the kingmakers not take matters into their own hands, even when the solution seems good enough to work, especially when it fails to line up with Your promises. Help the kings and kingmakers understand the importance of unity in the body of Christ as we walk in Your call to fulfill our destiny on this earth.*

## Ruth - The Influence of Obedience

Ruth was a dedicated, hardworking woman with notable traits found in one who will not quit. As we move from the previous chapter about Sarah and her obedience to her husband, we now come to the pages of Ruth's story to witness another kingmaker whose faithfulness and obedience sets a standard for other women to follow. Let's begin with the life she was dealt.

Ruth was a Moabite, a descendant of Lot who married a man of the tribe of Judah. While in Moab, Naomi's husband, along with Ruth and Orpah's husbands died. Ruth and Orpah's married two brothers, they were Naomi's sons. Leaving that place of famine and sorrow, these three widows started on a journey to return to the land of Judah. Prompted by Naomi, along the way, Orpah had a change of heart and returned to her father's house. Ruth, on the other hand, chose to stay with Naomi and continue the journey they began together. To get a closer look at this kingmaker's badge of loyalty, let's examine her response to Naomi when she strongly encouraged Ruth to return to her father's house.

*"But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The LORD do so to*

*me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me." (Ruth 1:16-17)*

Her determination to remain and not leave Naomi's side was one thing, but her commitment to their covenant relationship to the point that she was willing to die with Naomi if it came to that took her dedication to another level. The character of Ruth was genuine without any pretense. One might assume that the qualities Ruth displayed were rare traits found in the women in Judah because these features were highly spoken of by others who took notice of her. Ruth wasn't just identified by her name, she was also known by her remarkable devotion to Naomi.

Providing for herself was not Ruth's goal; her mission was to ease Naomi's worry by taking care of her provision as well. In this new place, under different customs and rules that she hadn't familiarized herself with yet, Ruth ventured outside of her own comfort but within the proper boundaries and sought Naomi's approval and permission to glean in a field. Herein is an invaluable lesson about accountability and submission. Although old enough to be married and make her own decisions, Ruth still voluntarily submitted herself to Naomi and trusted her wisdom to guide them. The voice of an older woman can be the source of the success to young kingmakers.

Through the years, submission has been grossly abused and sorely misunderstood, so much so, that not many are willing to see the beauty and the safety that it brings. The truth of the matter is forced submission is slavery but submission under the umbrella of God's word is love. There is an important point to make here. Kingmakers and

kings should always align themselves with those who have their best interest at heart. Loyalty is a two-way street and should be driven down on the proper side of the road. Loyalty out of line will bring danger to those who are coming our way if we cross the line from submission to slavery.

*So Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, "Please let me go to the field, and glean heads of grain after him in whose sight I may find favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter." (Ruth 2:2)*

Today, Ruth would be labeled as a weak woman with the way the world views and abhors submission. However, if she had taken the time to express her independence rather than relinquish her freedom to become a slave, she could have either started her own business, a women's movement or a renowned ministry. Before you condemn her, will you permit yourself to continue reading her story? If so, you will see that Ruth's totally surrendered life attracted the attention of Boaz, her kinsman redeemer, and gained her a great reward for staying with and caring for Naomi.

The qualities of Ruth were noted by those who observed her, who then relayed that information to Boaz. As he saw Ruth working diligently in the field, he inquired further and then he approached her personally. Notice the exchange of communication between the two and the position each takes with the other.

*Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to*

*glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn." So she fell on her face, bowed down to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?" And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before. The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge." (Ruth 2:8-12)*

Boaz's words honored Ruth. To this man of great notoriety, Ruth possessed a worth that was incomparable to and surpassed the total value of all his wealth. Thus, he took it upon himself, with no legal obligation to do so, to stand as a covering for her, granting full benefits of his provision and protection. In response, Ruth humbled herself demonstrating a position of honor, with no legal obligation to do so, to the man who had bestowed such grace upon her life. He wanted nothing from her, she asked for nothing from him, yet both were willing to give

everything to bring about something they didn't even know was ordained in heaven by God. For Ruth, her full obedience to his instructions was critical.

*And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. (Ruth 2:15)*

Boaz allowed her to glean the bounty *in* his field and not just the remnants scattered about along the edges *of* his field. When Ruth showed Naomi her sacks of grain from the field, Naomi knew this wasn't a typical day's work for a gleaner. As she learned more about the field and the man who owned it, she began putting the pieces together to make sure her daughter-in-law's future was secured. Naomi's plan would require Ruth to follow her specific instructions as to how she was to prepare herself to meet the king and how she was to conduct herself with the king.

*"Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself, put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. Then it shall be, when he lies down, that you shall notice the place where he lies; and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down; and he will tell you what you should do." (Ruth 3:3-4)*

Naomi was very direct in telling Ruth not to make herself known until the right time was present because timing is everything when it comes to approaching your king.

Ladies, please note. Anything that is a distraction to your king will compete for his attention. Likewise, the way you approach your king is also important. Ruth appealed to her king with tact and integrity in a discreet setting, without onlookers or others being involved in or aware of the intentions of Ruth. But don't forget, she was accountable to her mother-in-law every step along the way.

Naomi assured Ruth that once she did her part, Boaz would step in and do his part. The results, just as her mother predicted, played out perfectly and led to Boaz further pursuing rights to marry Ruth. This union would make history and aptly be recorded in *Matthew 1:5-6*, “*Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab, Boaz begot Obed by Ruth, Obed begot Jesse and Jesse begot David the king. David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah..*”

Now that is what I would call a kingmaker! But what of this David, the king, who is mentioned here? Who would be the influential voice to guide him? Likely, there were many who spoke into this king's life, but there was one that I will talk about in the next chapter. This kingmaker that we are going to learn was a team player and had words of wisdom that turned the heart of this king in another direction.

*Father, sometimes living an obedient and sacrificial life is hard because we are a part of a generation where surrender is synonymous with weakness. I pray that the kingmakers see that submission and accountability are*

*Your divine protections that will not only bring them into a great reward but also make them true rubies in the lives of the kings they serve. Let the kings realize, even as Boaz proved, that right motivation and proper intentions in relationships have a greater value than money. More so, as you did with Ruth, who lived a life of dedication and obedience, respect and servitude, give us a proper view of serving one another, especially those we walk beside daily. Do a work in our hearts so that we are truly prepared and fit for the kingdom we serve.*

## Abigail - The Wisdom Influence

The real beauty of a kingmaker is not found in her outward appearance only, but revealed in the beauty she possesses on the inside. Her inner beauty coupled with an understanding of and willingness to do what is in the best interest of her king makes this next influential woman of interest another rare find.

*“Then Samuel died; and the Israelites gathered together and lamented for him, and buried him at his home in Ramah. And David arose and went down to the Wilderness of Paran. Now there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel, and the man was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. And he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. The name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. And she was a woman of good understanding and beautiful appearance; but the man was harsh and evil in his doings. He was of the house of Caleb.” (1 Samuel 25:1-3)*

Here we are introduced to Nabal and his wife, Abigail, who are as different as night and day. Even though they were extreme opposites, their marriage was held to the same flame of the two becoming one. Nabal was a man of great wealth, yet no one envied him and understandably so. He was as the Bible describes, harsh and evil, and anyone who encountered him could bear witness to his

undeniable, undesirable character flaws. On the other hand, however, regardless of how much wicked darkness Nabal walked in, Abigail always emerged on the scene illuminated by light.

Her greatest light can be seen in the next passages of Scripture to follow. First, Abigail is told of her husband's poor behavior and wrongful deeds towards David. And while she probably had her own stories to tell about Nabal, she didn't chime in but listened without interjecting one negative word. Her silence testified to her commitment to honor Nabal no matter what wrong he did or what right he didn't do.

*“Now one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, Look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master; and he reviled them. But the men were very good to us, and we were not hurt, nor did we miss anything as long as we accompanied them, when we were in the fields. They were a wall to us both by night and day, all the time we were with them keeping the sheep. Now therefore, know and consider what you will do, for harm is determined against our master and against all his household. **For he is such a scoundrel that one cannot speak to him.**” (1 Samuel 25:14-17)*

As a woman of understanding, she knew there were some things better left unsaid, ideally in this situation where

voicing her words would not have bettered the matter. Likewise, she was mindful of her audience and determined not to speak down on her husband in the sight of those who walked with him. Ladies, this doesn't mean you won't struggle with wanting to say what you're thinking or express what you're feeling about your king to others, but you must resist any temptation to uncover your king. And the same is true for kings when it comes to covering their kingmakers.

Secondly, we can conclude by the actions that she took, that she believed what was reported by this servant of Nabal. Again, see the power of silence and how it revealed her maturity; but let's not mistake her silence for acceptance. When the young man finished speaking and challenged Abigail to do something least harm came to his master and his master's household, she immediately moved to ensure the welfare and safety of every man in Nabal's kingdom. She was not about to let an entire group of men suffer a fatal outcome at the hands of David and his mighty army because her husband made a bad decision.

*“And she said to her servants, ‘Go on before me; see, I am coming after you.’ But she did not tell her husband Nabal.” (1 Samuel 25:19)*

Perhaps you're thinking Abigail put her marriage in jeopardy by acting without Nabal's permission and keeping her actions hushed from him, but quite the contrary. She understood that there was a right time to share with Nabal what she knew and this she would do.

Honestly, every kingmaker needs to know when the right time is to speak to her king.

The action that Abigail took benefited Nabal and the men of his household because Nabal's actions endangered every male in his house and put Abigail in a compromising position. Look at the words of David:

*"May God do so, and more also, to the enemies of David, if I leave one male of all who belong to him by morning light." (1 Samuel 25:22)*

You see, Abigail moved on behalf of her king not in rebellion to him. Men, as the head of your home, you must understand that your actions and attitude will influence every male in your kingdom. Your actions influence the outcome of your children and those under your influence.

*"Now when Abigail saw David, she dismounted quickly from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground. So she fell at his feet and said: "On me, my lord, on me let this iniquity be! And please let your maidservant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your maidservant. Please, let not my lord regard this scoundrel Nabal. For as his name is, so is he: Nabal is his name, and folly is with him! But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my lord whom you sent." (1 Samuel 25:23-25)*

Now, what's this about putting Abigail in an awkward position? Well, Nabal allowed his kingmaker to be

exposed or uncovered at the feet of another man. She was in a dual position at David's mercy, as well as at his feet. What man would want his wife to be in this dilemma? Here is where I would caution any man to be careful never to put his wife in a compromising position. And this can easily be done whenever a man makes decisions or takes an action void of godly wisdom.

The next point I want to bring up is Abigail's willingness to spare her king by her request to have the blame placed squarely on her shoulders. She was willing to bare her king's burden for a mistake that he alone made. In her appeal to King David to save her husband's life, she thought to explain the dishonest and unfair nature of her husband was appropriately fitting since his name meant folly and it was with him. And as the story goes, David relented from destroying the house of Nabal because of Abigail's actions.

*"For indeed, as the LORD God of Israel lives, who has kept me back from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, surely by morning light no males would have been left to Nabal!" So David received from her hand what she had brought him, and said to her, "Go up in peace to your house. See, I have heeded your voice and respected your person." (1 Samuel 25:34-35)*

Ladies note how Abigail used kindness and not vengeance to rescue her husband from his own snare. Men, I also want you to note of Abigail's actions to preserve her husband's household. The qualities of this kingmaker

should be what every king looks for and what should be found in every kingmaker.

After she settled the matter favorably with David, Abigail returned home to an overly, intoxicated husband.

*“Now Abigail went to Nabal, and there he was, holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk; therefore she told him nothing, little or much, until morning light.” (1 Samuel 25:36)*

Now, as I pondered this for a moment, two things stood out to me. First, while Abigail was out fighting on behalf of her husband, he was at home holding a feast like a king, completely unaware that his wife was not safe with him. Secondly, he was too drunk to have defended himself against David, had David not heeded Abigail’s words to call the whole thing off, and he was too dreadful to have been protected by his servants. To his own hurt, Nabal couldn’t see that the life he was living caused not only man’s hand to be against him, but God’s hand as well.

For Nabal, unfortunately, the end of the story doesn’t finish with “and he lived happily ever after!” Even though David pardoned Nabal based on Abigail’s humility, he still had to face the consequences of his actions.

*“So it was, in the morning, when the wine had gone from Nabal, and his wife had told him these things that his heart died within him and he became like a stone” (1 Samuel 25: 37).*

Remember, timing is everything. She could have run into the house anxious to tell him all the details of her evening, but it would have availed nothing. In his drunken state, there was no reason to try to discuss the matter with him until morning. Why do you suppose *his heart died within him and, and he became like a stone* once she told him? If you're like me, possible reasons as to why it happened are probably streaming in your mind. I don't know for sure, but I do know that the stubborn nature within a man can kill him physically and/or spiritually. A man can be alive, but have no life within him.

I am sure the women who are reading this book would not object to me pointing out something Nabal failed to do but what every married man should do, and that is taking notice of his wife. Perhaps Nabal had been accustomed to shutting Abigail out of his world. For many men, this is their mode of operation for how they handle their relationships and sadly, their marriages. If this remotely sounds true in your marriage, there is hope. Remember what I shared with you before? God can redeem anything if we are willing.

Another point I want to stress is this: Any time we do something for someone else with an expectation that they will appreciate or acknowledge us to the degree we think they should, we will always be met with disappointment. Again, Abigail comes out on top in my book. Her tremendous act of bravery to save her family was done without any expectations of Nabal even saying *thank you*. I am not minimizing the words of praise or the recognition so needed by those who serve alongside us. I am saying, however, that we should not withhold our acts of kindness

simply because others do not do unto us as we have done unto them.

This next line in the Scripture is one I contemplated skipping altogether, but I couldn't.

*“Then it happened, after about ten days that the LORD struck Nabal, and he died.”  
(1 Samuel 25:38)*

I wrote, erased and rewrote that line several times with much caution. You see, I didn't want any kingmaker, especially one who is as underappreciated as Abigail, to see this as an answer to her marriage. In all essence, I believe this passage speaks volumes of God's mercy! Why did God wait ten days before he struck Nabal? God gives us an opportunity to look at the wrong what we have done in our lives and He gives us His grace to repent and make a change.

*“Then Nabal answered David's servants, and said, "Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays who break away each one from his master. Shall I then take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men when I do not know where they are from?" (1 Samuel 25:10-11)*

If, however, we are unwilling, then we must deal with the consequences for our stubbornness. Nabal did not die at the hand of Abigail or David but at the hand of God. Nabal had a ruby that protected him and fought for him, but he was too stubborn of heart to value her. The greatest

gift that was given to him was now taken away and given to another, along with all his possessions. I find the Bible full of twists and turns and unimaginable outcomes that can make you really evaluate where you are.

As for Abigail, what was unappreciated by one king was treasured by another king. David recognized and appreciated the wisdom of this kingmaker. She entered her marriage to David from the same humble servant position that had initially won his heart. I am persuaded that David could see that he was getting a true treasure.

*“So when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, “Blessed be the LORD, who has pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and has kept His servant from evil! For the LORD has returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head.” And David sent and proposed to Abigail, to take her as his wife. When the servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, “David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife.” **Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, “Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord.”** So Abigail rose in haste and rode on a donkey, attended by five of her maidens; and she followed the messengers of David, and became his wife.” (1.Samuel 25:39-42)*

As a wife, Abigail was well respected for her character and demeanor, and as a mother, she unquestionably instilled

her same values in her offspring. This can clearly be seen when David's other sons plotted to take-over his throne. Chileab, his son with Abigail, had no part in it; likewise, there is no record that he ever rebelled against David. This type of wisdom and influence is what every king should desire in the kingmakers on his team.

Before you continue reading, stop for a moment to see if you can guess whose story you will find in the last chapter. Let me give you a hint: This kingmaker was called to bring forth the life of the King of Kings. Now let's turn the page to find out whether you answered correctly.

*Father as we read these pages let our hearts continue to be cleansed of self-promotion and cruel words which we say. Let the kingmakers understand that the position of servant is powerful and one that carries respect. Jesus reminded us that the greatest among us was servant to all. Let the kings know their decisions will change the lives of all they rule over. Critical words spoken in haste can cause us our kingdom because not only are others watching but so are you.*

## Mary - Spiritual Influence

If I could spend a little time with Mary, the mother of our Lord and Savior, I would ask her a few questions, like: *When does it become real to you that you are nurturing a king or are in the process of building up a king? Is it something you automatically know or sense from the beginning?* There are not many passages written on this influential woman, but the few that are written are significant. In my opinion, I see Mary, the one honored to be the mother of Jesus Christ and the person of influence in the life of the King of kings, as the most amazing kingmaker in the Bible. And the greeting she received lends itself to the same.

*And having come in, the angel said to her,  
"Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is  
with you; blessed are you among women!"  
(Luke 1:28)*

Now that is something to be excited about. Being a kingmaker is a blessing and a highly favored position, which can be rewarding when you accept the invitation from God to work alongside Him.

Mary, a maidservant and the mother of Jesus, was pleased to serve as a kingmaker. After the initial greeting and news of the forthcoming birth of the Savior, Mary's answer was one that showed her willingness to please God in whatever fashion He chose.

*Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant  
of the Lord! Let it be to me according to*

*your word." And the angel departed from her." (Luke 1:38)*

The similarity between Abigail's response to David and Mary's response to the angel shows that both were willing to promote the kingdom at all cost and with little concern for their own welfare. As maidservants, these two women understood their positions of humility and was not overwhelmed by whatever requirements were put before them or the overall outcome. Just as Abigail gave no second thought to humbling herself before King David, Mary, likewise, gave no second thought to humble herself before the King of Glory. She simply said *yes*. She may not have known fully the weight her *yes* would have on the entire world, but she did know that what was happening to her at that moment was significant.

*"For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed." (Luke 1:48)*

Women of Influence listen to me. Sometimes a simple *yes* is all it takes. In fact, we can see throughout the Bible that the men and women who said *yes* to God became a part of the most remarkable stories in His-Story. Mary's *yes* did the same for her. Here was a maidservant who put aside whatever dreams she might have had to fulfill the role as a kingmaker. She had no guarantee or a full explanation as to how everything was going to end. All she knew was that she would be with child after the Spirit of God had come upon her. From her willingness to serve, all the generations that followed would learn and understand that

blessings accompany the hardest duties we have been given to do.

I know. We all want the blessings of God but the assignments He has predestined for us... maybe somebody else would be better suited for the job, right? Wrong. He is all sovereign and He knows what is best. So, can you rejoice in the tasks that are given to you even if it is not what you consider to be the best timing to do what you have been chosen for? Ladies believe me when I say this; it will go well with you to simply trust God and accept the life and the call of the king you serve. Men, as much as we would like to be in control of everything concerning us, we must recognize that our life is not our own, but it belongs to the One who has called us to do great things in His kingdom.

Now, I must ask each king an important question or two. Do you realize the trust God put in Mary to carry and protect the Holy Seed that He held dear? Do you also realize the great responsibility placed on your kingmaker who will carry your seed and help further your kingdom in the earth? From a natural perspective, kingmakers look down on the role of a kingmaker because they consider it to be an insignificant position, forgetting the importance that role holds in the eyes of God. However, there are some women, of which Mary is one, whose view of a kingmaker is different. She knew taking on this grand responsibility would be a significant change in her life and the life of those whom her King would serve.

*“Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.” (Luke 1:30)*

Kingmaker Mary stood before the angel of God and was told not to fear because she had found favor with God. How many of the influential women in your life have found such favor with God? God wasn't just interested in a woman to birth Christ into the earth, He was interested in establishing a relationship between heaven and earth, Himself and mankind, as well as king and kingmaker. He knew He could trust Mary with the task at hand, and trust is something needed in every healthy relationship. Such trust between the king and his kingmaker allows the kingmaker in the king's life to protect, nourish and encourage him along the way.

In Mary's case, not only did the angel from heaven call her blessed, but a woman in the earth recognized the blessing that she was carrying and nurturing. When she encountered her pregnant cousin, Elizabeth, and life in her belly leaped, it was a sign even to Mary that greatness had entered her own life. Ladies, do you look at the call of nurturing the king in your life as a burden? If so, this will negatively influence your willingness to be a maidservant, and possibly, destroy your purpose as a kingmaker. In all honesty, being discontent with your role takes away the reward of being available to serve the king. Look at what Elizabeth had to say.

*Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why*

*is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” (Luke 1:42-43)*

Here we have two women from two different tribes of Jacob, carrying two dynamic kings. Elizabeth, in her old age, was not just with child but chosen to carry “the one whose voice would cry in the wilderness making straight the way of the Lord” (John 1:23). And then there was Mary, elected to carry the Savior of the world, and was promoted from a simple maidservant to kingmaker and mother of our Lord.

Next, I want to talk about why it is important for kingmakers of influence to be observant and hear the destiny of the kings they serve. Time and time again, Mary would hear prophetic words concerning the child she would birth, and each time, she cradled those words in her heart. What can we learn from Mary’s example? Let’s read on.

*“And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.” (Luke 2:18-19)*

Here we read that Mary pondered or thought about the words that had been spoken and held them in her heart. Notice, she didn’t say anything. Silence is a great gift, and the ability to listen without speaking, interjecting, or voicing your own thoughts and ideas is skillfully developed with time, maturity and discipline. What a valuable lesson we all can glean from Mary.

Then, we find these divine words spoken by Simeon in Luke 2:32 concerning Jesus, the Christ.

*“A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.’ And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” (Luke 2:33-35)*

Mary and Joseph both marveled at the things that Simeon said, but it would be the words he spoke directly to Mary, “a sword will pierce through your own soul,” that would forever ring in her ears until the day it was fulfilled. Our lesson from Mary here is that the benefit of being a woman of influence does not come without a cost, but it is very rewarding.

From the beginning of His life, Mary and Joseph had taken great care, as responsible parents do, to watch over, tend to and look after Jesus. Then, one day, the unimaginable happened. While in their company and under their watch, so they thought, they looked for Jesus but could not find him. They had no idea of the whereabouts of the King of Glory. This was the incident when while they were traveling from Jerusalem and assuming that Jesus was among their caravan, they had gone a day’s journey before they realized He was missing? With fear and panic in their

hearts, they returned to Jerusalem and searched for three days until they found Him in the temple.

*“So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” (Luke 2:48-52)*

Do you suppose, perhaps at that moment, that she felt as though she had let down her King? Or perhaps displeased Him in any way? Here again, we find it recorded that Mary kept what was said in her heart, even though she did not understand what Jesus meant. Mary’s habit of listening quietly while shelving the information in a storage compartment of her heart, was a pattern for the reader of God’s Word to give serious attention to.

Let’s see if we can sum up the lessons learned. For the kingmakers, practice listening to what God has to say about your king and learn to hold His words in your hearts until the appointed time. For the kings, recognize that it is not easy for kingmakers to be chosen for such a privileged position, especially when they don’t fully

understand their roles. Hopefully, kings and kingmakers alike can see why neither can afford to take their roles lightly. To do so would be detrimental to both the king and the kingmaker.

Clearly, a key attribute for a kingmaker, which we find in Mary, is her ability to discern the proper timing to either address her king, act on his behalf, or remain silent. If she judges correctly, her timing will contribute greatly to the overall success of her king, as well as her role as a kingmaker. A prime example of this can be found in John 2:1-5, at the wedding feast.

*On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding. And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it." (John 2:1-5)*

The first miracle we see being performed by Jesus seems to come at the prompting of his mother. Jesus said to her, "My hour has not yet come", and Mary said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you do it." What has been a question in my mind for years is how did Mary know it was time for her King to walk in His destiny? Men listen to me closely. There are times when the women of influence in our lives know the right moment to press us into our God-given destinies. Ladies, notice. Mary was

not disrespectful, and she didn't say more than what was needed to be said. Yet, she knew enough about who He was to confidentially say, "Whatever He says to you do it."

Beneath her many titles, Mary was still a maidservant. Although maidservants are sacrificial by nature and ask for nothing in return, there comes a time where stability for their future must be set in order. This was the case in the life of the mother of the King of kings. Jesus, as the eldest son had the responsibility of making sure his mother, Mary, was taking care of. His final act at Calvary shows this importance.

*"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!" (John 19:25-26)*

Here we see that King Jesus making sure that his kingmaker is secure by placing her in the care of John, the disciple whom He loved, trusted, and turned out to also be the disciple who lived the longest. King, have you made provisions for the wellbeing and security of the woman of influence in your life so that she can have peace of mind knowing that she will be cared for after your work on the earth is completed? This biblical principle is one that we should respect and honor, and not overlook or take lightly. The most important thing a king can leave his kingmaker is security. After all king, your kingmakers' value is far greater than rubies.

*Father, as women, give us the heart of Mary, to say yes to your request to bring forth a king. There is nothing you ask of us that is insignificant. We have no idea but can only ponder in our hearts what your design for the kings we carry. Let those who stand in the wings to make the king great know there is a price to pay to be known for generations. As men let us take responsibility to cherish and hold dear what you have entrusted us with. Jesus final act was to be sure Mary was taken care of by the disciple he loved. The role we play*

## Conclusion

From the beginning of the Bible to the end we see that there are women who played significant roles in those who were called to lead and who also led themselves. No position is insignificant when you realize that everything, we do in life will affect someone. There are women who were mentioned in this writing that played significant roles in either putting out the vision of their king or having them banished from the kingdom. Equally those who protected their homes, hid their offspring and were willing to make significant sacrifice including putting their lives at risk to ensure a king's success. The one who endures the heat and the most pressure makes the best rubies.

*“For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.”  
(Proverbs 31:10-12)*

The role of a kingmaker is important, and we must always keep in mind that the role we have described are for those who have a covenant agreement with a loving God. Patience, honor and humility are all things we need to be familiar with no matter if we are a king or a kingmaker. Prayerfully in this writing you were introduced and understand those who were called to be leaders in the bible and those who either supported or removed the leaders from their positions.