

**The Missiological Implications of Jael's Role in Israel-Canaan Battle for Contemporary
Christian Women**

Rev. Daniel Oyebode Akintola,

ABSTRACT

This article attempts to look at the missiological implications of Jael's role in Israel-Canaan Battle in Judges, chapter four, for Contemporary Christian Women. Jael had played an exemplary role in old Testament time that our Christian women need to emulate in their involvement in Christian missions. In view of the whole narration of the Jael's role in Israel-Canaan battle in Judges 4, all Christian women should be encouraged to participate in mission. Regardless of social status, no woman in the church should fold her hands in joining God in missions in this twenty first century. Mission also demands supportive roles of Christian women without hesitating.

A. INTRODUCTION

Adekoya opines that, mission is grounded in God's character. Christ commanded us in Mathew 28:18 "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the father and the son and the Holy Spirit." This command of Christ does not mean that all Christians will be missionaries. But all disciples must be involved in making disciples. And all Christians must be concerned about taking the gospel to all nations.¹This fact is corroborated by Aladejobi who expounds that, the command to all Christians is for us to go into all the world," to personally witness for, Christ and preach the good news to all creation; just the way and manner

¹ Segun Adekoya. You could be a missionary. Revised Edition. (Jos: Nigeria Evangelical Missionary Institute, 2004), P.14.

the early Christians carried out the assignment.² In western nations, Christians have an idea that soul winning is done within the four corners of their church, but in the Bible days, soul-winning was done where people lived or worked, even in the market places.³

The going to all nations of the world to make disciples for Christ is not confined to four corners of the church; and all Christians are commanded to go. As Christian men are going out to field to preach the gospel, Christian women are not left out. “There are many important things women can do on the mission field.”⁴ There are also so many things they can do concerning the mission at home. In spite their roles in the mission at home, their roles in mission in the mission field cannot be ruled out. This is not to say that all Christian women should be missionaries but they can involve in making disciples for Christ in mission field. How can this be possible for all Christian women? The story life of Jael will shed light to this question and answer it perfectly as we proceed on in this article. This article will discuss the topic “The missiological implications of Jael’s role in Israel-Canaan Battle for the Contemporary Christian Women.

This article is divided into three parts, aside Abstract, Introduction and Conclusion: Definition of terms, two, background and History of Jael’s role in Israel-Canaan Battle, and three, its Missiological implications for the Contemporary Christian Women.

²Idowu Olu Aladejobi. *Personal Evangelism: the Task of Every Christian*. First Edition. (Ibadan: Bethel-Glad Tidings Publishers, 2002), P.57.

³ J. Ade. Akano. *General Missions’ Mobilization And How to win souls*. (Ilorin: Remi-Thomas Press, 2012), P.4.

⁴ Lois K. Fuller. *The Missionary And His work*. Second Edition. (Jos: Nigeria Evangelical Missionary Institute, 1996), P.119.

B. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Defining some terms in this paper will help in conveying the mind of the article to the readers. Therefore some terms like missiological implication, mission, contemporary and Christian women shall be explained.

Missiological implication: This refers to how Christian mission is either positively or negatively affected-The impact that something will make or has been made on mission.

Mission: Mission exists because God is a missionary God who sends his people to be a blessing to all humankind.⁵ God main strategy to achieve his goals is “sending.”⁶ The word “mission” comes from the Latin word *missio*, which means “sending.” The term is used in its plural form “missions” because there have been many sendings by various churches and bodies of missionaries to many places.⁷

Contemporary: It indicates the present time which is generally referred to as twenty first century.

Christian Women: These are the women of God who identify with the church. They are believers in Christ Jesus.

⁵ Samuel Escobar. *A Time For Mission The Challenge for Global Christianity*. Eds. David Smith and John Stott. (England: Inter-Varsity Press, 2003), P.92.

⁶ Lois K. Fuller. *A Biblical Theology of Missions God’s great Project for the Blessing of All Nations*. (Bukuru: ACTS, 2005), P.13.

⁷*Ibid*, P. 120.

The above terms will help in understanding the key issue that will be discussed in this article- The issue of Jael and the Christian women in missions. Let us then go to the background and history of Jael's role in Israel-Canaan Battle.

C. BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF JAEI'S ROLE IN ISRAEL-CANAAN BATTLE.

Knowing the little of the woman called Jael before discussing her roles in the battle will save us the prediction of the marital status of the character, that may lead to unworthy research on her in related to mission of God. Exempting her biography can make some readers to take her for prostitute as Sisera ran to her tent and the kind of fore treatment she gave to him. But examining briefly about her family background will add value to this work.

Jael is a family woman. She still lived under the roof of her husband. She is "the wife of Heber the Kenite."⁸ Now Heber the kenite had left the other kenites, the descendants of Hobab, Moses' brother-in-law, and pitched his tent by the great tree in Zaananim near kadesh (Judges4:11NIV). Kenite is "a member of a nomadic tribe. In the time of Abraham a branch of the tribe dwelt in Canaan (Gen.15:19), another branch in Midian (Ju. 1:16, 4:11)."⁹ So Heber being a nomadic man lived in a tent with his wife, Jael. "In O.T. times, taking down and putting up the tent, including driving tent pegs in hard ground, was the job of nomadic women."¹⁰ So by implication Jael the wife of Heber is an expert in tent making. One of her area of expertise in tent

⁸The New Analytical Bible and Dictionary of the Bible. Authorized King James Version Comprehensive General Index Edition. (Iowa: World Bible Publishers, 1973), P.115.

⁹ Ibid, P.130.

¹⁰ Lawrence O. Richards. Bible Readers' Companion. (Colorado Spring: Cook Communications Ministries, 2004), P.163.

making is driving tent pegs in hard ground. All these background of Jael God used to bring glory to His name in missions through which He made himself known to all nations of the world.

When the battle between the army of Israel led by Deborah and Barak and the army of Canaan led by Sisera became tough and the army of Israel were having upper hand over the army of Canaan, Sisera the commander and his army fled on foot (Judges 4:1-16). All the Sisera's troop fell by the sword (Judges 4:16). So Sisera fled to the tent of Jael. His reason of fleeing to the tent of Jael was because Heber the husband of Jael had friendly relationship with Jabin, the king of Hazor and Heber's clan also does (Judges 4:18). With this relationship Sisera might have thought in his mind to be saved in the tent of Heber especially the hand of Jael.

Unknowingly to Sisera that by the hand of Jael the mission of God will be completed over his life, Jael went out to meet him and said come my lord, come right in. Don't be afraid. So Sisera entered Jael's tent, she covered him with blanket and offered him milk to drink instead of water he asked for. After falling asleep she drove the peg through his temple into the ground, and he died (Judges 4:18-21). The mission is accomplished. When Barak came after Sisera, Jael took Barak to where the Sisera's body laid with the tent peg through his temple-dead. On that day God subdued Jabin, the Canaanite king, before the Israelites. And the hand of the Israelites grew stronger and stronger against Jabin, the Canaanite king, until they destroyed him. As a result of the role played by Jael, the people of God had victory in God's mission. Jael also was accorded honour among the people of God. She was highly celebrated and venerable. Her efforts in God's Mission was recorded and noted for honour in the Land of Israel (Judges 5:24-27) that now

became point of reference today by Christian family and Jews. Most blessed of women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, most blessed of tent dwelling women (Judges 5:24).

D. THE MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATION OF Jael'S ROLE IN ISRAEL-CANAAN BATTLE FOR CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN WOMEN.

The role played by Jael in accomplishing the Mission of God in the battle field is a supportive role. Her role was so vital that cannot be ignored in the history of the Israel in the Promised Land. The one who begins the task deserves appreciation most. If Jael failed to play her part, there is tendency for Sisera to escape which may lead to heavy oppression on Israel later from Jabin, the king of Canaan and Sisera, his commander. When God laid it upon the heart of Jael that she could be an instrument of accomplishing His mission she was not hesitated to act at the right time. That is one part of Jael's contribution to the victory of Israelite army on mission.

The second part of her role is the using of her vocational skills to accomplish God's mission. She was a tent maker, God through inner ministration made her to realize that her tools (Peg and Hammer) could be used to accomplish God's mission. She made use of what she had to bring glory to God in Missions. She was not a trained soldier like Israelite army. She did not insist on getting gun or other weapons before she could act. No excuse was found in the scripture before she could obey God's voice that was telling her she could do it and make it.

From the Jael's story, two important missiological implications can be derived for the contemporary Christian women. These implications are messages for all Christian women all over the world. First, for Christian Mission to progress and have great accomplishment, the

supportive role of our Christian women is greatly needed. Their supportive contributions to our Missionaries in Mission field will make the work easy and even cause the devil and his cohorts to be defeated for the freedom of the people the missionaries are working amongst. As God laid it upon the heart of Jael what she could do to accomplish His mission, so God lays it upon the heart of our women what they can do to accomplish God's Mission in the mission field.

Second, as the Lord made use of Jael's vocation to fulfill His mission, our Christian women's vocational work can be of great help in accomplishing God's Mission. If they travel to mission field to use their vocation to affect the lives of the people in the field and turn, they can turn great number of them to Christ. They can also organize the vocational training for missionaries' wives even right there at home which can help them to affect lives in the field. Our women do not need to capitalize on the point that they have no special training as missionary before they can contribute to missions. God is speaking to them internally to use what they have in accomplishing His task in missions. They should stop giving excuses and take the action without hesitating.

F. CONCLUSION

This article has revealed enough to our women that God's expectation is to see their hands on deck (Missions). As He (God) had used Jael in the Old Testament time to accomplish His mission, He utmost desires today to have Christian women played their own part in Missions. Jael had laid good example, let all Christian women follow them by playing their supportive role in missions and using their vocational skills for the harvest of souls for the Lord. Mission work is demanding that every Christian woman should play her part for the growth of

the kingdom of God and the defeat of Satan and his kingdom. Mission also demands supportive roles of Christian women without hesitating.

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