

**Sermon Title:** Glass Houses: Willing or Able?

**Scripture:** Judges 4 & 5

*Gender **Dynamics**:*

Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, “The Lord, the God of Israel, commands you: ‘Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them up to Mount Tabor. <sup>7</sup> I will lead Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands.’”

Judges 4:1-7

**The story of Deborah & Barak critiques problematic expressions of **masculinity**.**

*Notice **pride**:*

So the Lord sold them into the hands of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. Sisera, the commander of his army, was based in Harosheth Haggoyim. <sup>3</sup> **Because he had nine hundred chariots fitted with iron and had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years,** they cried to the Lord for help.

Judges 4:1-3

When they told Sisera that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, <sup>13</sup> Sisera summoned from Harosheth Haggoyim to the Kishon River all his men and his nine hundred chariots fitted with iron.

Judges 4:12-13

*Notice **scheming**:*

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 Zaanannim near Kedesh. <sup>12</sup> When they told Sisera...

Judges 4:11-12

*Notice **passivity**:*

In the districts of Reuben there was much searching of heart. <sup>16</sup> **Why did you stay** among the sheep pens to hear the whistling for the flocks? In the districts of Reuben there was much searching of heart. <sup>17</sup> **Gilead stayed** beyond the Jordan. And Dan, **why did he linger** by the ships? **Asher remained** on the coast and stayed in his coves. <sup>18</sup> The people of Zebulun risked their very lives; so did Naphtali on the terraced fields.

Judges 5:15-18

‘Curse Meroz,’ said the angel of the Lord. ‘Curse its people bitterly, because they did not come to help the Lord, to help the Lord against the mighty.’

Judges 5:23

**Passivity is **pervasive & poisonous**.**

After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. <sup>3</sup>The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” <sup>4</sup>**Jesus answered**,  
Matthew 4:2-4

**The life of Jesus is the definitive standard for everyone & an emphatic standard for every man.**

**The story of Deborah & Barak critiques problematic expressions of femininity.**

“When **the princes in Israel** take the lead, when the people willingly offer themselves—praise the Lord!  
Judges 5:2

My heart is with **Israel’s princes**, with the willing volunteers among the people. Praise the Lord!  
Judges 5:9

**Celebrate what you want to see more of.**

On that day Deborah **and** Barak son of Abinoam sang this song:  
Judges 5:1

“In the days of **Shamgar** son of Anath, in the days of **Jael**, the highways were abandoned; travelers took to winding paths. <sup>7</sup>Villagers in Israel would not fight; they held back until I, Deborah, arose, until I arose, **a mother in Israel**.  
Judges 5:6-7

“So may all your enemies perish, Lord! But may all who love you be like the sun when it rises in its strength. **“Then the land had peace forty years.**  
Judges 5:31

**When men & women work together, God’s work advances in power.**

*God dynamics:*

**God works through the willing, no matter who they are.**

“Most blessed of women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, most blessed of tent-dwelling women.  
Judges 5:24

***The willing, not the worthy.***

Barak said to her, “If you go with me, I will go; but if you don’t go with me, I won’t go.”  
<sup>9</sup>“Certainly I will go with you,” said Deborah. “But because of the course you are taking, the honor will not be yours, for the Lord will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman.”  
Judges 4:8-9

***The willing, not the able.***

So Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh. <sup>10</sup> There Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali, and ten thousand men went up under his command. Deborah also went up with him.  
v9b-10

Then Deborah said to Barak, “Go! This is the day the Lord has given Sisera into your hands. Has not the Lord gone ahead of you?” So Barak went down Mount Tabor, with ten thousand men following him. <sup>15</sup> At Barak’s advance, **the Lord routed Sisera and all his chariots** and army by the sword, and Sisera got down from his chariot and fled on foot. <sup>16</sup> Barak pursued the chariots and army as far as Harosheth Haggoyim, and all Sisera’s troops fell by the sword; **not a man was left.**  
v14-16

**God invites people to take him at His word & take Him by the hand.**

**Readiness is not a requirement for obedience.**

**Jesus is at work to strengthen our willingness to trust.**

for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.  
Philippians 2:13

**Jesus’ willingness to love is the lasting fuel willingness to trust.**

“Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. <sup>12</sup>**If you are willing and obedient,** you will eat the good things of the land;  
Isaiah 1:18-19

**What are the easiest & hardest areas of obedience in your life & why?**