

DEBORAH & BARAK – JUDGES 4:4-7

INTRODUCTION

1. God had raised up Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar to deliver the people from their enemies.
2. But after the death of Ehud, the people fall again into apostasy and in the midst of this time of trouble God will once again bring out His people's deliverance (**Judg. 5:6-12**).

DISCUSSION

I. CANAANITE OPPRESSION

- A. After Ehud died the people fell away again (**Judg. 4:1; 2:19**).
- B. The LORD gave them over to Jabin, a king of the Canaanites, whose army was commanded by Sisera (**Judg. 4:2**).
- C. After twenty years of oppression the people cried out to God for help (**Judg. 4:3**).
- D. God had raised up Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar before but who would He raise up now?

II. DEBORAH & BARAK

- A. Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophetess and was judging Israel (**Judg. 4:4-5**).
 - i. Deborah was unique in that she was both a prophetess and judge.
 - ii. Samuel was the only other one who occupied both roles.
- B. She sent for Barak and asked him if God had not commanded him to go and to fight against Sisera and that God would give him the victory (**Judg. 4:6-7**).
- C. Barak replied that he would obey God but only if Deborah went with him (**Judg. 4:8**).
- D. Deborah said she would go, but because of his lack of faith, God would give Sisera into the hand of a woman (**Judg. 4:9**).
- E. Barak called on the aid of Zebulun, Naphtali, and some people of Ephraim, Benjamin, Machir, and Issachar to join in the fight (**Judg. 4:10, 5:13-18**).
 - i. Note that some of the people of Israel refused to fight alongside Barak.
 - ii. Nevertheless, those who had faith united to fight Jabin and Sisera.

III. BARAK & JAEL

- A. When Sisera learned that Barak had gathered for war, he assembled his army to meet them in battle at the Kishon River (**Judg. 4:11-13**).
- B. Deborah told Barak that God had given Sisera into his hand and they rose up and the LORD gave them the victory (**Judg. 4:14-16**).
 - i. God made Sisera's chariots useless by fighting for Israel as He had done in the days of Moses and later in Samuel (**Judg. 5:20-21; Exod. 14:24; 1 Sam. 7:10**).
 - ii. Without their chariots', Sisera and his men fled on foot and only he escaped Barak's army.
- C. Sisera fled to the tent of an unlikely ally, Heber the Kenite (**Judg. 4:17**).
 - i. Heber's wife, Jael, feigned to be hospitable, but she killed Sisera (**Judg. 4:18-21**).

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- ii. God had given the glory of Sisera's defeat to a woman just as Deborah had prophesied (**Judg. 4:22; 5:24-27**).
- D. God delivered the people from Jabin, the king of Canaan, and the people would have peace for forty years (**Judg. 4:23-24; 5:31**).
 - i. Deborah's song spoke about Barak, Jael, and her part in the victory.
 - ii. Her song speaks about those who did and who did not fight in the battle.
 - iii. But most of all her song honors God who gave them the victory.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED FROM DEBORAH & BARAK

- A. The role and example of a faithful, godly woman.
 - i. Deborah was a remarkable woman who balanced her responsibilities of being a wife, a prophetess, and a judge.
 - ii. She shows us how to be caring, how to exalt others, and to be bold and step up even when others will not.
 - iii. She was a "Mother of Israel" who cared for and nurtured the people in a difficult time under God's direction (**Judg. 5:7; 4:4-5**).
 - iv. Though many today want to use Deborah as authority for women to take on public leadership roles in the church, note what Deborah did and didn't do:
 - 1. She didn't lead the army, but called on the man God chose (**Judg. 4:6; 1 Sam. 12:9-11**).
 - 2. She encouraged Barak to take up his role and to obey God (**Judg. 4:14**).
 - v. Instead of stepping out of her role as a godly woman, she served God by remaining in her God given role.
 - vi. Today, women who would be faithful like Deborah will respect God's will in their role in the home, society, and the church (**Gen. 2:18; 1 Tim. 2:9-15; 5:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:1-7; 1 Cor. 11:3; 14:34**).
- B. The need for complete obedience and trust in God.
 - i. When God called on Barak to lead the armies of Israel he refused to obey unless Deborah went with him (**Judg. 4:8**).
 - ii. Because of Barak's conditional obedience, he did not receive the glory of defeating Sisera; instead Jael did (**Judg. 4:9; 18-22**).
 - iii. When God calls on us to obey Him do we respond with "I'll obey if...."?
 - iv. Faith calls on us to trust God regardless of our feelings or reservations.
 - v. If we want God to honor us at the Judgment, we must be willing to trust and obey God without conditions (**John 14:15; 2 Tim. 2:10-15**).

CONCLUSION

- 1. God can always use women and men who will have faith and step up and do His will.
- 2. May we be willing to trust God fully and rise up and obey Him no matter the time or circumstances.