

Judges Part 3 – Deborah and Barak (Judges ch. 4&5)

I have been blessed in my life that God has often put strong women in my life....sometimes too strong

Some of my earliest remembrances are of my GG grandmother....she was an Irish immigrant....now, believe it or not, a lot of what we hear about Irish people is not true....

They don't walk around saying....."top o the morning to ya".....they don't all love potatoes.....they are not all drunks.....and most of them can say thirty three and a third without making you giggle....

But one thing that I learned very early in my life is the temper of an Irish red headed grandmother.....

She was in her late 80s when I was a child, and one of my (dare I say) fondest memories.....was bringing her a glass of water when she was nearing the end of her life.....she was mostly (KEY WORD IN THIS STORY) bed ridden....

She had these beautiful blue and green drinking glasses, and I loved bringing her water....she would usually give me a butterscotch candy.....but she always told me as I took the glass back to the kitchen.....don't drop the glass....

Out of spite one day.....I decided to drop the glass, and as it shattered into a billion pieces.....I heard the bed creak, and the grunt of an 86 year old lady jumping out of the bed.....and in what I can only describe as a moment of sheer age regression on her part.....she turned into an Olympic sprinter.....determined to light up my backside with a fly swatter

To this day, I have a panic attack when I hear glass break....

My great grandmother was also one of the strongest women I had ever known, and also one of the godliest....i can still to this day hear her praying in her rocking chair....

One of the things I adore about my wife is her fierce (and when I say fierce.....I mean....FIERCE) loyalty to her family....she is normally pretty reserved.....but if you want to awaken momma bear.....say something negative about someone she loves and cares for....I know beyond a shadow of a doubt.....she is a pillar of strength for me in ministry

I say all this this morning, because of the character that comes out of Judges 4/5.....her name is Deborah.....

Deborah is the Judge that follows Ehud (and Shamgar, but only 1 vs.)

Here are a few things to know about Deborah....Judges 4

v.4. she was a prophetess
married to Lappidoth.
Judging Israel

v.5. she would sit under the Palm trees
people would bring their complaints to her and she would determine who was right.....
(blue dress/gold dress on FB)

v.6. she was powerful
could command the armies

it is not an understatement to say that Deborah was arguably one of the most gifted, talented, and godly PEOPLE in the bible.....thats important.....because I want to be careful and not say she was JUST one of the most gifted women...

her rank and status in the bible is not only equal to the other men we see in the book of Judges....but she is seen as the most distinguished of the rest of the judges

Lets run through the story of Deborah and Barak, and lets let this guide us to see how she fits into story of the coming Messiah.....

v.1 – the Israelites have again “did what was evil”after Ehud

remembering back – Judges 2:3 – the canaanites will be thorns, their gods will be traps....

Sisera – commander of the armies of Canaan – 900 chariots of iron

For context.....guess how many chariots of iron the Israelites had.....ZERO

v.3 – Sisera had oppressed the Israelites for 20years.....and finally.....the Israelites have had enough of the thorns in their sides...

remembering back to their ancestors.....they cry out to the Lord for help

this is where we find the leader, the most distinguished judge.....Deborah....

v.6 – she summons Barak – the leader of the Israelite army

she reminds Barak of the Lords command – this is important.....God had already commanded Barak (go gather zebulun and Naphtali, take 10,000 and God will draw out Sisera– he refused

the contrast of personality here is embarrassing for Barak – the faith of Barak is embarrassing

Barak’s answer to Deborah who reminds him of Gods promise is.....If you go, I will.....If you won’t, I won’t.....

And I can just see Deborah’s response....can’t you.....v.9 – allllright.....I’ll go.....eye roll

v.9 But.....you (Barak) wont get the glory for defeating Sisera – instead – it will go to a woman.....

v.11 -this sounds odd.....why did the writer of Judges feel its important to point out a domestic dispute
(Heber the Kenite got mad, was kicked out, and he took his RV and moved as far away from his family as possible.....so much so.....that he had befriended the Canannites)

You will see why this is important here in a moment.....

Barak, goes to war against Sisera.....10,000 Israelites rout 900 of Siseras chariots.....and Sisera escapes.....and he ends up at the tent of Jael and Heber (the Kenites)

Jael (the wife) comforts him by bringing him milk, water, a blanket....and lets him rest....

v.20 – Sisera tells Jael, stand at the tent....they are coming for me, tell them I’m not here...
read v. 20 – 21

v.21. I can just here Jael standing their with her hammer.....Nailed it....
– so he died – not sure this is necessary....

And Deborah’s prophecy comes true.....Barak would not receive the glory....instead, it would be given to a woman

v.23 Jaban – sin. Subdued by the faith of Deborah. Jaban destroyed by Deborah’s faith

What can we apply to our lives from this story about Deborah...these come from **ch.5**

1. God gifts men and women with the same gifts that they use within their differing roles
 - v.2** – that the leaders took the lead
 - this story was remarkable given it took place in a very patriarchal period
 - Deborah was strong, trusted, godly
 - she used her power to accomplish God's will without usurping the role he had for her as a woman....

How do we know this – she commanded the armies but she was not the military leader, this role was reserved for men. She was a prophetess who God used, however she was not a priest as that role was not her role.....But because of her gifts, talents, and abilities, she was trusted, and her faith was beyond the measure of her contemporaries

We believe the same thing about women here at CFF. God has given each of you gifts, talents, and abilities, and if you let him, he will use those for His glory.

2. Quit being a spectator
 - a. **5:23** – Curse Meroz – why.....they did nothing
 - b. They probably were sitting back at the tent smoking a joint, eating potato chips, probably holding up signs that said make love not war.....
 - c. God doesn't need spectators, he needs men and women who will step up and do something
 - d. We need your help here at CFF....we need men and women to serve in all kinds of roles...worship ministry, youth, children, hospitality,
 - e. When the church is full of spectators it will be cursed, and it will die.....don't be a spectator
3. All God requires from us is simple obedience **v.24**
 - a. God used a housewife to bring down a powerful Canaanite....
 - b. She used what was then just a common tent stake (it would be the equivalent of killing him with a frying pan)
 - c. Barak was not given the glory of the victory – why – because he refused to do what God told him....he was scared.....Jael, did what Barak could have easily done....the difference was....Jael did something

Musicians

4. God will one day make everything right
 - a. In her song, Deborah mocks the mother of Sisera **(v.28)**. (why is it taking him so long to come home)
 - b. **v.30**. The princesses answer.....because he is out dividing the spoils of beating the Israelites
A womb or two for every man – women were often raped when they were conquered
 - c. Dyed materials for Sisera.....there is so much spoil, it may take a while....
 - d. But one day.....**v.31** for all of us

Short ending