

## *A Mother's Place is on the Battlefield*

### I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2 R&R Bible Study starts *tomorrow night* at 7pm. See Cindy tonight to register/questions.
- B. Wed Night Dinner – Last dinner will be served next Wed, Sept. 30.

### II. Slide3 Intro: *A Mother's Place is on the Battlefield*

- A. Here is a story so good it's told twice. *Once as prose, then as poetry.*  
[prose/written language in its ordinary form. From Lt. *prosa/straightforward*]
- B. Ancient civilizations were **patriarchal** in structure. The role of men was emphasized.
  - 1. In many cultures **women** were viewed as nothing more than **property**, and were not permitted even to inherit the possessions of their husbands, much less given authority. **Israel** too was patriarchal, **but women were not oppressed** there as in other lands.
  - 2. Slide4 Deborah was one of the special women, who even before the military victory over the Cannanites was “judging” Israel from Ramah.
    - a) The term “judging” is important if we are to understand this woman's importance. A judge was more than a person who **settled disputes** (which she did 4:5). A judge in Israel exercised **all the functions of a governor**: he or she **held executive and legislative authority**, and often **military authority** as well.
- C. Is the **Bible** really sexist, or are women valued and appreciated there?
  - 1. God used Miriam, Huldah/prophetess, Queen Esther, Rahab & Ruth, Abigail Rizpah, Prov 31 woman. Mary, Martha/Mary, All the women helping Christ, Priscilla, Lydia, Phebe, Eunice & lois.
- D. Few women have ever attained to such public dignity & supreme authority.
  - 1. Slide5 She was like **Joan of Ark**, who 27 centuries later rode in front of the French & led them to victory.
- E. Paul mentions 33 names in Rom.16: 24 from Rome (17 men, 7 women). The other 9 were w/Paul in Corinth (8 men, 1 women).
  - 1. Here's what we can learn from that list that you might not catch upon 1st reading. The 1st Century Church had incredible **diversity**.

- a) Rich & Poor. Jew & Gentile. Male & Female. Different **Ranks**, Different **Races**, Different **Genders**. *It was like a garden with flowers of every color & type.*
  - b) **Phoebe** – *Bright, radiant*. Gk. mythology starts w/**12 Titans**, *6 male, 6 female*. Phoebe was one of the *6 Titanesses*. So the name Phoebe was of a goddess, so it's probable she had a heathen background. **But now**, a sweet sister in the lord.
2. **Slide6** Maybe it's like **General Haig's** "compliment" concerning **Mrs Thatcher**: that *she was the best man in the British cabinet*.

### III. **Slide7 BEE STING (Ch.4)**

- A. (3) These military **chariots** often had sharp blades attached to the hubs of their wheels: foot soldiers were devastated by the charge of these heavy vehicles, their whirring knives flashing.
- B. **Slide8a** (6) **Deborah's Secret**. While we have to believe that Deborah was an exceptional person in her own right, there was more to her **leadership** than **her special talents**.
  1. **We can be sure she was wise and fair**: the readiness of Israelites to trek to where Deborah held court so she could settle their disputes tells us that (v. 5).
  2. **Slide8b** But what really made Deborah special, and won her the respect of the men of Israel, was her **closeness to the Lord**.
    - a) *God spoke to this woman...and God spoke through her.*
  3. **She was one of those few spokesmen that God selected to communicate His will to His OT people**: Deborah was a **prophetess** (4).
    - a) It was Deborah's special relationship with God that was recognized by all the people, and that won her their respect. **And it was Deborah's closeness to God that led Barak to call for her to go with him.**
- C. **Slide9a** **Barak was willing to fight**. But he wanted to be sure of God's presence. In this particular historical situation, it was Deborah who represented to Barak the very presence of God.
  1. **Was this a sign of cowardice or the way he chose to be sure that God would remain with him in battle?**
  2. **Is he a wimp?** Well we do find him in the hall of faith (w/pretty good company).

3. Slide9b Heb.11:32 **And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets:**
  4. Slide9c Heb.11:34 **...out of weakness were made strong...**
  5. Slide9d **“Each of us has the opportunity to participate in ministries far beyond our own personal endeavors.”** Jerry Bridges
- D. Slide10-12 (7) Lay out the landscape: 10a **Hazor** (largest city in Canaan, North of Sea of Galilee). Battle is fought in the 10b,11 **Jezreel Valley** (this valley drains to the West by the **Kishon River**). Most prominent feature in that valley is a perfectly round shaped mountain, 11b,12,13 **Tabor** (it guards the doorway to Hazor from the South).
- E. (12) Sisera arranged his chariots **on the plain below Mnt Tabor**, a location with clear tactical advantages.
- F. Slide14 (14) **Up!** - **Deborah** means **bee** [**Barak** (lightening)] [**Jael**/mountain goat]
- G. Slide15 (14-16) According to the poetic account of the battle in 5:21, Sisera’s forces were swept away by the **Kishon River**. Evidentially a **thunderstorm** bogged the chariot wheels & allowed Barak’s foot soldiers to gain the upper hand.
- H. (17) **Her tribe were itinerant metal-smiths**. Maybe explains the friendly relationship between her husband & Sisera, Jabin probably made his chariot of iron.
1. Sisera proved to be a **coward** fleeing the battle in the *opposite direction*.
- I. Slide16-18auto (21) **Jael** - woman were in charge of *putting up the tents...actually they literally do everything...don’t ever mess with Bedouin women*.
1. Contrast Jael/Barak. **Jael had no clear word from God but acted courageously; Barak had a clear word from God but didn’t immediately act courageously.**
  2. The Lord makes heroes out of **ordinary people** who will **loyally & courageously** carry out **His** mission. [no, **don’t** be buying tent pegs]
- J. **Israel was successful** in defeating a superior foe, **but only because God intervened** on their behalf. *The battle belongs to the Lord.*

#### IV. Slide19 **SONG OF VICTORY (Ch.5)**

- A. **Poetry of ancient Israel** (and their neighbors) was characterized by a compositional technique called *parallelism*, where the 2nd of 2 lines amplifies the 1st in *content, word, or idea*.
1. This poem helps us to *reach out & touch Israel* in a way only brought about by **story**
- B. There are **4 parts** to this poem: **Introductory Hymn of Praise** (1-5) **Situation before the Deliverance** (6-8) **Rallying of some Tribes & the Rebuke of others** (9-18) **The Victory** (19-31)
1. It expresses a deep passion for God & His people. And when God acts, nature itself responds by fighting for Israel (20,21).
  2. All Israelite poetry starts with **praise to God**. Then tells the story in such a way that it would be **easy to recite** at special gatherings or even around the **watering holes**(coolers) for generations (10,11).
- C. **Begins & ends with a mothers heart** (see 7,28).
- D. **Slide20a Lessons:**
- E. **Who was the real architect behind Israel's Victory?** - *The battle belongs to **the Lord**.*
1. *What practical application* does that have to us today?
    - a) But Brian, you don't see the *900 iron chariots* I'm facing.
  2. Ex.14:13,14 **And Moses said to the people, Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. The Lord will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.**
- F. **Slide20b** By God still using Barak & giving him victory...what insight does this give us into God's willingness to bear w/our human frailty?
- G. **Slide20c** How women can encourage men - *in the Lord*.
1. Point your man **to God**. **Not**, point out all his **weaknesses**.
- H. **Slide20d** Why didn't the whole community come together? 6 praised, 4 tribes stay behind.
1. *What is named in the 4 tribes backsliding?* [Reuben/indecision. Gilead/stayed away from the fight. Dan remained at ease. Asher kept fishing. ]
  2. *What parallel spiritual consequences are found in the life of the backsliding Christian?* [same list above]
  3. Read 5:2 again...*willingly offer themselves*.