

PEOPLE LIKE US

Week 4
Deborah & Barak
"Who's Really Leading the Way?"

Scripture

Judges 4-5

- What is something that's easy to follow when someone else is leading, but becomes much harder when you have to do it on your own?
 - Why do you think that is?
- Have you ever started something confidently only to hit one obstacle and immediately wonder, "Oh no, what have I gotten myself into?"
 - What did it reveal about your expectations?

Diving IN

- Judges begins after the death of Joshua. What do you think Israel may have felt or feared when their clear leader was gone?
 - What does that reveal about the difference between following God *personally* and depending on a single person or program?
- In Judges 1-2, Israel obeys partially. They move forward, but they leave certain things in the land that God told them to drive out. Why is partial obedience so easy to justify?
 - What kinds of reasons might have sounded reasonable to them at the time?
- Judges 4:1 says, "Israel again did evil in the eyes of the Lord." What connection do you see between what they allowed to remain and what eventually enslaved them?
 - How does this pattern show up in people's lives today?
- When the Israelites cry out, God raises up Deborah. What stands out to you about her leadership in Judges 4:4-9?
 - What does her role teach us about recognizing godly leadership wherever God provides it?
- Barak says, "If you go with me, I will go, but if you don't go with me, I won't go." How do you read Barak's response?
 - Do you see fear, wisdom, faith, hesitation, or some mixture of those?

- Deborah tells Barak, “Has not the Lord gone ahead of you?” What is different about believing God is not only with you, but ahead of you?
 - How might that change the way someone enters a difficult situation?
- In Judges 5, we learn that God used the storm and the Kishon River to defeat Sisera’s chariots. What does that add to the story?
 - What does it show us about God’s power over things that seem impossible?
- Jael’s part in the story is unexpected and ordinary in some ways: a tent, milk, a blanket, a peg, a hammer. What does her role show us about the way God can use “small things”?
 - Why do we sometimes overlook those kinds of things?

Living It OUT

- Where are you most tempted to build your faith around a person, church, program, routine, or season instead of a personal walk with Jesus?
 - What would still remain of your faith if those supports were removed?
- What is one area where obedience feels especially difficult right now?
- Is it hard because it feels too hard to face, or because it’s too enjoyable to give up?
- Are there places where you are asking God for “next steps” while resisting something He has already made clear?
 - What would it look like to obey what you already know?
- What trial, conflict, or unknown are you facing where you need to remember, “God is already ahead of me?”
 - How would your posture change if you really believed that?
- God used Deborah, Barak, Jael, a storm, a river, and a tent peg. What ordinary thing in your life might God be asking you to offer to Him?
 - What would faithfulness look like with what is already in your hands?
- What is one specific step of obedience you can take this week?
- How can we encourage you, check in with you, or pray for you as you take it?

Lifting it UP

- Praise God for being faithful even when, at times, His people aren’t.
- Ask God to reveal any area of *partial* obedience that has become a snare for sin.
- Pray for courage to follow Him fully, trusting that He is already out in front!