

Calvary Chapel Cajon

Women's Bible Studies

Judges 4 and 5

Lesson 3

Warren Wiersbe views Judges 4 and 5 as a drama having five scenes. The cast of characters are as follows:

Jabin: King of Hazor in Canaan; a tyrant

Deborah: a Jewish judge; a woman of faith and courage

Barak: a reluctant Jewish general

Sisera: captain of Jabin's army

Heber: a Kenite neighbor, at peace with Jabin

Jaël: wife of Heber; handy with a hammer

Jehovah God: in charge of wars and weather

Let the drama begin.

DAY ONE: Act One – A Tragic Situation – Judges 4:1-3

1. Israel's cycle of sin continues. What does Judges 4:1 reveal?
 - a. Again, God is faithful to keep His promise to, rather than deliver Israel **from** their enemy, to deliver them **to** their enemy. What does verse 2 tell us God did?
 - 1.) Who was the commander of the army? (This will be important to remember later!)
 - a.) What do we learn about Jabin and his army in verse 3?
 - 2.) Record from Judges 1:19 why Judah was unable to *drive out the inhabitants of the lowland*.
 - a.) Apparently, the children of Israel were still suffering from the same fear. But, rather than give up as Judah did, what did they do? Judges 4:3
 - b.) Record the words of David from Psalm 18:6.
 - i.) What can we learn from this verse?

DAY TWO: Act Two – A Divine Revelation – Judges 4:4-7

1. Act Two – enters Deborah – a prophetess. An Old Testament prophet spoke for God about things to come. From the following verses, what did Deborah prophesy?

verse 7

verse 9

verse 14

2. Deborah was not only a prophetess, soon to be a deliverer, but she was a judge. What does verse 5 tell us about her?

Challenge: Women often played key roles in the Bible. Write a summary about one of them.

3. Judges 4:6,7 reveal a revelation revealed to Deborah by God. From these verses, answer the following questions:

Who did Deborah give God's word to?

What was he to do?

What did God promise to do?

4. God called. God pronounced the work. God even pronounced the difficulties. And God promised to deliver. The Old Testament stories are given to us as *examples* to follow (1 Corinthians 10:6,11). What can we learn from this example?

DAY THREE: Act Three – A Reluctant Participant – Judges 4:8-10

1. Continuing the story... Record Barak's response from verse 8.
2. What did Deborah say to Barak?

3. Like Moses before him, and Gideon, and Jeremiah, Barak hesitated when told what God wanted him to do. Reflect upon the conversation between God and Moses in Exodus 4:10-14. Record your insights.

a. Look again at Barak's response in verse 8. What is wrong with that response?

1.) What can we learn from Moses' and Barak's negative examples?

4. God's promise should be all we need. Scan God's promises in Psalm 37 and list some of them.

a. Which ones do you tend to doubt? Why?

1.) What do you do when a promise of God does not make sense to you or you don't think it applies to you?

5. Deborah agreed to go with Barak. If Barak's request was against God's will, Deborah should not have gone with him. It was not the request that was wrong, but the attitude of refusing to obey, unless Deborah went with him. Thus, there were consequences (verse 9). What have you discovered to be the consequences of conditional or partial obedience?

DAY FOUR: Act Four – A Victorious Confrontation – Judges 4:11-23

1. The time has come for the battle to begin. God is setting the stage. We see in verse 11 that God has moved Heber the Kenite into position. Skip down to verse 17. Who was married to Heber?

2. Upon receiving the news that Barak had *gone up to Mt. Tabor* (verse 12) what did Sisera do? verse 13

- a. Chariots were a valued commodity in those days. It was believed they gave the advantage in battle. Iron chariots prevented Judah from driving out the inhabitants of the lowland. Rather than benefit from relying on the strength of chariots, what does Isaiah 31:1 say?

- 1.) David had discovered the true Source of strength. What did he write in Psalm 20:7?

3. Meanwhile, as Sisera gathered his forces, record what Deborah said to Barak in Judges 4:14?

- a. Record the two truths she stated about the LORD.

- 1.) In your own words explain the phrase:

the LORD has delivered (someone or something) into your hands

the LORD has gone before you

4. Upon hearing Deborah's words, Barak responded by going forth into battle. In what ways do God's promises give you the push you need to go forth?

- a. What enemies has God defeated in your life?

- b. Read the words of 2 Samuel 5:24. Although God *goes before us*, what do you see is our responsibility as you read Judges 4:14 and 2 Samuel 5:24?

5. Although the Old Testament tends to teach of God's triumphing over physical enemies, the New Testament speaks of triumphing over spiritual enemies. Record the words of the following verses:

2 Corinthians 2:14

Colossians 2:15

- a. As in the Old Testament, we have our part. What is our part that enables us to experience the victories that God has gone before us and achieved?
 - b. What prevents us from experiencing victory over our enemies?
6. Back to the chariots. What does Judges 4:15 tell us God did with the chariots?
- a. Record the glorious words of Jeremiah 3:23.
 - b. In what way does Judges 4:15 and Jeremiah 3:23 encourage you about the enemies you fear in your life?
 - c. Notice that Sisera fled his chariot. He saw it no longer as an advantage, but a hindrance. How can things we trust in, instead of God, become a hindrance to us?
7. Enter Jael. Sisera fled to what he thought was the safety of a woman. Instead he met with his death (Judges 4:17-23). Sisera thought he would destroy Israel with his many iron chariots. Instead, he was defeated with one iron nail. Read 1 Corinthians 1:27-31. Why does God use *weak and foolish* things?

DAY FIVE: Act Five – A Glorious Celebration – Judges 5

1. When they wanted to celebrate special occasions, the Jewish people often expressed themselves in song; so the writer shifts from narrative prose to jubilant poetry. The writer referred to the *LORD* seventeen times in 31 verses, offering praise and blessing for His wondrous deliverance. David too learned the value of praise. Look up the following verses and record what he wrote:

Psalm 9:1

Psalm 28:7

Psalm 30:4

Challenge: record other verses that invoke us to bless and praise the Lord.

- a. If you wrote a song about God's work in your life, what would you write about?
2. Record the phrase repeated in Judges 5:2 and 9.
 - a. Consider the words *willingly offered*. What do they mean to you?
 - b. God loves to have us partner with Him. What has been your experience when you have the opportunity to be a part of God's work?
 - 1.) In what way would it have been different if you would have *offered* yourself begrudgingly?
 3. Complete Judges 5:31. *Thus let all Your enemies perish, O LORD. But let those who _____ be like the _____ when it comes out in _____.*
 - a. What does Proverbs 4:18 add to this?
 - 1.) How has loving God caused you to see your *path* better?

DAY SIX: Review the Scenes

After reviewing the scenes of Judges 4 and 5 what are some of your thoughts about going to battle against your enemies?

*And now my head shall be lifted up above my enemies all around me;
Therefore I will offer sacrifices of joy in His tabernacle;
I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to the LORD.
-Psalm 27:6*

Judges, Chapter Four

¹When Ehud was dead, the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord. ²So the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army *was* Sisera, who dwelt in Harosheth Hagoyim. ³And 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. ⁴Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time. ⁵And 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. ⁶Then 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; ⁷and against you I will deploy Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude at the River Kishon; and I will deliver him into your hand!'" ⁸And 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!" ⁹So she said, "I will surely go with you; nevertheless there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman." Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. ¹⁰And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; he went up with ten thousand men under his command, and Deborah went up with him. ¹¹Now Heber the Kenite, of the children of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, had separated himself from the Kenites and pitched his tent near the terebinth tree at Zaanaim, which *is* beside Kedesh. ¹²And they reported to Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor. ¹³So Sisera gathered together all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people who *were* with him, from Harosheth Hagoyim to the River Kishon. ¹⁴Then Deborah said to Barak, "Up! For this *is* the day in which the LORD has delivered Sisera into your hand. Has not the LORD gone out before you?" So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him. ¹⁵And the LORD routed Sisera and all *his* chariots and all *his* army with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera alighted from *his* chariot and fled away on foot. ¹⁶But 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 a man was left. ¹⁷However, Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; for *there was* peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. ¹⁸And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, "Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; do not fear." And when he had turned aside with her into the tent, she covered him with a blanket. ¹⁹Then he said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened a jug of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him. ²⁰And he said to her, "Stand at the door of the tent, and if any man comes and inquires of you, and says, 'Is there any man here?' you shall say, 'No.'" ²¹Then 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; for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died. ²²And then, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and 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. ²³So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the children of Israel. ²⁴And the hand of the children of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.

Chapter Five

¹Then Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam sang on that day, saying: ²"When leaders lead in Israel, when the people willingly offer themselves, bless the LORD! ³"Hear, O kings! Give ear, O princes! I, *even* I, will sing to the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel. ⁴"LORD, when You went out from Seir, when You marched from the field of Edom, the earth trembled and the heavens poured, the clouds also poured water; ⁵the mountains gushed before the LORD, this Sinai, before the LORD God of Israel. ⁶"In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were deserted, and the travelers walked along the byways. ⁷Village life ceased, it ceased in Israel, until I, Deborah, arose, arose a mother in Israel. ⁸They chose new gods; then *there was* war in the gates; not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel. ⁹My heart *is* with the rulers of Israel who offered themselves willingly with the people. Bless the LORD! ¹⁰"Speak, you who ride on white donkeys, who sit in judges' attire, and who walk along the road. ¹¹Far from the noise of the archers, among the watering places, there they shall recount the righteous acts of the LORD, the righteous acts *for* His villagers in Israel; then the people of the LORD shall go down to the gates. ¹²"Awake, awake, Deborah! Awake, awake, sing a song! Arise, Barak, and lead your captives away, O son of Abinoam! ¹³"Then the survivors came down, the people against the nobles; the LORD came down for me against the mighty. ¹⁴From Ephraim *were* those whose roots were in Amalek. After you, Benjamin, with your peoples, from Machir rulers came down, and from Zebulun those who bear the recruiter's staff. ¹⁵And the princes of Issachar *were* with Deborah; as Issachar, so *was* Barak sent into the valley under his command; among the divisions of Reuben *there were* great resolves of heart. ¹⁶Why did you sit among the sheepfolds, to hear the pipings for the flocks? The divisions of Reuben have great searchings of heart. ¹⁷Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan, and why did Dan remain on ships? Asher continued at the seashore, and stayed by his inlets. ¹⁸Zebulun *is* a people *who* jeopardized their lives to the point of death, Naphtali also, on the heights of the battlefield. ¹⁹"The kings came *and* fought, then the kings of Canaan fought in Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo; they took no spoils of silver. ²⁰They fought from the heavens; the stars from their courses fought

against Sisera. ²¹The torrent of Kishon swept them away, that ancient torrent, the torrent of Kishon. O my soul, march on in strength! ²²Then the horses' hooves pounded, the galloping, galloping of his steeds. ²³'Curse Meroz,' said the angel of the LORD, 'Curse its inhabitants bitterly, because they did not come to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.' ²⁴'Most blessed among women is Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; blessed is she among women in tents. ²⁵He asked for water, she gave milk; she brought out cream in a lordly bowl. ²⁶She stretched her hand to the tent peg, her right hand to the workmen's hammer; she pounded Sisera, she pierced his head, she split and struck through his temple. ²⁷At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still; at her feet he sank, he fell; where he sank, there he fell dead. ²⁸'The mother of Sisera looked through the window, and cried out through the lattice, 'Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why carries the clatter of his chariots?' ²⁹Her wisest ladies answered her, yes, she answered herself, ³⁰'Are they not finding and dividing the spoil: to every man a girl *or* two; for Sisera, plunder of dyed garments, plunder of garments embroidered and dyed, two pieces of dyed embroidery for the neck of the looter?' ³¹'Thus let all Your enemies perish, O LORD! But *let* those who love Him *be* like the sun when it comes out in full strength.'" So the land had rest for forty years.