

10/12/13

**Deborah, The Faith Warrior**  
**Judges 4:1-24**

The Bible is interesting in that it is very clear about the role of a woman as God intended from the beginning of creation.

The woman is to be cared for, protected and loved in order that she be secure in the confines of her home and family. Yet there have been times in history when God has used women in an extraordinary way, out of the ordinary of His design.

\* Often due to the decayed male leadership!

Deborah is one of these interesting ladies chosen by God to deliver His people to bring glory to Himself, described in a three-fold movement:  
Judges 4:1-24

- I. The condition of the times when Deborah judged. vs. 1-5
- II. The commission to Barak by Deborah the prophetess. vs. 6-10
- III. The liberation of Israel by Deborah the deliverer. vs. 11-24

**I. The condition of the times when Deborah judged. vs. 1-5**

A. Deborah judged at a time of spiritual decay.

vs. 1

\* “When Ehud was dead, the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD.”

1. The children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.
  - a. Ehud, the left handed Benjamite was dead, which gave way to another apostasy.
    - 1) This was the fruit and effect of the long rest and peace they enjoyed.
    - 2) This is often the case of a people or nation favored with peace, plenty, and prosperity.
    - 3) They are apt to abuse their liberties and freedom and forget God, the author and giver of them.
 

\* “Look, this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughter had pride, fullness of food, and abundance of idleness; neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy.” Ezk. 16:49
  - b. The principal evil, though not expressed, was idolatry, worshipping the gods of the nations about them; though it is highly probable they were guilty of other sins, which they indulged in the times of their peace and prosperity.
    - 1) Syncretism.

- 2) Compromise.
  - 3) Idolatry.
  - 4) Forsaking the Lord, apostasy.
2. The common phrase of the book of judges was two-fold.
- a. “In those days there was no king in Israel.”
  - b. “Everyone did *what was* right in his own eyes.” Judges 17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21:25
  - c. The people of God were hard to distinguish from those of the land.
  - d. Patriotism was dead and lost.
  - e. Anarchy was the standard of Israel.
- B.** Deborah was under the bondage of the enemy, due to God’s judgment. vs. 2-3
1. This was God’s doing according to His covenant. vs. vs. 2a-b
- \* “So the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor.”
  - a. The LORD Yahweh had given them up to Jabin the King of Canaan. vs. 2a
    - 1) He ruled over a confederacy of tribes.
    - 2) God was true to His word. Lev. 26; Deut. 28-29
  - b. The location of Jabin’s reigned was Hazor. “vs. 2b
    - 1) The city of Hazor was in Galilee of the Gentiles, or Upper Galilee, in

- the north of Israel, allotted to Naphtali
- 2) The name Hazor means “castle”, we go by it when we are up in the Galilee and go to Miggido.
2. The King Jabin had a commander over his army. vs. 2c-d
- \* “The commander of his army *was* Sisera, who dwelt in Harosheth Hagoyim.”
  - a. The name Sisera “Ciyc@ra”, and mean “battle array”.
    - 1) The authority come from the king.
    - 2) The enforcer is his military force.
  - b. Sisera dwelt in Harosheth Hagoyim. vs. 2c-d
    - 1) It was here that Jabin’s great army was marshaled before it went forth into the great battlefield of Esdraelon to encounter the army of Israel, by which it was routed and put to flight.
    - 2) It was situated “at the entrance of the pass to Esdraelon from the plain of Acre” at the base of Carmel.
3. The children of Israel were under his oppression. vs. 3
- \* “And the children of Israel cried out to the LORD; for Jabin had nine hundred chariots of iron, and for

twenty years he harshly oppressed the children of Israel.”

- a. The people of God cried out to their covenant God, Yahweh. vs. 3a
- b. The tyrannical power was intimidating by nine-hundred chariots of iron Jabin had. vs. 3b
- c. Their harsh oppression had been going on for twenty year. vs. 3c

C. Deborah was the hope of Israel. vs. 4-5

1. She was a prophetess. vs. 4a-b
  - \* “Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time. “
    - a. The seer of Israel.
    - b. The mouth of God to reveal the word of God and the work of God.
    - c. The first instance of female government, on record.
2. She was the wife of Lapidoth. vs. 4c
  - a. Nothing else is known about him.
  - b. She was a respectable and honorable woman.
  - c. Some have rendered the expression “a woman of a fiery spirit,” under the supposition that Lapidoth is not a proper name, the meaning being “torch” they have take it to mean a woman of a torch-like spirit.
3. She was a judge of Israel. vs. 4d

- a. There were thirteen judges in a period of roughly 300 years, 12 men and one women of faith. Heb. 11:32
- b. The fourth judge was Deborah and it was the third apostasy.
- c. There was a repeated cycle to Israel’s character after the death of the judge.
  - 1) Apostasy
  - 2) Bondage.
  - 3) Cry for deliverance.
  - 4) Brief obedience.
  - 5) Apostasy back to bondage.
4. She would judge the people under a palm tree. vs. 5
  - \* “And she would sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the mountains of Ephraim. And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.”
    - a. She would sit and judge, the position of one who instructs. vs. 5a
    - b. She did this under a palm tree, a symbol of rest and peace, due to the fact that it was God who would speak to her. vs. 5a
    - c. She judge in the mountains of Ephraim, between Ramah, the home of Samuel and Bethel. vs. 5a
    - d. She received the children of Israel as they came to her for judgment. vs. 5b

- 1) She advised and counseled in matters of great difficulty by the Spirit of God.
- 2) She heard cases between contending parties and made righteous judgments by the Spirit of God, exercising righteousness judgment, being reckoned among the judges.
- 3) She exercised both civil and religious authority for the purpose of turning the people from their sin to repentance and the will of God.
- 4) She lived up to her name Deborah which means “bee”, busy about the Lord’s business!

### Illustration

The fact that many in the church are living like the world, is no excuse for not living as God intends His people to live. Deborah was not the only one, but the book of Ruth fits into this period of time.

### Application

1. The church is experiencing a void of strong spiritual leader today in America.
  - a. Many are not preaching the gospel, but a social gospel, void of sin and repentance.
  - b. Many of them are into the “Seeker Friendly” and “Emergent Movement”.

- c. Many are into the common bond of love, at the expense of critical doctrine for the sake of unity and reaching the lost.
  - d. Many are interpreting the Scriptures subjectively and out of context mixing New Age teaching, as motivational speakers.
    - \* “The prophets prophesy falsely, And the priests rule by their *own* power; And **My people** love to have it so. But what will you do in the end?” Jer. 5:31
2. The position of women in the church is clear in the Scriptures, yet there is so much confusion.
    - a. Women can pray in the church. 1Cor. 11:13
    - b. Women can prophecy in the church. 1Cor. 11:5
    - c. Women can do anything in the church, be deaconess, teach women or children, etc.
    - d. Women can not be a Pastor-teacher over men in the church.
      - \* “And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.” 1Tim. 2:12-14
      - 1) The prohibition is based on two scriptural reasons, not cultural, as so many teach today.
      - 2) The first is that Adam was created first, he is the head of the human race and authority over the woman.

- 3) The second is that fact that Eve was deceived, her decision making is more based on her emotions, than the man.
  - 4) Adam transgressed.
  - 5) Her silence indicates to not disrupt the teaching by asking questions.
3. The church needs the teaching of the word of God to keep God's people free from error and bondage.
- a. The purpose of the church is to perfect the saints, so they can mature to the stature of Christ and not be deceived. Eph. 4:12-14
  - b. Examining everything to the word, like a good Berean. Acts 17:11
  - c. So many people are being deceived and destroyed today, due to the false teaching over the pulpits of America.
- \* "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children. "The more they increased, The more they sinned against Me; I will change their glory into shame. They eat up the sin of My people; They set their heart on their iniquity And it shall be: like people, like priest. So I will punish them for their ways, And reward them for their deeds." Hos. 4:6-9

***The condition of the times when Deborah judged was apostasy from God!***

**II. The commission to Barak by Deborah the prophetess. vs. 6-10**

- A. The courageous call of Deborah was sent to the man God had chosen for the battle. vs. 6-7
- \* "Then she sent and called for Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, "Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded, 'Go and deploy *troops* at Mount Tabor; take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun.""
1. The man's name was Barak. vs. 6a
    - a. The name Barak "baraq", means "lightening flash".
    - b. Which without doubt referred to his speed and effectiveness in war.
  2. The man Barak was from one of the cities in the north. vs. 6a
    - a. He was the son of Abinoam "Abiyno'am", which means "my father is delight".
    - b. His family was from Kedesh, one of the city of refuge on the south-west corner of the Sea of Galilee.
      - 1) These were cities where a man accused of murder could flee to, in order to escape the kinsman redeemer, the blood goel, from

- avenging the dead family member, until his case was heard and determined if it was murder, an accident or self-defense.
- 2) There were six, three in the land of Israel and three on the east side of the Jordan.
  - 3) The name Kedesh means holy place.
3. The man Barak was from the tribe of Naphtali. vs. 6a
- a. Naphtali was the son of Bilhah, Rachel's maidservant. Gen. 35:25
  - b. Rachel was barren and her sister Leah was bearing many children, so she gave Bilhah to Jacob to have a child by her.
  - c. Naphtali means "wrestling" located from the south-west to the north of the Sea of Galilee.
4. Deborah called to remind Barak to obey the call of God to battle. vs. 6b-c
- a. The call was a mild rebuke for he was fully aware of God's word to him, "Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded".
    - 1) The covenant God "Yahweh", to not spare any in the land.
    - 2) The revelation to Barak were direct orders from heaven, an imperative command from the Lord of Host,

- the Captain of the armies of heaven, but he had not obeyed.
- b. The plans had been given to him by God.
    - 1) He was to go and deploy or march troops at Mount Tabor, west of the Sea of Galilee, in the Plain of Jezreel.
    - 2) He was order to take 10,000 men of Naphtali and Zebulum.
5. Deborah revealed to Barak God was in control over the battle to give victory. vs. 7
- a. God declared, "Against you I will deploy Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army".
  - b. God named the location, "the River Kishon", where Elisha slew the prophets of Baal, about thirteen miles or so from Tabor.
  - c. God revealed their triumph, "I will deliver them into your hand."
- B. The cowardly response of Barak was voiced to Deborah. vs. 8-10
1. Deborah heard Barak's condition for obedience. vs. 8
    - a. Barak said, "If you will go with me, then I will go, but if you will not go with me, I will not go!"
    - b. Barak revealed two things by his words.

- 1) His eyes were not on the Lord, but on Deborah.
  - 2) He was being disobedient to going without Deborah.
  - 3) I think it is a mistake to justify Barak, saying his understanding of Deborah's influence on the army was crucial.
2. Deborah declared Barak's shame and dishonor. vs. 9a-d
- a. She would go as he requested.
    - 1) Her love for God and the nation was greater than her disappointment of the lack of courage in the male leadership.
    - 2) Our love for God must be greater than our disappointments with man and life or we will not walk with God! Xavier
  - b. She revealed there would be no glory for him, due to the fact that God would give Sisera to the hand of a woman.
 

\* Short term Deborah and long term wise Jael!

    - 1) Some commentators try to tone this down by saying that she was not rebuking him, rather agreeing with the partnership for battle, but the words, "there will be no glory for you" is clearly a rebuke.

- 2) That a woman was ruling over men is a dead give away to the spiritual condition of the men and nation.
    - a) Miriam was a prophetess, but was not in a leadership position and Huldah was also prophetess, but during the spiritual decay condition of Josiah's reform. Ex. 15:20; 2Kings 22:14; 2Chron. 34:22
    - b) Philip had four daughters who prophesied. Acts 21:9
  - 3) Throughout history when women in great numbers have taken a prominent roles to lead, rather than men in the leadership of a nation, it is indicative of deterioration and a weak society and the judgment of God.
    - a) "*As for My people, children are their oppressors, And **women** rule over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err, And destroy the way of your paths.*" Is. 3:12
    - b) It is the greater shame to the man rather than the woman!
3. Deborah went up with Barak. vs. 9e-10

- a. Zebulum and Naphtali comprised 10,000 men. vs. 9e-10c
- b. Deborah went up with Barak. vs. 10d

### **Illustration**

From 1970-1973 the Soviet Union supplies Egypt, Syria, Irak and others with arms that were used to attack Israel Oct. 1973. Just between Egypt and Syria it consisted of 650 planes and 2500 tanks to Egypt, 330 planes, 2,000 tanks to Syria. Including anti-tank and anti-tank missiles, never before sent outside of the Soviet Union. (Arab-Israeli conflict)

### **Application**

1. Whenever God wants to do a work, He is the One who chooses, calls, enables and anoint the person.
  - a. The call can be responded to or ignored, God does not force us to serve Him.
  - b. The call has nothing to do with the talent or ability of the person.
  - c. The call to the work is to be in full dependence and obedience to God as to how He will do the work.
    - \* “As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now **separate** to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” Acts 13:2
2. Whenever God wants to do a work, He does it in such a way that the odds for the work to be done is nearly human impossible.

- a. The raising up of the people to be involved in the work.
- b. The open doors to establish the work.
- c. The provision through the people of God, without pressuring and manipulation the people of God.
  - \* “And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.” Matt. 6:5-6
- 3. At times the person called does not trust God alone, looking to others to come along side them, when God did not intend it, tainting the glory of God.
  - a. Abraham took Lot.
  - b. Judah to Simeon.
  - c. Paul took Mark.
    - \* Only to hear, “nevertheless there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking” Judges 4:9c

***The commission to Barak by Deborah the prophetess was to not disobey the call of God!***



### III. The liberation of Israel through Deborah the deliverer. vs. 11-24

#### A. Sisera gathered his troops for the battle. vs. 11-13

1. Sisera was alerted about Barak's approach by Heber. vs. 11-12
  - a. Heber the Kenite was the instrument God used, "Now Heber the Kenite, of the children of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses." vs. 11a-b
  - b. Heber had broke ties from the Kenites, "had separated himself from the Kenites and pitched his tent near the terebinth tree at Zaanaim, which is beside Kedesh." vs. 11c-d
  - c. Heber warned Sisera, "And they reported to Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor." vs. 12
2. Sisera marched towards the battle. vs. 13
  - a. He headed out to battle, "He gathered together his nine-hundred chariots of iron." vs. 13a-b
    - 1) Iron chariots were like tanks in todays modern warfare.
    - 2) The odds against Deborah, Barak and the people of God were stacked against them by a observations.

- b. He marched with the people from Harosheth Hagoyim towards the River Kishon. vs. 13c-d
  - \* The River Kishon is at the modern day Carmalite monastery overlooking the plain of Esdralon

- #### B. Deborah commanded Barak to rise to have God deliver Sisera into his hand. vs. 14-16
1. She declared the battle was won before it started. vs. 14
    - a. Then Deborah said to Barak, "Up! For this *is* the day in which the LORD has delivered Sisera into your hand." vs. 14a-c
      - 1) The covenant God Yahweh had, past completed action, had delivered Sisera to Barak.
      - 2) God knows the end from the beginning.
    - b. The rhetorical question is a strong admonishment to not hesitate, "Has not the LORD gone out before you?" vs. 14d
      - 1) God can not be opposed or defeated by any human ability.
      - 2) God can not lie. Num. 23:19
    - c. The military general Barak went down from Mount Tabor with 10,00o troops following him. vs. 14e
      - \* God had gone before Barak.

2. She declared the Lord defeated Sisera. vs. 15-16
  - a. The Lord used the men of Israel to defeat Sisera. vs. 15a
    - 1) The word routed “hamam”, means to discomfit or bring confusion, crushing and destroying.
    - 2) God brought rain in spring, causing the chariot wheel to get stuck, Baal was the storm god. Judges 5:19-22
  - b. The commander Sisera fled on foot from his chariot. vs. 15b
  - c. Barak pursued and destroyed all, not a man was left. vs. 16
    - \* A far as Harosheth Hagoyim, which means woodland nation, forest.

C. Sisera fled from the battle to seek refuge. vs. 17-22

1. He sought refuge in the tent of Heber the Kenite due to there being peace between them. vs. 17
  - a. Heber has warned Sisera about the army of Barak. vs. 11-12
  - b. Heber was related to Moses’ father-in-law. vs. 11
2. He received hospitality from Jael the wife of Heber. vs. 18-19
  - a. Jael greeted him, “And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, “Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; do not fear.” vs. 18a-c

- b. Jael made him comfortable, “And when he had turned aside with her into the tent, she covered him with a blanket.” vs. 18d-e
  - c. Sisera asked Jael for something to drink, “Then he said to her, “Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty.” vs. 19a-c
  - d. Jael gave him milk to relax him from his weariness of battle, “So she opened a jug of milk.” vs. 19d
  - e. Jael make him warm, “gave him a drink, and covered him.” vs. 19e
3. Sisera requested her to protect him. vs. 20
    - a. Jael was to stand watch, “And he said to her, “Stand at the door of the tent.” vs. 20a-b
    - b. Jael was to lie for him, “and if any man comes and inquires of you, and says, ‘Is there any man here?’ you shall say, ‘No.’” vs. 20c-g
  4. Sisera died at the hand of Jael. vs. 21
    - a. She pinned Sisera literally to the ground, “Then Jael, Heber’s wife, took a tent peg and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it went down into the ground.” vs. 21a-e
    - b. She allowed his overconfidence to be his downfall, “for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died.” vs. 21f-g

5. Jael presented Sisera dead to Barak. vs. 22
- a. Barak approached Heber's tent, "And then, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him," vs. 22a-c
  - b. Jael said to him, "Come, I will show you the man whom you seek." And when he went into her *tent*, there lay Sisera, dead with the peg in his temple." vs. 22d-f
- \* Remember the words of Deborah that Barak would have no glory!

- E. Deborah most likely recorded the summary statement of God's victory over the enemy. vs. 23-24
1. God did it all through the hand of His people, "So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the children of Israel." vs. 23
  2. God used the victory to strengthen Israel, "And the hand of the children of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan." vs. 24
  3. God recorded it in the New Testament as the victory of Barak, not Jael or Deborah. Heb. 11:32

### Illustration

God has done the same in the modern day wars of Israel. In the 1973 war Israel was attacked on its

most holy Day, Yonkipur, Egypt and Syrian forces totaled 900,000 to Israel's 300,000, tanks 4,600 to 1,700, planes 1,090 to 488, yet God gave Israel the victory!

### Application

1. The individuals God will use to accomplish His work will not always be aware of each others involvement, until God puts it together, what is most important is their obedience.
  - a. Paul was in Tarsus for 7-9 years preaching the gospel.
  - b. Barnabas went up to Antioch to verify if it was a work of God.
  - c. Seeing it was God, Barnabas was directed to go seek out Paul for the work.
  - d. They taught Christians for one year, then God directed three missionary journeys from Antioch.
 

\* "For we are His **workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." Eph. 2:10
2. The perfect timing of God is key for His work.
  - a. The exodus was right on time through Moses.
  - b. The decree to return after the Babylonian captivity to rebuilt the streets and wall, as the starting date for the day Messiah would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey was exact.
  - c. The things that God wants us to be involved is according to His timing, not ours.

\* “But those who **wait on** the LORD Shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.” Is. 40:31

3. The Lord will provide incredible protection for those in His work.
  - a. God protected Moses from Pharaoh..
  - b. God protected Joseph from his brothers and Potiphar’s wife.
  - c. God protected Jeremiah, though they plotted to kill him.
  - d. Paul was protected until God was done with him.
    - 1) “But the Lord stood with **me** and strengthened **me**, so that the message might be preached fully through **me**, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear. And I was **delivered** out of the mouth of the lion.” 2Tim. 4:17
    - 2) “And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him! Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.” Lk. 12:4-7

*The liberation of Israel through Deborah the deliverer was for the glory of God!*

### Conclusion

Deborah was chosen by God to deliver His people, in order to bring glory to Himself, described in a three-fold movement:

- I. The condition of the times when Deborah judged was apostasy from God!
- II. The commission to Barak by Deborah the prophetess was to not disobey the call of God!
- III. The liberation of Israel through Deborah the deliverer was for the glory of God!