

11/3/13

### Judges 5-6

The fifth chapter of Judges is a poetical description of the battle that took place between Deborah and Barak against the military commander Sisera, whose King was Jabin, the king of Canaan, who reigned from the city of Hazor.

The victory song of Deborah is a poetic account supplements the battle account of chapter four and is considered to be a masterpiece of early Hebrew poetry.

1. Some believe it was one of the collections of war songs like the book of Jasher. Num. 21:14; Josh. 10:13; 2Chron. 12:12

2. We have other like the song of Moses, as Miriam sang how God destroyed the Egyptians in the Red Sea. Ex. 15; Deut. 32

#### 5:1-11 *The battle and triumph.*

- 1) They memorialized the victory in a song. vs. 1
  - a) This is one of the oldest examples of Hebrew literature regarding poetic parallelism.
  - b) Hebrew poetry does not consist in rhyme as English, but rather in parallelism of thoughts and concepts of comparisons or contrasts.

- c) The building of a thought and arriving at the intended idea of message.
- 2) They acknowledged the difference leaders make to a nation. vs. 2
  - a) People are like sheep, who need to be led and who will follow.
  - b) People who acknowledge godly leader will follow.
- 3) They praised God for the victory. vs. 3
  - a) All that is declared is through the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
  - b) All that is declared is accurate truth from God's perspective, rather than man's.
  - c) All that is declared complements and supplements the record of chapter four.
- 4) They described the omnipotence of God. vs. 4-5
  - a) God is described as a marching soldier out of Edom. vs. 4a-b
  - b) God's power was evident by the earth trembling. vs. 4c
  - c) God caused it to rain. vs. 4d
  - d) God used the run-off or flash floods to discomfit the enemy. vs. 5
- 5) They described the fearful condition of the people before the victory. vs. 6-7b
  - a) The days before Deborah were dangerous and the road was not safe due to robbers and anarchy. vs. 6

- \* The days of Shamgar, the third judge, was a contemporary with Jael and Deborah the fourth.
- b) The life of villages did not exist due to the lack of leaders, along with the danger of the enemy, living in fortified places. vs. 7a-b
- 6) They acknowledge Deborah as the heroin. vs. 7c-d
  - a) She arose by the call of God.
    - \* A sharp rebuke to the men of the day!
  - b) She saw herself as a mother in Israel.
    - 1)) To protect Israel with maternal affection.
    - 2)) To have compassion on the afflicted.
    - 3)) To administer justice.
    - 4)) To defend the name of Yahweh.
- 7) They described the apostate in contrast to the faithful. vs. 8-9
  - a) The people served other gods. vs. 8a
  - b) The people rebelled against the authorities of the elders at the gates. vs. 8b
  - c) The people were without weapons to defend themselves, not one shield or spear among forty thousand. vs. 8c
  - d) The prophetess was overjoyed in heart with the leaders who had given

- themselves willingly with the people to be victorious in the battle. vs. 9
- 8) They demanded a testimony about God's deliverance by those who benefited by it and now enjoyed safety. vs. 10-11
  - a. They now rode on white donkeys, sat in judgment and walked safely on the roads. vs. 10
  - b. They were now able to live in peace and recount the acts of the Lord at the watering places, the villages and gates of the cities. vs. 11

#### **5:12-23** *The battle described.*

- 1) The celebration of victory is declared.
  - a) In rejoicing song to awake and take action. vs. 12a-f
  - b) In rejoicing in the leading of the captives. vs. 12g-j
- 2) The courageous are praised. vs. 13-15c
  - a) Those who survived were emboldened and came to the battle. vs. 13
  - b) Ephraim, Benjamin, Zebulum and Issachar. vs. 14-15c
    - 1) Those who root were in Amalek, but settled among the Ephraimites and fought with Israel. vs. 14a
    - 2) The recruiter's staff could be referring to the recruiting officer who wrote the name of the soldiers? vs. 14f

- 3) The fearful are denounced. vs. 15d-17
- a) Reuben procrastinated in coming due to having settled in the enemies land, not wanting to compromise their safety and rather cared for the flocks. vs. 15d-16
  - b) Gilead also stayed beyond the Jordan vs. 17a
  - c) Dan remained at ease in her port city, involved in commerce. vs. 17b
  - d) Asher likewise remained on the seashore. vs. 17c-d
- 4) The intensity of the battle is described. vs. 18
- a) Zebulun jeopardized their lives. vs. 18a
  - b) Naphtali on the heights of the battlefield. vs. 18b
- 5) The miraculous intervention recorded. vs. 19-22
- \* The poetic repetition is vivid in this section “fought” occurs four times, “river” three times, Kings, “Kishon” and ‘galloping occur twice each.
  - a) The kings came to fight at Megiddo, but took no spoil, alias of Israel. vs. 19
  - b) The heavens fought against Sisera, the stars in some form of confusion or the elements of hail and rain etc. vs. 20

- \* As Joshua fought against the five kings of the Amorites, God cast down hailstones from heaven and Joshua called on the sun to stand still over Gibeon. Josh. 10:5-12
  - c) The torrents of water in the River Kishon swept away the enemy. vs. 21a-b
    - \* The area of Mount Carmel, where Elijah would contend with the prophets of Baal.
  - d) The Lord strengthened Israel. vs. 21c-22
    - \* The Lord of Host was fighting for Israel!
- 6) The accursed declared. vs. 23
- a) The city of Meroz.
  - b) The inhabitants of Meroz.
  - c) They did not come to the help of the Lord.
  - d) They did not come to the help of the Lord against the mighty.
- 5:24-31** *The battles results.*
- 1) The hero was Jael. vs. 24-27
    - a) The wife of Heber the Kenite. vs. 24a-b
    - b) The blessing is to distinguish her among women in tents, those who honor their husbands being at home. vs. 24c

- c) The hospitality was that of a King, to draw no suspicion, rather than water she gave him milk and perhaps cream in a large size bowl. vs. 25
- d) The plan was precise and calculated for being an enemy of God's people. vs. 26
- e) The poetic parallelism is prominent throughout the chapter and contrasts of Hebrew poetry. vs. 23, 24, 27
- 2) The heart broken was Sisera's mother. vs. 28-30
  - a) She was concerned about his delay from the battle. vs. 28
  - b) She is answered by the princesses, that he is delayed by the gathering of the spoil. vs. 29a
  - c) She agrees and repeats their answer and mentions the specifics. vs. 29b-30
    - \* The word for girl "rachamah", means womb, implying the spoils of war of ravishing the women!
- 3) The closing remarks. vs. 31
  - a) The prayer for Yahweh's enemies to perish. vs. 31a-b
    - \* God loves His people and desires to protect them!
  - b) The prayer for those who love the Lord Yahweh to be strong and radiant as the sun. vs. 31c-d

- \* God desires to use and strengthen his people to glorify Him!
- c) The land had rest for forty years. vs. 31e
  - \* God is the only One who can give a generation rest by delivering them supernatural!
- d) The Lord used a woman at the shame of the men who would not stand in the gap.

**6:1-10** *The sin of Israel led to their oppression by the Midianites.*

- 6:1-2** The bondage of Israel was of their own doing.
- 1) Israel turned their backs on Yahweh for the fourth time in apostasy. vs. 1
    - a) They practiced the idolatrous evil of the land before the eyes the LORD, unrestrained and unashamed. vs. 1a
      - 1)) Forty years of rest, as Deborah and Barak defeated Jobin king of Hazor. Judges 5:31d
      - 2)) The treachery was to the LORD", their covenant God, Yahweh.
      - 3)) This was the normal cycle of the time of the Judges, remaining faithful till the death of the judge, then reverted back to compromise and sin that ended in bondage!

- b) Israel consequently was given up in judgment to the Midianites for seven years by Yahweh. vs. 1b
- 1)) The Midianites were descendants of Abraham through Keturah, nomadic tribes in the Arabian desert east of the Dead Sea and borders of Moab and Edom. Gen. 25:1-2
  - 2)) Joseph was sold by his brothers to the Midianites and sent Balaam to curse Israel. Gen. 37:36; Num. 22:4-7
- 2) Israel was living under great hardship by their bondage to the Midianites. vs. 2
- a) The hand of Midian constantly brought defeat to Israel. vs. 2a
  - b) Israel in fear was forced to make protective hiding places in the mountain areas. vs. 2b-d

**6:3-4** The bondage of Israel brought and kept Israel in utter poverty.

- 1) The Midianites and Amalekites raided the land Israel at the sowing of her crops. vs. 3
  - a) The two nomadic tribes invaded the land from the east for seven years. vs. 1b
  - b) The defeat of Jabin king of Hazor had made it easier for them to attack.

- 1)) Amalek was a descendant of Esau. Gen. 36:10-16
  - 2)) They attacked Israel coming out of Egypt, Moses prayed and Joshua defeated them. Ex. 17
  - 3)) God had declared perpetual war against Amalek, commanding to utterly destroy them. Ex. 17:16; Deut. 25:17-19; 1Sam. 15:2-3
- 2) The enemy would devastate their crops. vs. 4
- a) They moved through the land as they encamped, from the north to the south destroying all their produce, as far as Gaza.” vs. 4a
  - b) They left nothing for Israel, crops, sheep, ox nor donkey.” vs. 4b
- 3) The enemy was a fearful brute force. vs. 5
- a) They are depicted by the metaphor as a plague of locust in multitudes. vs. 5a-b
  - b) They are described as having military advantage with their speedy camels running destructively through the land. vs. 5
    - 1)) Camels can travel 3-4 days with heavy loads, covering 300 miles without food and water.
    - 2)) This is the first time camels are mentioned for military use.

- 4) The Israelites in their desperation called upon their God. vs. 6
- a) The summary statement states their difficult condition of great impoverishment by the Midianites.” vs. 6a
- \* The word poverty “dalal”, means to languish, hang down, to be weak and defeated.
- b) The children of Israel looked once again for help from their covenant God. vs. 6b
- \* This is the fifth time we read the phrase “cried out to the LORD”. Judges 3:9, 15; 4:3; 5:28; 6:6

**6:7-10** The cry of Israel from their bondage was rebuked a prophet of God.

- 1) The LORD sent a prophet to speak the children of Israel.” vs. 7-8a
- a) Prophets primarily were sent by God to call His people to confront the sin of the people and call them to repent.
- b) Prophets secondly revealed future events at times.
- 2) The prophet reminded them of their past redemptive history out of bondage from Egyptians by God. vs. 8b-9a
- a) They had been there for 430 years.
- b) God Judged the gods of Egypt.

- 3) The prophet also reminded them of His past deliverance from the people as they entered the land. vs. 9b-c
- a) It began with the destruction of Jericho by Joshua.
- b) Joshua at his death commanded they take the rest of the land, but they failed by compromise.
- 4) The prophet reminded them of their disobedience to listen to God. vs. 10
- a) Their loyalty was supposed to be to their covenant God, Yahweh. vs. 10a-b
- b) Their fear was never to be of the gods of the Amorites. vs. 10c-d
- c) Their disobedience marked their rebellion against God. vs. 10e

**6:11-24** *The commission of the fifth judge.*

**6:11** The appearance of God to Gideon.

- 1) The person is described as the Angel of the LORD”. vs. 11a
- a) This is a Christophany, an appearance of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament. vs. 11a
- b) The word LORD “Yahweh” is the covenant God, the existing One. Ex. 3:12-14
- c) Other appearances. Judges 2:1-4; 13:2

2. The Angel of the LORD sat under the terbinth tree in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite.” vs. 11a-b
- a) Joash was the father of Gideon, Ophrah was 8 miles northwest of Beth Shem.
  - b) The family name was Abiezarite “Abiy ha-Ezriy”, which means “my father is help” vs. 11a-b  
\* This is in the vicinity of Shechem, the tribe of Manasseh.
- 3) The occasion was as Gideon was hiding wheat from the Midianites raiders. vs. 11c-d
- a) The threshing of wheat was done on a high elevation, beating it, then throwing it up in the air to separate the wheat from the husk.
  - b) The wine press was at a lower elevation, to be concealed from the Bedouin Midianites, revealing a meager crop.

**6:12-16** The conversation between God and Gideon.

1. The Angel of the Lord initiated the conversation, assuring him that the LORD was with him and that he was a mighty man of valor! vs. 12
  - a) Gideon had been unaware of the presence of the Angel of the Lord.

- \* His only concern was to be undetected by the enemy!
- b) Gideon all of a sudden hearing that Yahweh was with him and that he was a mighty man of valor.
    - 1) Contradicted what Gideon was doing.
    - 2) He was afraid as he threshed wheat in the wine press at the bottom of the hill, rather than on top.
  - c) The Angel of the LORD was going to be with him to deliver Israel and God saw him as he was going to be, knowing the end from the beginning.
- 2) The man Gideon objected to the statement in view of the present reality, charging God with some sarcastic questions. vs. 13
- a) He blamed God for their present condition, “Gideon said to Him. vs. 13a-c
  - b) He blamed God for not working miraculous on their behalf, as in the past. vs. 13d-f
  - c) He falsely accused God of forsaking them. vs. 13g

\* Gideon was blaming God for their past and present troubles, while in reality it is the result of disobedience to God and His Word. Judges 6:10

- 3) The Angel of the Lord commissioned Gideon as the fifth judge. vs. 14
  - a) The practicality of his call is stated, “Go in this might of your”, it is a command. vs. 14a-b
  - b) The outcome of his call was then stated, he would save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. vs. 14c
  - c) The power and authority was stated, “Have I not sent you?” vs. 14d
    - 1) This is the only confidence that will bring perseverance, knowing God is sending me.
    - 2) The mystery of the Divine and the human is throughout the Bible, God works through the natural to magnify the supernatural!
- 4) The personal humility of Gideon is revealed, as he expressed weakness of his tribe, Manasseh, and he lack of importance of his father’s house. vs. 15
  - a) Moses likewise objected because of his speech impediment. Ex. 4:10
  - b) Isaiah said, “I am but a youth”, “Woe is me, I am a sinful man.” Is. 1:6; 6:5
  - c) Jeremiah said, "I am but a child." Jer. 1:7
  - d) Peter said, “Depart from me Lord for I am a sinful man.” Lk. 5:8
  - e) Manasseh was the son of Joseph, half of the tribe settled on the east side.

- 5) The promise of victory was stated. vs. 16
  - a) The covenant God would be with him. vs. 16a-b
  - b) The victory would be Gideon’s, as one man, supernaturally. vs. 16c

- 6:17-24** The confirmation of the Angel of the Lord.
- 1) Gideon made a request to affirm he was speaking to God. vs. 17-18
    - a) He asked for a sign. vs. 17
    - b) He wanted to offer an offering to Him. vs. 18
  - 2) Gideon sought the appropriate offering and to be offered. vs. 19-21
    - a) The particulars are given for the offering. vs. 19
    - b) The instructions were given to Gideon. vs. 20
    - c) The offering was accepted by the Angel of the Lord, confirming He was God, by consuming the offering and disappearing. vs. 21
  - 3) Gideon perceived it was God in the person of the Angel of the Lord. vs. 22-24
    - a) Gideon responded in reverent fear. vs. 22
    - b) The LORD Yahweh assured Gideon he would not die, “Then the LORD said to him. vs. 23



\* Gen. 16:13; 32:30; Ex. 20:19; 33:20

c) Gideon memorialized the occasion with an altar. vs. 24

\* The word peace “Shalom indicated more than tranquility, a well-being, health and prosperity, a wholesomeness and benefit of life.

**6:25-40** *The commission of Gideon was in view of repentant obedience.*

**6:25-27** The Lord sent Gideon first to oppose the worship of Baal by his family and set up the worship of Yahweh that very night. vs. 25-27

1) He was to destroy the altar of Baal. vs. 25

\* The worship of Baal, the god of storms, as well as fertility and his consort, the wooden image of the fertility goddess Ashara in the groves had permeated Israel .

2) He was to build an altar to the Lord in it's place and offer a sacrifice. vs. 26a

\* He offered a burnt offering symbolic of dedication and consecration to God.

3) He took ten men who had not bowed to Baal during the night. vs. 27

a) Home is the hardest to be a light, but it is the first place we are called to in order to bring other to Christ!

b) Scripture tells us not to despise the days of small things. Zach. 4:10

**6:28-32** The men of the city declared their consternation. vs. 28-32

1) The people seeing the altar torn down in the morning enquired as to who had done it. vs. 28-29a-b

2) The inquiry led to Gideon the culprit. vs. 29c-e

3) The men demanded the execution of Gideon for the deed. vs. 30

4) The father of Gideon opposed the men. vs. 31-32

a) God used the occasion to turn Gideon's father back to God, giving him wisdom to respond. vs. 31

b) The father of Gideon honored his son by giving him the name of Jerubbaal. vs. 32

1) The name Gideon mean “hewer”, the name Jerubbaal means “let Baal contend”, indicating he was Baal antagonist.

2) Later changed to Jerubbesheth, “shame will contend”. 2Sam. 11:21

3) Gideon led the town back to Yahweh.

**6:33-35** The stage for the battle was set.

- 1) The enemy passed over the Jordan and encamped against Israel, in the Valley of Jezreel. vs. 33  
 \* Jezreel is between Moreh and Gilboa, the territory of Issachar, not to be confused with the plain of Esdraelon or the plain of Megiddo.
- 2) The Lord equipped and enabled Gideon for the victory by His Spirit, blowing the trumpet for battle. vs. 34  
 \* Literally “clothed” Gideon to enable him to do the work,
- 3) The man Gideon sent messengers throughout the northern tribes for fighting men. vs. 35

**6:36-40** The commission was through confirmation.

- 1) Gideon placed a flees before the Lord. vs. 36-38
  - a) The condition of Gideon was stated to God by Gideon. vs. 36-37
  - b) The Lord confirmed the request of Gideon. vs. 38
- 2) Gideon reversed the flees to be sure it was God. vs. 39-40
  - a) The condition was stated to God again. vs. 39
  - b) The Lord confirmed the request of Gideon. vs. 40

- 1)) I would not recommend “fleeces” to have God confirm something!
- 2)) God confirms Himself through His word, never contrary to it!