

Judges 4:1-24 – Barak, Reluctant Leader (Part 1)

Judges 4:1-24 – Prose – Narrative of events | Judges 5:1-31 – Poetry – Celebration of results

<p>S _____</p>	<p>1. Israel Violates God’s _____</p>
<p>^{4:1} When Ehud was dead, the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD.</p>	<p>a. <i>What they did: “the evil” AGAIN</i> b. <i>In Whose judgment: “in the sight of the LORD”</i></p>
<p>S _____</p>	<p>2. God Brings in an _____ Against Israel</p>
<p>² So the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. [<i>key trade route for millennia</i>] The commander of his army was Sisera, who dwelt in Harosheth Hagoyim. [<i>“forest of the Gentiles”</i>] ³ And 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.</p>	<p>a. <i>God’s Action</i> b. <i>The Enemy’s Identity</i> <i>Sisera seems to be a foreigner. He was likely a mercenary general hired by King Jabin.</i> c. <i>The Enemy’s Location</i> d. <i>Israel’s Response</i> e. <i>Israel’s Reason</i></p>
<p>S _____</p>	<p>3. God Raises Up a _____</p>
<p>⁴ Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth [<i>lit. “torches”</i>] 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. ⁶ Then she sent and called for Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, [<i>a Levitical city</i>] 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?" ⁸ 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!" 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." Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh.</p>	<p>a. <i>The Identity of the Prophetess</i> b. <i>The Function of the Prophetess</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Why? Failure of the priests?</i> • <i>No reference to the spirit of God (except for Deborah)</i> <p>c. <i>The Activity of the Prophetess</i> d. <i>The Prompting of the Prophetess</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>God _____ the leader</i> <i>“Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded” – seems to indicate previous communication directly to Barak.</i> • <i>God _____ the leader</i> • <i>God _____ the leader</i> • <i>God _____ the strategy for the leader</i> • <i>God _____ the success of the leader</i> <p>e. <i>The Reluctance of the Leader</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cowardice or desiring presence of God?</i> <p>f. <i>The Leader’s Loss of Glory</i> g. <i>The Prophetess Accompanies the Leader</i></p>

God Delivers Israel – The Details

<p>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.</p>	<p>1. Barak Calls His Assigned Troops</p>
<p>¹¹ Now Heber the Kenite, [<i>Heber “an ally”</i>] 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.</p>	<p>2. Background Detail Is Laid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Kenite (not Kennizite)</i> • <i>Zaanaim: “to pack up” – maybe where traders would load their wares?</i>
<p>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.</p>	<p>3. The Enemy Responds to Barak’s Army</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>He responds</i> • <i>His strength</i> • <i>His location (as God had said)</i>

<p>14 Then Deborah said to Barak, "Up! For this <i>is</i> the day in which the LORD has delivered Sisera into your hand. Has not the LORD gone out before you?"</p>	<p>4. The Prophetess Prompts the Rescuer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has delivered</i> • <i>Has gone out before you</i>
<p>So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him.</p>	<p>5. The Leader Leads as God Commanded</p>
<p>15 And the LORD routed Sisera and <u>all his chariots</u> and all <i>his</i> army with the edge of the sword before Barak;</p>	<p>6. The LORD Defeats the Undefeatable Enemy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The LORD routed Sisera with all his weapons & army</i> • <i>The LORD did this before (in front of) Barak</i>
<p>and Sisera alighted from <i>his</i> chariot and fled away on foot.</p>	<p>7. The Enemy General Flees on Foot</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>8. The Leader Completely Defeats the Enemy Forces</p>
<p>17 However, Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; for <i>there</i> was peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>19 Then 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.</p> <p>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.'"</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>9. The Enemy General Seeks Shelter from an Ally</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>At the place of Heber</i> <i>The tent of Jael ("mountain goat"), wife of Heber</i> <i>Jael received the fleeing general</i> <i>Jael hides him under a blanket</i> <i>The general asks for a drink</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>He asks for water</i> • <i>She gives him milk</i> <i>The general asks Jael to stand guard</i> <i>Jael kills Sisera with a tent peg and hammer</i>
<p>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 <i>tent</i>, there lay Sisera, dead with the peg in his temple.</p>	<p>10. The Pursuing General Meets Disappointment</p>
<p>23 So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the children of Israel.</p> <p>24 And the hand of the children of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.</p>	<p>11. God Gets the Credit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>God defeats him that day</i> • <i>Israel eventually defeats Jabin completely</i>

Barak, the Deliverer (not Deborah)

- 1 Sam 12:11 And the LORD sent Jerubbaal [Gideon], Bedan [Barak], Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side; and you dwelt in safety.
- Heb 11:32-33a 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: ³³ who through faith subdued kingdoms...

Deborah, Model for Today or Unique Situation?

- What was supposed to be happening, per God's design, regarding communication from God?
- As a prophetess, what did Deborah receive that would not apply to other women today?
- How did she receive this position / ability? What did Deborah do? What did Deborah not do?
- "That people in our day, especially women, should find inspiration in Deborah is not surprising. She doesn't displace men in officially established positions of leadership, but her gender does not disqualify her from significant service for God." – Block, D. I. (2016). *OT317 Book Study: Judges*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.