

Judges 4 Deborah and Barak

Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, after Ehud died. 2 So the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor; and the commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-hagoyim. 3 The sons of Israel cried out to the LORD; for he had nine hundred iron chariots, and he oppressed the sons of Israel severely for twenty years.

4 Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. 5 She used to sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the sons of Israel went up to her for judgment. 6 Now she sent word and summoned Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-naphtali, and said to him,

The LORD, the God of Israel, has indeed commanded, 'Go and march to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men from the sons of Naphtali and from the sons of Zebulun. 7 I will draw out to you Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his many troops to the river Kishon, and I will hand him over to you.'

8 Then Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go." 9 She said, "I will certainly go with you; however, the fame shall not be yours on the journey that you are about to take, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." Then Deborah got up and went with Barak to Kedesh.

10 Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh, and ten thousand men went up with him; Deborah also went up with him. 11 Now Heber the Kenite had separated himself from the Kenites, from the sons of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent as far away as the oak in Zaananim, which is near Kedesh.

12 Then they told Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor. 13 Sisera summoned all his chariots, nine hundred iron chariots, and all the people who were with him, from Harosheth-hagoyim to the river Kishon. 14 Then Deborah said to Barak, "Arise! For this is the day on which the LORD has handed Sisera over to you; behold, the LORD has gone out before you." So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him.

15 And the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera got down from his chariot and fled on foot. 16 But Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Harosheth-hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not even one was left. 17 Now Sisera fled on foot to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite, because there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

18 And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, "Turn aside, my master, turn aside to me! Do not be afraid." So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. 19 And he said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened a leather bottle of milk and gave him a drink; then she covered him.

20 And he said to her, "Stand in the doorway of the tent, and it shall be if anyone comes and inquires of you, and says, 'Is there anyone here?' that you shall say, 'No.'" 21 But Jael, Heber's wife, took a tent peg and a hammer in her hand, and went secretly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it went through into the ground; for he was sound asleep and exhausted. So he died.

22 And behold, while Barak was pursuing Sisera, Jael came out to meet him and said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking." So he entered with her, and behold, Sisera was lying dead with the tent peg in his temple. 23 So God subdued Jabin the king of Canaan on that day before the sons of Israel. 24 And the hand of the sons of Israel pressed harder and harder upon Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had eliminated Jabin the king of Canaan.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

- What questions were provoked within you?
- Did anything confuse you?
- Did anything move you emotionally?
- Did God instruct you to do something?
- Did you gain any insight into God's character?

Paul's helpful insights and questions

1. They did evil in the sight of the Lord, they failed to stay away from wrong doing.
2. This only took place after the death of Ehud and sadly this was a common theme throughout Israel's history!
3. The consequences of this rebellion is that God removed His protection over His people and they were taken into
4. slavery.
5. They were held in captivity by Sisera and the commander of the Canaanite armies.
6. Only after twenty years of captivity does Israel cry out to God to deliver them from the tyranny of Sisera.
7. God showed Israel mercy. Why?
8. At that time Israel's judge was Deborah, despite the nation being held in captivity to the Canaanites.
9. She had her own office under the palm tree where the nation of Israel's leaders came to her for counsel.
10. God speaks to Deborah, instructing her to inform Barak to rise up against Canaan and Sisera, to lead Israel into freedom, but he is unwilling to go.
11. Her plan was to draw Sisera and Canaan's army onto the battlefield against Barak and ten thousand Israelites.
12. Deborah said, 'God had spoken to her', so why does he not go?
13. Do you 'go' when God says 'go'?
14. Barak is only willing to go if Deborah will go with him. He refuses to go if she won't!
15. Deborah points out to Barak, if she goes it will take away Barak's honour, but he does not care so Deborah goes.
16. What are your perspectives on a man like Barak?

17. Moses father-in-law came aside from his people and was protected. God knows how to take care of His own.
18. Sisera, along with his army of nine hundred iron chariots, respond to the challenge Deborah and Barak make.
19. Deborah points out to Barak, long before his victory over Sisera, that it is God who will deliver Israel and release them from their captivity.
20. God created chaos in the camp of Sisera and Canaan so that the chariots were no use in the battle.
21. Trust in the Lord and you will be free, God brings all of the Canaanite army to their death!
22. Sisera escapes temporarily but is pegged to the ground by deception.
23. Why would he think he could trust in his enemy to protect him?
24. Jael is happy to tell Barak what she has done to Sisera.
25. It is God who subdued Israel's enemy and it is God who will do the same for your enemies.
26. Israel continues to battle Canaan until the Canaanite King was eliminated.