

THE REAL HERO

We find the story of Deborah, Barak and Jael in the book of Judges.

At this point in time Israel did not have a King governing them. God was supposed to be their King.

Unfortunately, the people of Israel quite often would forget about God and would start worshipping the gods of other nations and be in rebellion against God.

As a consequence, they would find themselves in much trouble and under the oppression of their enemies. Out of compassion the Lord would raise individuals from each tribe of Israel to deliver them from their enemies, and to establish justice. They were called Judges.

The people of Israel were under the oppression of the Canaanites. They were oppressed by King Jabin for 20 years and their situation was very desperate.

Judges 4:1-3

When Ehud was dead, the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord. 2 So 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. 3 And the children of Israel cried out to the Lord; for Jabin had nine hundred chariots of iron, and for twenty years he had harshly oppressed the children of Israel.

Judges 4:4 Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time. 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.

God chose this woman, Deborah, to be one of the Judges in Israel.

It's important to notice that as we read through the book of Judges, we see God sometimes choosing Judges that most of us would probably overlook and not appoint to be leaders.

1. GOD CAN USE ANYONE TO ACCOMPLISH HIS PLANS.

As a Judge, Deborah would help the people with their disputes, and she was also a prophetess.

Israel was in an awful situation and in chapter 5 we have a song that Deborah wrote, and she gives us a good description of what was happening at the time.

Judges 5:6-7

"In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath,

In the days of Jael,

The highways were deserted,

And the travellers walked along the byways.

7 Village life ceased, it ceased in Israel, (...)

8 They chose new gods;

Then there was war in the gates;

Not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel.

God heard the cries of His people and He spoke to Deborah. Without any hesitation she got into action. Deborah calls for Barak, a military commander.

6 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; 7 and 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?’”

This commander came a long way in response to Deborah’s call, but after hearing her battle plan against the Canaanites, he was not so sure that it would work!

After all, King Jabin had been oppressing them for 20 years, and Sisera’s army was very powerful.

Deborah had unwavering faith in God. She was sure that this battle plan would work even with just 10,000 men.

And 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!” Judges 4:8

For a moment Barak’s faith wavered. I believe that Barak wanted Deborah to go with him, to make sure that God’s presence was going with them.

(Verse 9) So 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.”

Because Barak wavered in his faith, the recognition for this battle’s victory would be given to someone else.

(verse 9) Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. 10 And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; he went up with ten thousand men under his command, and Deborah went up with him.

1. GOD CALLS PEOPLE TO STEP OUT IN FAITH TO ATTEMPT THE IMPOSSIBLE.

Deborah’s example of faith not only encouraged Barak to go to battle, but also encouraged the 10,000 men who decided to join them. God was going to deliver them from their enemies.

Verse 12

And they reported to Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor. 13 So 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.

Sisera, the commander of the Canaanites hears that Barak went to Mount Tabor, and he starts getting ready for the battle.

Judges 4:14

14 Then 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.

Deborah encouraged Barak to attempt the impossible! She said to him: **UP! Has not the Lord gone out before you?**

Faith pleases the heart of God!

Hebrews 11:6

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him (...)

The day of the battle arrives!

Verse 15

And 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. 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 a man was left.

With only 10,000 men Barak defeats the army of Sisera exactly like Deborah had said. What God promises, He fulfills.

Deborah’s song in Judges chapter 5:4,5

**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;
5 The mountains gushed before the Lord,**

God sent rain and gave them the victory. The chariots became stuck in the mud. Sisera trusted in his chariots, but they were no match for God!

Psalm 20:7

**Some trust in chariots, and some in horses;
But we will remember the name of the Lord our God.**

But Sisera, the Canaanite commander managed to run away!

Judges 4 Verse 11 Now 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.

Sisera finds the tent of this man Heber. In the tent there’s Jael, Heber’s wife.

He thought he was safe there because the Kenite people had an agreement with King Jabin.

4:17 However, 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. 18 And 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.

Jael didn't have any allegiance with Israel, she was a neutral party, but she will have to make a very quick and brave decision.

4:20 And 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.’ ”

21 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; for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died.

4:22 And 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.

4:23 So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the children of Israel.

The recognition for this battle's victory went to Jael. A housewife who was not a soldier but knew how to use a peg and a hammer!

Deborah wrote about Jael in her victory song:

**“Most blessed among women is Jael,
The wife of Heber the Kenite;
Blessed is she among women in tents. Judges 5:24**

3. GOD FIGHTS OUR BATTLES

God used these three people in an extraordinary way to deliver Israel from evil and oppression.

God also fights our battles, and He is for us!

Even when our faith wavers, like Barak, God can still help us and use our lives in extraordinary ways.

Isaiah 52:12

**12 For you shall not go out with haste,
Nor go by flight;
For the Lord will go before you,
And the God of Israel will be your rear guard.**

At the end of their ordeal Deborah and Barak sang a song of victory.

Judges 5:1,31

Then Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam sang on that day, saying:

**“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.”**

Who is the real hero in this story?

4. GOD IS THE REAL HERO

He is the Deliverer of the oppressed and captive.

Jesus, our Hero came to set us free from sin and every bondage of the devil.

Luke 4:18

**18 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to the poor;
He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
And recovery of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty those who are oppressed;**

Jesus said:

“With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. – Matthew 19:26

Romans 8:37

37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

“Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?

Jeremiah 32:27

Dare to believe like Deborah did. **Have faith in God. Trust in Him!**

- 1. GOD CAN USE ANYONE TO ACCOMPLISH HIS PLANS.**
- 2. GOD CALLS US TO STEP OUT IN FAITH AND TRUST HIM.**
- 3. GOD FIGHTS OUR BATTLES.**
- 4. GOD IS OUR HERO.**