

Lyceum 104 - July 31, 2025, Neighborhood/Parish Lyceum – a forum to Think, Discuss, Share, and Learn from one another. Your input is welcomed - Iron sharpens iron.

“The 1826, in Connecticut, a farmer named Josiah Holbrook started a school for ‘the general diffusion of knowledge and raising the moral and intellectual taste’ of Americans. In those days, the opportunities for higher education were limited to those venerable old universities that had long served the upper crust. Holbrook’s vision was to make learning – practical, liberal, and humane – available to working people of all kinds. He named his school the Lyceum, after the garden where Aristotle once taught his students philosophy.... We need to go deeper than the superficial fights that characterize public life. We need to return to the first principles and meet each other there as human beings.” – Nathan Beacom, Plough Magazine, Autumn 2023, p. 9.

Ladies – take a bow.

10 Obscure Women in the Bible and Their Significant Roles in God’s Kingdom

By Nylse Esahc

1. Achsah – The woman who dared to ask.

Ancient Israel was a patrilineal society with kinship defined through the inheritance of the male. Caleb’s daughter, Achsah, was given to her cousin Othniel in marriage as a conqueror’s reward. The scripture does not indicate what prompted her to ask, but she went to Caleb, her father, and asked for land with springs. She specifically said, “*Give me also,*” ([Joshua 15:19](#)) and Caleb gave her the upper and nether springs. Despite the limits within her culture, she confidently made this request of her father. There was nothing wrong with asking; so, she asked and got what she requested (and then some).

You too can boldly ask your Heavenly Father to “give me also.” His response may exceed your expectations ([Joshua 15:16-19](#), [Judges 1:14,15](#))

2. The Five Daughters of Zelophehad – Women working together for change.

These five count as one since they worked in concert to achieve a goal for themselves and those who followed.

Manasseh’s great-grandson, Zelophehad, had no sons but five daughters. When the land was being parceled out by Joshua, these five sisters said to Joshua, “*The Lord commanded Moses to give us an inheritance among our brethren*” ([Joshua 17:4](#)). This was the second time these women spoke up, and this time it was to re-affirm what they

had already accomplished. Back in [Numbers 27:1-11](#), the women recognized that the law made no provision for inheritance if a man did not have a son, so they brought their case before Moses. As a result, an adjustment was made to the law which still stands.

These women were overlooked until they spoke up, prompting a permanent change in the law.

3. Abijah– The woman with a bad husband and a good son.

Despite the idolatry of her royal husband, Ahaz, Abijah (also called Abi) sought to do the will of God. She counteracted any evil influence of Ahaz over their son Hezekiah, who did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord when he later became king. Hezekiah was a great king thanks to the godly influence of his mother. In Abijah we see that the godly influence of a mother is powerful and far-reaching ([2 Kings 18:2](#); [2 Chronicles 26:5](#)).

"Hezekiah was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-nine years. His mother's name was Abijah daughter of Zechariah." ([2 Chronicles 29:1](#))

4. Chloe – The woman who was insightful and hospitable.

Chloe was well known to the Corinthians and provided much-needed hospitality to the Apostle Paul. It was while Paul was staying by Chloe that he received information of strife among the leaders of the early church. Her home provided a welcome respite for Paul to address these concerns. Chloe's household saw that strife was occurring and reached out to Paul to address these concerns. She was a wise peacemaker.

"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord [Jesus Christ](#), that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought. My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you." ([1 Corinthians 1:10-11](#)).

5. Deborah the nursemaid – The woman who took care of another's family.

As Rebekah's nurse, she accompanied her mistress to her new home after her marriage to Isaac. When Jacob and Esau were born, she nursed them and took care of them. When Rebekah had no further use for her nurse, she did not dismiss her, but instead, Deborah remained with the family and was held in great reverence. Through her faith in God, she transformed the bonds of servitude into those of love and earned the devotion and gratitude of those she served ([Genesis 24:59](#); [35:8](#)).

6. Deborah the Judge – The woman who was a strong leader.

She was a wife, a prophetess, a facilitator, a warrior, and a poet. She fought the Lord's battles with a sword in her hand and a psalm on her lips. She was recognized as a leader because the Israelites would go to her for judgment (i.e., leadership and decision-making).

"Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided." ([Judges 4:4-5](#))

When the Israelites defeated their enemy, Deborah sings a song of praise and acknowledgment to God. In Deborah we see her relationship with God; her obedience, and her unabashed adoration for the Lord ([Judges 4, 5](#)).

"On that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang this song: 'When the princes in Israel take the lead, when the people willingly offer themselves— praise the LORD!'" ([Judges 5:1-2](#))

7. Elisabeth – The woman who bore a son in her old age.

Elisabeth was the mother of John the Baptist. She was a godly woman, blameless in character, righteous in the sight of the Lord, and married to a priest – Zacharias. She was also childless until the Lord intervened. In her sixth month of pregnancy with John the Baptist, her cousin Mary visited, who was pregnant with Jesus. When Mary visited Elisabeth, shortly after being told that she would bring forth the Messiah, the baby that was in Elisabeth's womb leaped with joy! It is utterly amazing that two spirit-filled babies were communicating with each other before they were born. Elisabeth is an example that often waiting on the Lord brings unexpected blessings ([Luke 1:1-45](#)).

8. Lydia – The woman with a prosperous business.

We know from [Acts 16:11-15](#) that Lydia was a seller of purple who reaped the fruits of her labor – a spacious home and servants. Lydia was religious but had a hunger for a deeper connection. She was a seeker, and through conversations and interaction with the Apostle Paul, she became a believer. Becoming a Christian did not change her business success or nullify her business acumen. Lydia now had an open house for the saints of God, and her home became a center of Christian fellowship in Philippi.

"After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia's house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encouraged them." ([Acts 16:40](#))

9. Vashti – The woman whose beauty was more than skin deep.

During the days of the feast, a drunk King Ahasuerus, Vashti's husband, requested that Vashti parade herself in front of his intoxicated guests – all men. Vashti refused and paid a price for her decision.

"On the seventh day, when King Xerxes was in high spirits from wine, he commanded the seven eunuchs who served him... to bring before him Queen Vashti, wearing her royal crown, in order to display her beauty to the people and nobles, for she was lovely to look at. But when the attendants delivered the king's command, Queen Vashti refused to come. Then the king became furious and burned with anger." ([Esther 1:10-12](#))

She was deposed as Queen, which then started the process for how Esther eventually became Queen. Vashti had her dignity and refused to allow herself to be exploited by her husband. She was not willing to compromise her values and allow herself to be degraded. As a result, Vashti lost everything but her self-respect and paved a way for Esther to become Queen and save the Jews. Vashti knew that she was more than just a beautiful face ([Esther 1](#)).

10. Lois – The grandmother who imparted her faith.

Lois was the grandmother of Timothy. She passed on her spiritual influence on her daughter Eunice and her grandson Timothy, which the apostle Paul commends. Paul specifically notes that Timothy's sincere faith dwelt first in his grandmother, Lois. Grandmothers play a vital role in their grandchildren's lives.

"I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also." ([2 Timothy 1:5](#))

Though these women are obscure, they all played a vital role in God's kingdom. As a woman, be encouraged by these women to do the same.

Resources: [All The Women in the Bible](#) by Dr. Herbert Lockyer, Zondervan Press.

"Last week we were encouraged to pet a pet; This is an addendum having finished last evening a good read "This dog will change your life" by Elias Weiss Friedman. I am sharing with you his final reflections: "It is the ever-present reminders dogs give us every day; to go outside, to connect with others, to not be afraid of just being who we are. To appreciate and do our best to be happy in the moment we are in. They make us laugh and keep us company when we are feeling down. They restore our trust when we have lost all faith. Dogs give us more than we can ever quantify. They are one of the universe's great sparks and we are incredibly lucky to share this planet with them ...and

what has given me the title for this book: This dog will change your life.” Pp. 245-247. Of course, as I type this, the four of us are crowded in a lazy boy, the computer on my lap, Sophie snuggled between my hip and the arm rest, and Rambeau reclining on the extended footrest. At this moment, nothing is finer. Heaven is now. -rvb.