

SUMMER QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2017
THEME – RESPONDING TO THE MASTER’S CALL
UNIT I – CALLED TO BE STRONG

“GOD’S URGENT CALL AS A JUDGE...DEBORAH AND BARAK”

Sunday School Lesson I – June 4, 2017

Lesson Presented by Rev. Frank A. Davis, III - Pastor-Teacher



Lesson Text: Judges 4:1-22

Required Reading: Judges 4 – 5

Motto Text: Judges 4:8-9, *“And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go: but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go. And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedes.”*

Judges 4:21-25, *“In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”*

Reliable Resources: Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Thru the Bible Commentary, Dr. J. Vernon McGee; Standard Lesson Commentary; “Be Available,” Dr. Warren Wiersbe; Precepts for Living (UMI); Word Search 10 Electronic Library

LESSON INTRODUCTION

It is not often that the Bible gives us much detail on the exploits of Godly women. Therefore, when we have an opportunity to highlight one in the weekly lessons, it is a blessing. The Nation of Israel continued their usual practices as recorded in Judges 2:13-19: *“And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth. And the anger of the LORD*

was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed. Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so. And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them. And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned, and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.”

Now the Biblical narrative introduces us to Israel’s only woman judge, Deborah. According to scripture, she was a wife, prophetess, and judged Israel’s civil and judicial matters. The role of such leadership was most times handled by men in Israel, but I’m reminded of the words of Isaiah 3:12, “As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them...” Israel was fallen from the covenantal commitment with Jehovah, but God remained faithful despite their error. Deborah, whose name means “bee”, was a strong sign of God’s grace toward Israel. She was wise, prudent, spirit-filled and fair. She was also courageous, and sought to follow the teachings of God. Through her fortitude, Israel found peace, and Barak, the Lord’s general, found strength to overcome the Canaanites!

Anticipated Power Points: God’s Urgent Call Demonstrated In...

- **Disobedience and its Perils.** Judges 4:1-3
- **Deborah and her Properties.** Judges 4:4-7
- **Doubt of Barak a Possibility.** Judges 4:8-10

- **Deception and Divine Punishment. Judges 4:11-13**
- **Display of God's Power. Judges 4:14-16**
- **Death by Pegging! Judges 4:17-22**

LESSON OUTLINE

“God’s Urgent Call as a Judge...Deborah and Barak”

Note the scriptural narrative:

I. **Disobedience and its Perils. Judges 4:1-3**

Because of Israel’s disobedience towards the Covenant of God, He allowed them to be conquered and cruelly oppressed by Jabin, king of Canaan and his rude captain Sisera with his 900 iron chariots. Such oppression was heinous and horrible. It was the true results of disobedience against Jehovah. Remember Galatians 6:7; 5:9; Judges 1:27-35.

II. **Deborah and her Properties. Judges 4:4-7**

Deborah, according to the scriptures, was a woman of wisdom and character. Note:

A. She was a prophetess, meaning God revealed truths unto her to share with His people (v. 4).

B. She was the wife of Lapidoth (v. 4).

No knowledge has been credibly revealed that she had children, but she was a wife. Tradition teaches that her husband might have made wicks for the sacred lamps of the sanctuary at Shiloh. This is speculative. His name means “*torch*.”

C. She was a judge who sat over the civil and judicial affairs of many Israelites who trusted her sincerity and integrity (v. 5).

D. She had authority to send for Barak and declare unto him God’s will concerning him leading the armies of Israel against Sisera and his 900 chariots of the Canaanites (v.6). She even had God’s assurance that the battle would conclude in ultimate victory (v. 7)!

III. **Doubt of Barak a Possibility. Judges 4:8-10**

When one reads verse 8, it appears that Barak, the military judge of Israel, was not in a hurry to lead Israel into battle. His statement about not going to battle unless Deborah accompanied him has left a bitter taste in the mouths of many men for ages. Dr. J. V. Magee called Barak “a sissy hiding behind the skirt of a woman.” But I’d like to try to think better of him, based on Hebrews 11:32-34 (please read). If there was fear, he found faith in the word of truth and the presence of Deborah, who even traveled with him to the edge of battle. His name means “*lightning*.”

IV. **Deception and Divine Punishment. Judges 4:11-13**

The scriptures speak of a descendant of Moses’ father-in-law, named Heber, who lived in the middle of a constant war zone. He sort of kept peace by leaning to the winning side of neutrality! It appears his house gave news of Barak’s whereabouts to Sisera, who was being deceived by divine favor, to be led to his demise! “He brought his 900 chariots and soldiers through the dry river bed of Kishon, probably during the months of June through September, the dry season.” (Wiersbe). But according to Judges 5:20-22, God sent an out of season torrential rain which caused mud slides and havoc to his chariots, horses, and men! The disarray gave Barak and his 10,000 men divine favor and victory in battle as he was encouraged by the word of the Lord through Deborah!

V. **Display of God’s Power. Judges 4:14-16**

Because of God’s miraculous rainstorm and the encouragement of Deborah, Sisera’s chariots and army were discomfited! (Judges 5:20-21)

VI. **Death by Pegging! Judges 4:17-22**

Deborah had forewarned Barak in Judges 4:9 that the victory of the day would not wear his name, but that of a woman. And so the prophetic word of Deborah came true when Sisera, the captain of the Canaanites, fleeing on foot for his life, was invited to hide in the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber. He asked for water, she gave him milk; he asked for security, she gave him a blanket and a tent peg in the temple. She executed the captain and called Barak to claim the body! The song of victory lifted the name Jael for destroying Sisera. (Read Judges 5:24-31, NLT).

CLOSING

The lesson declares how God can use the unusual at times to accomplish His covenant commitment. Deborah was a humble, wise woman whom God used to keep his covenant promise to help, save, and maintain Israel. Beloved, that same God sent His Son Jesus Christ, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life!

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LOOKING AHEAD:

June 11, 2017

Judges 6:11-18

Please join us each Wednesday noon at Bibleway where Pastor Davis teaches the Sunday School lesson.