

Judges 4 - 5

Deborah:

The Fourth Judge:

“Sing a song of tent pegs....”

I. Review

A. Prologues

1. Background (1:1 - 2:5)
2. Overview (2:6 - 3:11)

B. 1st Major Judge: Ehud Ben-Gera, the Left-Handed Benjamite (3:12-31)

1. Enemy: Eglon, King of Moab
2. Deliverance: Assassination of Eglon; Capture of Fords of Jordan

II. Details

A. The Sin (4:1)

B. The Enemies

1. Jabin¹ (4:2)
 - i. King of the Canaanites²
 - ii. Ruled in Hazor³ like his father(s) (See footnotes 1 & 3.)
2. Sisera⁴ (4:2-3)
 - i. Commander of Jabin's Army in Harosheth-Haggoyim
 - ii. Commanded About 900 Iron Chariots (See Jos 17:14-18.)
3. Heber⁵ the Kenite⁶ (4:11)
 - i. Informant of Deborah and Barak's Plans (v. 12)
 - ii. Migrated Far North to Zaananim near Kedesh and Hazor
 - iii. Perhaps His Family Were Metalworkers for Jabin. (See footnote 6.)
4. Other Canaanite Kings (5:19)

¹ Jabin: perhaps a dynastic name; Joshua had earlier defeated another king named Jabin (Jos 11:1, 10)

² Canaanites: descendants of Ham (Gen 10:6); held sway over the north and came from within Israel's territory (See 1:27-33)

³ Hazor: a city earlier burned by Joshua (Jos 11:10)

⁴ Sisera: not a Canaanite name

⁵ Hebrer: "ally"

⁶ Kenite: a descendant of Moses' father-in-law (1:16); settled far south in Judah's territory; traditionally metalworkers

C. The Oppression (5:6-8)

D. The Cry (4:3)

E. The Deliverers

1. Deborah⁷ (4:4-5)
 - i. Wife of Lappidoth
 - ii. Only Judge Who Was Also a Prophet(ess)
 - iii. Judged near Bethel in Central Israel
 - iv. Wrote One of the Oldest Poems in the Bible (chap. 5)
2. Barak⁸ Ben-Abinoam (4:6)
 - i. Lived in the North
 - ii. One of the “Heroes of Faith” (See Heb 11:32.)
3. Jael⁹, Wife of Heber (4:17)

F. The Deliverance

1. The Summoning of Barak, Deborah’s Prophecies, and His Request (4:6-9)
2. The Gathering of Troops (4:10, 13; 5:13-18)
 - i. Israel (10,000 from Zebulun, Naphtali, Ephraim, Benjamin, Manasseh¹⁰, and Issachar): Mt. Tabor¹¹
 - ii. Canaan: Valley of Jezreel¹² along the Kishon River near Meggido and En-Dor
3. The Battle (4:14-16; 5:19-22; Ps 83:9-10)
4. Flight and Death of Sisera (4:17-22; 5:24-29)
5. Defeat of Jabin (4:23-24)
6. Song of Victory (5:1-31)

G. Rest for one generation (40 yr) (5:31)

III. Application and Discussion

A. Why would Deborah summon a man from so far away to deliver Israel?

B. Was Barak’s request a lack of faith?

⁷ Deborah: “Honey Bee”

⁸ Barak: “Lightning Bolt”

⁹ Jael: “Mountain Goat”

¹⁰ Manasseh: Machir was the son of Manasseh (Jos 17:1)

¹¹ Mt. Tabor: elevation ~1300 ft

¹² Valley of Jezreel: Jezreel means “God scatters” or “God sows”; also known as the Plain of Meggido; King Ahab later kept a palace somewhere in this plain and he and Jezebel died there; site of numerous battles in history: Pharaoh Thutmose III defeated a Canaanite army there in 1468 BC; Gideon would later defeat the Midianites there (6:33); King Josiah of Judah died in battle against Pharaoh Neco II of Egypt there in 609 BC (2 Ki 23:29; 2 Ch 35:20-24); Napoleon defeated the Turks there in 1799 (taking advantage of the flooding of the Kishon River); British General Allenby defeated the Palestinian Turks there in 1917

- C. Why were Judah and Levi not rebuked for not joining in the fight as were Reuben, Gad (Gilead), Dan, and Asher? (What was going on in Judah at this time? (See 5:6.))**
- D. How was Mt. Tabor a strategic location for Israel?**
- E. What other battle might be fought near Meggido? (See Rev 16:13-14, 16; 19:19-21)**
- F. What is meant by the imagery of stars fighting in 5:20?**
- G. What can we learn about worship from Deborah's song?**