

THE LADY

ELECT



JADE LEE

Women of the Bible Series

Introduction

This series will help women identify Godly Characteristics by taking a deeper look at various Women of the Bible such as:

Esther
Deborah
Ruth, and
Many More.

Whether these women were Godly or unfaithful, we can learn valuable lessons, guiding us into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ. Each one of these women's lives brought different challenges and each woman responded in unique ways. This is why it is very easy to identify with at least one or more of the women of the Bible.

From prostitutes to prayer warriors, each woman is used to teach us GOD's unconditional love for us, our appropriate response to GOD's love, the heartaches of disobedience to GOD and the characteristics that embody Christlikeness.

Enjoy learning about women you may have never studied deeply or revisit the lives of women you have heard of for many years. Take the time to answer the Life Application Questions at the end of each chapter. Ask GOD to show you areas He wants you to experience His love or maturity on another level.

Women of the Bible: The Lady Elect is Part Five of this Series.

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For The Atlanta Revival Center

The Elect Lady.

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CHAPTER ONE

Who is She?

“The Elder,

To the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth.” 2 John 1:1¹

We’ve all heard stories of a far-away world, full of kingdoms, kings, queens, princesses and princes. An evil protagonist shortly greets us from the screen or our favorite childhood book, we sit at the edge of our seats only to find ourselves filled with the wonder of how the beautiful princess will escape from his horrid grip. It is then that a knight in shining armor appears on the scene, winning the princess’ heart through his extravagant love.

This story would be a true damper if the knight never showed up or worse yet, lost the battle to her soul after winning the battle against her false lover.

Christianity is the story we have read about over and over, or seen on a movie screen. It is the story of a beautiful princess, being prepared for a mighty takeover and reign in a glorious kingdom. This princess will soon be the Bride of the King of the World. But she isn’t quite ready just yet. Everything is set for her inheritance. Her knight in shining armor has left her in a very different world, promising to come back again...sweeping her off her feet happily ever after.

There has never been a lover like Him. She thinks of Him daily, His eyes, His hair, His gentle smile, the warmth she felt when they were together. But the reality of life quickly settles back in, sadly reminding her that she is still a peasant in this current life. She must endure through this fallen world, relying on the Promise of her King. She knows He has earned His placement in this Amazing Kingdom, but she awaits His coming.

She holds His love letters closely to her heart, reminding herself of the many words no one can take from her. They are etched upon her heart. She literally breathes out those words multiple times a day, in awe of how poetic and full of life they are...this is her hope. Her hope is in a man, none other can compare to Him.

¹ NKJV

He's described this beautiful place, it's simply perfection. Gold streets, beautiful people, children dancing, no more tears, no crime, no disease, no sickness...only health and wealth and total joy!

She will reign with Him and He has already left to prepare her a beautiful mansion. Her desire towards Him is seen with her every prayer, her every heart cry. He adds more and more sections to her coming home as He sees her heart beating for Him passionately.

She is His chosen one, His elect, named after Him, the Chosen One. She is His perfect match.

This is the love story of GOD.

Unlike a children's story, this account is actually real. It describes the life of a Christian woman. She is the Bride of Christ.

In 2 John 1:1 we find a very unique term, describing a woman many believe to be the church or a very much admired Christian woman of the church. This term is "the elect lady." She is GOD's Favorite Lady.

This word, "elect" is the Greek word "eklektos" meaning "picked out, chosen by GOD, to obtain salvation through Christ...Christians are called "chosen or elect" of GOD."² This word was also used of Jesus Christ as the Coming King. When used of Jesus as the Messiah, this is the "most exalted office conceivable."

In 2 John 1:1 we enter the letter of John the Beloved writing in his latter years to the elect lady and her children. This lady is truly loved by all believers and by John, a well-respected elder in the church. He has already been updated on how her children are doing and she must have been parenting them well because they are described by John as "walking in truth" (2 John 1:4).

She has obedient children because she has exemplified obedience. John's heart cry is that the elect lady loves one another by following GOD's commandments. He encourages her to love but to also watch out for "deceivers" who would appear as Christians but are really under the sway of the antichrist.

He tells her to hold onto what she has already worked for to gain a full reward. This almost exactly mirrors John's writings in the Book of Revelation, warning the Church to continue on in the faith if they want the fullness of their reward.

Just as in a marriage, when the bride receives her husband's name, the Elect Lady has received the name of Christ, "Chosen." This is a name of great celebration, dignity and highest respect. This is the image of the Ultimately Chosen and Appointed One marrying His Favorite Lady. Out of all the women in the world, she is His favored woman.

As we enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ, we do not see the fullness of what He has in store for us as His Bride. Many times we do not even realize that He is our Husband. We do not realize that He is going to prepare a beautiful home for us in glory. This is not a home that we

² Taken from Strong's Concordance of BlueLetterBible.org

will not enjoy or experience fully. In the fullness of who we are, we will embrace this home with gladness.

Imagine someone that knows you more than you know yourself, with the knowledge of all the resources in the world and heaven, creating a home for you. He knows exactly what you will like, how you will like it, what colors will cause your breathe to be taken away at first sight. He knows how to interior decorate your room in ways that will make you run out of the room crying because you are so happy!

This is what Jesus is busy doing for every single one of us in the Elect Lady. He is totally committed to us in ways we cannot imagine. For thousands of years, He has not forgotten His beautiful woman and He will return to sweep her off her feet.

You are that lady, picked out, chosen by GOD to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ. Your eyes have never seen what He has in store for you. ...not on HGTV, your favorite tv show, or driving in the richest neighborhood in America. You have never heard of anything as amazing as what He is preparing for you. Your imagination has never been able to go where He is right now preparing for you. It's the Grand Surprise.

It's better than anything else this world has to offer in happiness, love, joy or material possessions. Embracing this truth will change everything about you internally, revealing your true beauty from within to the remainder of the world.

Life Reflections:

1. Have you ever considered yourself to be specially chosen by GOD, in a personal, thoughtful way? If yes, how does that make you feel? If no, how do you think your perspective about GOD would change if you saw yourself in that light?

2. You are a beautiful princess being prepared for your Bridegroom, the King of the Universe. You will soon be the Queen of Royalty. How does seeing Jesus as your King coming back for you personally make you see the Love Letter He left for you- the Holy Bible?

3. GOD sees you as more than His child, His daughter or His servant. He sees you as His Elect Lady, His Wife forever. What does this reveal to you about GOD's heart for you as an individual?

CHAPTER TWO

The Chosen Lady

“For many are called, but few are chosen.” Matthew 22:14³

You’re walking into your favorite designer store, looking through racks and racks of clothing until you come across this gorgeous piece that you instantly fall in love with...the cost goes right out of your mind- you are in love! You can think of a hundred ways to wear this dress- with pumps, stilettos, ballet shoes, your hair adorned in jewels or flowing gracefully down your back. You could pair it with a cute sweater for autumn or a fur coat for winter. You could wear it as a solo piece for spring and summer.

The money in your pocket is burning a hole through your heart and you are ready to race to the fitting room, then checking out all because...You found your treasure. This has made your day.

You can’t wait to take pictures in it and hang it in your closet like a precious item, standing out amongst the remainder of your clothes.

This is the excitement of a shopping trip for those of us who enjoy the exhilaration of fashion. A part of our identity seeps through our hands as we find that perfect blend of fabric, colors and design. We want to express it to the remainder of our world as a glimpse of who we are...

This is how GOD feels when He looks upon the earth, seeking someone to lavish His love upon! Of course, you and I are worth much more than any clothing item and His joy is overwhelmingly greater, but we are that treasured gift that GOD will always cherish.

To be chosen means you have been “picked out by preference, selected” or “favored by GOD.”⁴ You are that chosen object of GOD’s affection. He has selected you amongst the rest; He has preferred you. He wants to be with you, to highlight you, to share His riches with you and to

³ NKJV

⁴ Webster’s New World College Dictionary Fourth Edition

present you as a priceless companion to the remainder of the world. He is not ashamed of you nor confused about how He feels about you. No one can take away His love for you, including you.

Even with your imperfections, He pulled you off the dirty rack, which left much to be desired. And He's going to bring you into His beautiful mansion, placing you in a glorious display. You are favored by GOD. Many people wonder how you can be GOD's favorite when there are so many people GOD loves.

But this word "favor" means "approval" or to be "pleasing or desirable" to someone. GOD approves of who you are, He loves everything about you. He desires to be with you as your Father. He is a personal and gracious father, wanting to show the greatness of the measure of His love for you. There is nothing you can do to stop this love from beating in GOD's heart. He loves you beyond your behavior, choices or decisions. He is waiting to take you back into His loving arms when you sin:

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9⁵

When we buy a beautiful dress or wonderful pair of shoes, we do not expect it to be perfect over time, or even when we purchase it- we don't begin pulling out a measuring tape to see if the seams are perfectly matched. It is fine exactly the way it has been manufactured. But over time, we expect it to get dirty if we do not care for it- we must wash it, follow the cleaning instructions and care for it to last for years.

GOD does not expect you to be perfect in the way you may think- He knows that you have fallen into sin, alike the remainder of the world. And He knows that He must wash you, care for you through the washing of the water of His Word. All He wants is you to realize His love for you so that you will continue to come to Him, in your most vulnerable, weakest moments. Confession is simply coming to GOD without the wrong type of fear, knowing that He has already forgiven you. You know His love for you so you are bringing your biggest failures to a loving GOD. You believe in His faithfulness and cleansing power.

Like that garment, He will wash you. He will clean you up and place you back on His favorite hanger or display. He won't give up on you.

Have you ever been rejected by someone when you brought your sin to them, desiring to make amends with them and GOD? Sometimes we are surprised by the sin in our own lives or other's lives. We are disappointed. GOD loves righteousness as well, but He is not surprised by our sin. He knows about the sin issue. He saw it enter into the world.

He wants us to come to Him in spite of our sin. He wants us to be confident. He wants us to know we are loved beyond our actions.

We come to GOD realizing that we are chosen in spite of our sin:

⁵ NKJV

...as a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by GOD and precious... 1 Peter 2:4⁶

But GOD demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8⁷

We come to a GOD who chose us even when others rejected us, a GOD who sees us as precious. He loves us indescribably. While we were in the midst of our deepest sin, He was on the cross dying on our behalf. We are priceless to Him.

It is this demonstrated love that we must apply to the areas of fear declaring our incompetence and lack of desirability. GOD is not like man. He can desire us even while we are sinning. He can see the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ. It is through His sacrifice alone that we are justified. We are saved from the anger GOD has towards sin through the price Jesus paid on the cross.

This is the joy of being chosen by GOD. We can be chosen where we once were doomed to eternal death. Our good Father has made a way for us to be redeemed. He has brought us back with a tremendous price, His most prized relationship- with His only Son.

We are GOD's own special people, full of His mercy and chosen as a generation to loudly declare His praises.⁸ There is no longer anything separating us from His love. We can go boldly and directly to Him. He is our daddy. He is our lover. He is our everything. He can't wait to forgive us and throw our sins into a sea of forgetfulness. It is when we get this revelation that we are made free. We are made free through the sacrifice of His Son, our Bridegroom Lover, our Husband.

We can apply the sacrifice of Jesus to our sins, our failures, our disappointments, reminding ourselves that we have been chosen by our Father. We can do nothing to win His love or get Him to choose us. We are free because of who He is, not what we do.

This truth causes us to want to submit to a loving GOD. We want to do whatever He wants us to do out of a captivating love relationship.

Just as it brings a daughter joy to make her daddy happy; it brings GOD's daughters joy to please Him and do His will. It lights up the heart of a newlywed couple to serve one another. And it lights up the heart of the Bride of Christ to serve Him faithfully. She is not simply a servant. She is His cherished love.

The secret to being chosen is allowing yourself to be chosen.

It is when we decide that we believe that we are freed to walk into the fullness of our identity as the Elect Lady of Jesus Christ. We realize that He has finished the work in us, we are absolutely adorned by GOD. We choose to be chosen.

⁶ NKJV

⁷ NKJV

⁸ See 1 Peter 2:9

Could you imagine a piece of fruit jumping out of the hands of the grocery shopper, falling back into the crate screaming, “I’m not good enough for you to choose me!” or “You’re not loving enough to choose a horrible piece of fruit like me!”

This is a very humorous thought.

But this is what much of the world does when GOD says, “Hey, I choose you!” They look around them wondering if He is speaking to the person behind them or next to them. *He couldn’t be choosing me! Not after all that I have done.*

Only GOD knows *all* that you and I have done, yet He chooses us with a great big smile on His face. It is when we say, “Thank you for choosing me, for dying for me, for paying the price to purchase me. I receive you too” that we come into a tremendous joy and rest. We come into a personal relationship with the Creator of the entire universe.

The purpose of this relationship is for Him to lavish His grand love upon us in a way that we can receive. He then calls us into a partnership to reach the remainder of the world. But many say no. They say no for many reasons, but one of the main reasons is misunderstanding and deception.

They cannot believe that GOD is being honest.

Our belief system affects our chosen-ness even after we have been called.

Can you believe He chose you?

When Things Go Wrong

It is also important to understand that just because you are chosen does not mean all of your circumstances will be perfectly comfortable. They will go the way GOD desires, but this may not be easy for us to understand. This life has problems, issues, trials and tribulations. But our GOD has already overcome the world.

Jesus is a great example of pain and suffering. He was in a hard situation circumstantially but He did not use circumstances to define GOD’s love for Him. He did not want to be in the circumstance He was in; in fact, He asked GOD to “pass this cup” from Him.

Many times, others will mistreat you, mock you and even physically abuse you in this lifetime. This does not mean you did anything wrong. There are many reasons this may occur including the fruit of sin or the glory of GOD. In the end, you will gain the victory and become a stronger person.

Jesus was being treated unjustly on our behalf and for our sakes. People stripped Him of His clothing and disrespected Him publically. They cut up the clothing He was wearing. Then they said, “He saved others; let Him save Himself if He is the Christ, the chosen of GOD.”

When you are chosen, this does not mean the remainder of the world will respect nor see you the way GOD sees you. It is important to establish this truth as a foundation in your own life so that you are not shaken when others call you names, mistreat you or use you.

This is not a reflection of GOD's heart for you. It is easy to take on these thoughts, believing that this must be a punishment from GOD. When we are persecuted for righteousness sake, this is for GOD's glory. This is not a punishment and does not mean GOD does not love us. In fact, He will reward us greatly in the End.

He is no man's debtor.

He sees our pain. He cares about our pain. But He also knows how much we will grow in the midst of difficulty.

It is like a princess who has been left as a pauper temporarily. Her father may allow her to be poor temporarily to instill character and compassion into her heart. But it is only a matter of time before He comes back to establish her as queen.

Any difficulty we endure in this lifetime is very temporal in comparison to the glory that will be revealed inside of us- this internal beauty will shine for all of eternity. And all of our tears will be wiped away when we reach our eternal destination.

We are loved even in the midst of our challenges, falls and difficulties.

GOD is with us every moment of the journey.

In fact, no one can say anything against GOD's chosen lady:

Who shall bring a charge against GOD's elect? It is GOD who justifies. Romans 8:33⁹

There are consequences to our sins, but we cannot refuse to receive GOD's forgiveness. Even in the midst of correction, which no one likes, we can be confident in GOD's great love towards us- anything GOD is doing in our life is out of His love.

When condemnation and blame comes, we shake it off, knowing that our Good Father has already justified us through the sacrifice of His Son. No one can come against us when our great big daddy is standing behind us ready to fight on our behalf. He is the same dad who will discipline us when we are wrong, but He will fight for us when we are being mistreated.

⁹ NKJV

Life Reflections:

1. Have you ever considered yourself to be specially chosen by GOD, in a personal, thoughtful way? If yes, how does that make you feel? If no, how do you think your perspective about GOD would change if you saw yourself in that light?

2. You are a beautiful princess being prepared for your Bridegroom, the King of the Universe. You will soon be the Queen of Royalty. How does seeing Jesus as your King coming back for you personally make you see the Love Letter He left for you- the Holy Bible?

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CHAPTER THREE

The Lost Lady

“But GOD demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8¹⁰

Amazing Grace is one of the most popular hymns of our day. People sing it at times of celebration and great grief. It instantly has a way of calming an atmosphere and stilling a room. It brings peace.

Amazing Grace, How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

I once was lost, but now I'm found. Was blind, but now I see.

This first stanza is probably already familiar to you, but have you ever taken the time to meditate on these words? We were lost, but now we have been found. There are times in this journey called life when we are lost and we do not even realize that we need to be found. There are other times that the awareness of our lack can be almost crippling if we are not on guard against condemnation and hopelessness.

How can I be chosen when I am so lost?

It is when we see how lost we are that we forget about how found we have been. Being lost is not the end of the story. GOD demonstrated or proved His love for us while we were still in a sinful state. Many of us knowingly lived a lifestyle of sin, but GOD's love goes beyond our actions. Not only did He forgive us of our sin; He died for us while we were in our sin.

Death isn't something that you do for someone you don't love. It would have to be your own child or a loved one for you to give your life in place of another. Most of us would not take on that type of passion for a complete stranger. It is not our responsibility.

¹⁰ NKJV

We are compared to lost sheep in the Bible. The image of a shepherd with his sheep may not be an everyday experience for many of us, but understanding more about this lifestyle is very important to knowing the GOD of the Bible.

A shepherd is with his sheep everyday, tending to his flock, loving his flock, correcting his flock and ministering to the needs of his flock. He knows the personality of each sheep. He knows about the stray sheep, the lonely sheep, the happy sheep and the submitted sheep.

When we are compared to “lost sheep” this example is in the context of a very loving shepherd whose heart is bleeding as he wonders where his sheep has gone. Why isn’t his sheep with the remainder of the flock anymore.

His sheep is out of place.

Perhaps there have been times you have strayed from the fellowship GOD wants you to have with others in the flock or even from your relationship with Him. It could be today. He wants to restore you in relationship with His self and others.

Our own hurts and pains can cause us to stray from the flock, but there is healing through the sacrifice of Jesus.

We need to pray the words of the Psalmist:

I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments. (Psalm 119:176, KJV)

The first step when we are lost is to come back to Jesus. We simply tell Him that we have gone astray. We are lost. We want to renew our sweet fellowship with Him. We are tired of looking for love in all of the wrong places. Then we ask Him to seek us. This may sound like a very strange principle, but it is the question a confident lover of Jesus asks. Even when we mess up, the Father wants to fellowship with us as His children.

We may be lost but we do not have to forget His commandments. We want to give Him our whole heart again and we want Him to find us, to seek us out. This is how we know that He loves us.

GOD will answer our prayer with the following promise:

I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick... (Ezekiel 34:16, KJV)

When we are lost, like a good shepherd, GOD leaves the other 99 to find us. He seeks us out and His desire is toward us. He wants to make amends with us. He is humble, meek and lowly in His approach toward us, not wanting to harm us but to bring salvation.

In the verse before, GOD promises to feed His flock and lie them down. Lying down is a position of rest. Feeding is a position of blessing and needs being met. GOD will feed the empty, hungry soul, the soul that is trying to be filled by the gods of this world: money, fame,

success and the hand clap of man. He will bring rest to the soul that is in so much pain it is looking for any type of relief it can find, even if it must suffer the consequences of sin to find that moment of pleasure. This pleasure is a break from the torment of the mind and soul, however self-destructive in the long run.

GOD is looking for those hearts. He wants the ones who are most broken, hurting and lost. He wants the ones who feel driven away and rejected. He wants to take their broken hearts and begin to doctor them until they are healed. He wants to strengthen the sick mind and emotional life of each and every one of us.

This is not because of any good we have done; it is simply because He is a loving GOD.

GOD loves us for who we are; He does not base His love for us on what we do. He desires us all the same.

Not only are we lost or sick but we can come to points of hopelessness when we do not see GOD in our current situations. We then bury our pain, not wanting to ask Him the real questions of our heart, “Where were You when I was being mistreated, used, abused and rejected? Where were You when I was feeling alone and ashamed?” We can then begin to wallow in our pain, failing to talk to the only One who can really answer these deeply felt questions.

Self-pity and abandonment can quickly settle in if we do not see GOD as a Loving Father, wanting to help us in our desperation.

In the same book of Ezekiel GOD asks Ezekiel an amazing question, “Son of man, can these bones live?”

Ezekiel answers back, “O LORD GOD, You know.”

There are some situations in our lives, in our childhoods that we do not understand. The situation may have been with us for so long that we do not even want to face our own doubt. If GOD were to ask us the question, “Can these bones live?” the safest answer we could say is, “GOD, You Know.” Why does He know? Because we don’t really know at this point. It seems impossible from our perspective.

Here Ezekiel was, positioned by the Spirit of the LORD, in a valley of dry bones. There was not a living soul in sight. He began to walk around in the valley, noticing that the bones were really dry. This meant they had been there for a very long time and the chances of any of these bones coming to life again was slim to none.

As I write this, it is Halloween, the time of the year where bones are celebrated. People hang bones from trees, in their yards and wear skeletons on their bodies. It is a lighthearted event to them, but to Ezekiel this was reality. It wasn’t something he could joke about or take lightly. These were real people with a real need. They were past the point of life...or so it seemed.

But GOD didn’t seem to be phased by Ezekiel’s answer to his question. As long as GOD knew the truth, He could require Ezekiel to prophesy. He told Ezekiel to speak to the dry bones and command them to live.

There were literal steps to the renewal of life in this lost group of people. It did not happen all at once. This is very much in the character of GOD whom created the entire world in seven days instead of one, had His Son live on the earth for 30 years before starting His ministry and healed a man of leprosy after washing his self in the Jordan River 7 times instead of one.

The first time Ezekiel prophesied the bones reconnected. These bones were no longer bodies. They were scattered throughout a valley (a low place of darkness and desperation). Then the muscles and skin miraculously appeared on the bones. But the bodies were just lying there in the valley lifeless. They needed life to be breathed into them, like Adam was given in the Garden of Eden.

This was a sort of reverse creation experience. GOD was taking these people from death to life in a way that only He could receive the glory because no one else could perform this operation.

He is never afraid of *how* lost His children are; He is gracious and all powerful.

Then Ezekiel prophesied to the breath and the bodies became living beings, standing in the valley.

When we first get in the valley of the shadow of death mentioned in Psalm 23, we may be laying there lifeless. We may feel like the bones of these people, scattered everywhere in a state of hopelessness. We may feel like there is no way to be made whole. Then time goes on and it gets worse because of time alone. How can GOD fix my situation or better yet, fix me, when I've been in this state for so long?

Once we see a glimpse of hope, our situation begins to come back together we fight for any bit of faith we can muster up...but then GOD speaks into our situation. He does the miraculous. He recreates us, calling on the winds to breathe life back into us and we can finally stand in the valley.

We are in the same position, same location, same situation but we can finally stand.

It is then that we see others are standing with us and we experience the miracle of being rebirthed into a restorative state. We relate to others in a different way, we have more compassion, we have been made warriors in a mighty army. We are now ready for battle.

The children of Israel were the people in this valley saying, "Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!"¹¹

These are the words of hopelessness and pity. This is a state where we cannot see GOD in the midst of our situation. We need of reminder of His infinite power and His desire to love us out of our situation.

GOD does not want you to be stuck in despair or to remain lost. He wants to find you, even if He has to seek you out of a broken childhood, years of pain and a dry soul. He will then pick

¹¹ Ezekiel 37:11, NKJV

you up, cleanse you, give you new clothes and a new heart. Are you ready for this type of experience with your loving Father?

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