

## Barak

### Judges 4

**And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead. <sup>2</sup>And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles. <sup>3</sup>And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel.**

1. Continuous pattern (see Judges 2:16-23). They fall into bondage and trouble, then cry out to God; God raises a deliverer to bring them out; after the Judge dies, they go back into sin and bad times follow. Whenever God's leader wasn't around, they had a tendency to sin or get out of position. How do you operate when His people/person ain't around? This doesn't happen when you fear God more than man.
2. God gives them over to trouble through Jabin and Sisera (Gentiles). When you turn your back on God, He forsakes you.
  - a. Sin causes you to lose the advantage over the enemy. Joshua had beaten them before (Joshua 11)
3. Must have been a bad time because they cried to God. The enemy had a lot more than what they had. Oppressed mightily, means things were really bad. Didn't call on God until they were in trouble.
  - a. God knows what will bring us back to Him.
  - b. This went on for 20 years. Why did they suffer that long? Took that long for them to stop trying to work it out themselves, that long to be fed up, and that long before they finally returned to God. It still happens today.
  - c. Someone in my class shared with me this statement, "**Change happens when the pain of staying the same is greater than the pain of change.**" (Tony Robbins)
  - d. Another class member stated, "They stayed that way for so long because it doesn't hurt bad enough (yet)."

**<sup>4</sup>And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time. <sup>5</sup>And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in mount Ephraim: and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.**

**<sup>6</sup>And she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedeshnaphtali, and said unto him, Hath not the LORD God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward mount**

**Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun? <sup>7</sup> And I will draw unto thee to the river Kishon Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand.**

**<sup>8</sup> 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.**

4. Deborah – prophetess; judged Israel and in that season, if you wanted a word, you went to this woman.
  - a. God's mouth to the people.
5. Ramah –hill, near Bethlehem; Bethel = house of God – ancient place of worship in Ephraim.
  - a. She stayed between these two places; under a tree that provides shade and cover. Comfort to those who came to see her and get a word.
6. Barak = lightning flash; Abinoam = my father is delight (tribe of Naphtali)
  - a. Kedesh = holy place
  - b. Naphtali = wrestling – 5<sup>th</sup> son of Jacob
  - c. Zebulun = exalted – 6<sup>th</sup> son of Leah, 10<sup>th</sup> of Jacob
  - d. Calls these two tribes because they lived nearest to Jabin so their oppression was probably greater than the others.
  - e. She calls Barak and gives him a word and reminder. Notice, she didn't give him a new word. It was confirmation of a word he had already received from the Lord so this was no surprise to Barak.
  - f. Go and take some folks with you that can wrestle and looking to rise up. Get them from his tribe and the tribe next to him.
7. God will draw closer to him when he approaches his enemy Sisera and He will deliver these problems into his hand.
  - a. As soon as Barak was in position....high place, the enemy would come to him, but not to take him out; but to be taken out themselves. Enemy may come with one purpose in mind while God has another plan in mind.
  - b. The problem chasing after you may be just part of a set up....so don't worry as long as you have a word and are in good position. Same thing happened to the Egyptians during the Exodus.
8. Barak says he won't go unless the person who provided him the word goes with him. He won't go without the word or woman of God.

Key points. Barak already knew what God wanted him to do. It was revealed to him. I wonder why he was waiting and not obeying what God instructed him to do?

Could be several reasons. Fear, waiting for confirmation, want things to work out a different way, etc.

Deborah is skillful in addressing his reluctance in the form of question. What did God command you to do? It was effective, try it.

Sometimes you need a godly person to confirm to you what you already know about the will of God in your life.

Barak is mentioned in the Hall of Faith and yet here will not go unless Deborah goes with him. Why?

- Seems he wanted that symbol and representation of faith with him. Does he have some faith....yes....does he really have all that he needs to carry out God's order? Yes, he merely needed to have faith in the word God gave him.
- Does he lack great faith? Probably, but I like that he recognizes his weakness and still eventually moves to obey.
- I'm not going to criticize too harshly Barak's actions because the last time I checked the story, he was on the move.
- And herein is perhaps the great lesson to this point of the story.....Deborah meets Barak where he is. Instead of rebuking him, she ministers to him and encourages him to do what? To do the will of the Lord.

Application for today, what role are you playing to encourage others to obey the word of the Lord? We should look to encourage rather than discourage through criticism.

**<sup>9</sup> 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 Kedesh. <sup>10</sup> And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; and he went up with ten thousand men at his feet: and Deborah went up with him.**

9. She agrees to go with him and gives him a prophetic word:
  - a. The journey you are on is not for your glory. She doesn't just tell him what to do, she goes with him.
  - b. Sisera will be taken out by an unlikely person....a woman.
  - c. She goes with him to Kadesh.
10. Barak calls his fighters to Kedesh, obeys the order and Deborah goes up as well to encourage him.

This should be an encouragement to Barak. Look at what is happening. Deborah, a spiritual mentor is with him so he is not alone; the word of God is being partially fulfilled because he is able to get the 10,000 men predicted; these men are in position and at his command.

- Application: When you see God starting to move and you experience the partial fulfillment, it should encourage you that He isn't lining all of this up for you to fail. He who began a good work in you, is faithful to complete it (Philippians 1:6).

**<sup>11</sup> Now Heber the Kenite, which was of the children of Hobab the father in law of Moses, had severed himself from the Kenites, and pitched his tent unto the plain of Zaanaim, which is by Kedesh. <sup>12</sup> And they shewed Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to mount Tabor. <sup>13</sup> And Sisera gathered together all his chariots, even nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people that were with him, from Harosheth of the Gentiles unto the river of Kishon.**

11. Heber = comrade, his wife is Jael who kills Sisera. He decides to separate from his relatives and live someplace else Zaanaim = removing.
12. Heber either rats out Barak and tells Sisera that he has gone up to Mount Tabor or is setting Sisera up. This I understand is not far from Armageddon.
13. Sisera takes 900 chariots and all that he has to pursue Barak.

How did Sisera know where to go? He had help.

Application: Even today the enemy has agents to attack you where you are in the Lord. There are still people and agents working for the enemy who are working against you and the will of God for your life.

**<sup>14</sup> And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this is the day in which the LORD hath delivered Sisera into thine hand: is not the LORD gone out before thee? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him.**

14. Deborah tells Barak to get up because this is the day.
  - a. Notice the positioning, God tells him to go up to the mount before he goes down to face the enemy. Gotta go up first if you want to be successful.
  - b. God was already moving in front of where he was going. God was in front of this. Paving the way, without God, your way may not be opened yet.

Question: Why does Barak leave the Mount to deal with the enemy?

Application Points: Look at Barak's faith because he certainly could have looked at the enemy and his problem he had to face and turned around. Instead he rises up.

- Look at the encouragement he receives from Deborah – this is the moment you have been waiting for. Today is the day to rise up. The victory is yours. Can't you see that the Lord has already gone out before you?
- **Take note – what evidence did Barak have that God had gone out before him?** Does it say?
  - Yes, he can easily look at where God had brought him and the changes around him, and things that were happening in his life since he started to obey. This should have been all the evidence he needed.
  - I used to look at this and wonder what God showed him at this point to encourage Barak....I missed the point that he had already received encouragement.
  - He had more than what he started with and the blessing he received was in line with the word and plan of God.
- **Application:** When you receive blessings you didn't have before, that line up with the word and will of God; that is a pretty good sign that God has gone out before you.
  - This may be critical, because if you focus on the problem in front of rather than the blessings behind you, you might miss the God who is still in front of you. Don't miss the victory that is on the way.

**<sup>15</sup> And the LORD discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword before Barak; so that Sisera lighted down off his chariot, and fled away on his feet. <sup>16</sup> But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles: and all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not a man left. <sup>17</sup> Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite: for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.**

15. God made Sisera uncomfortable. Enemy uncomfortable, but how? With the sword. Word which is the sword of God if used correctly will make the enemy uncomfortable. Sisera gets down out of his ride and runs away on foot. What he brought to the fight in confidence, he now threw away to escape on foot.
- a. Thought: Taken out by a rain storm which bogged down the chariots. Made them uncomfortable since Baalim was a rain god. We see an indication of this in the following chapter (Judges 5).
  - b. This story not just about Barak, it is also about the purpose of God and message to those who work against Him and those outside the Kingdom. If you are trusting in someone or something other than God....you will eventually find that they will fail you.

16. Barak chased after the chariots and defeated the rest of the enemy. They were able to catch them even though the enemy had chariots.
17. Sisera runs to Heber's house on foot because they were friends.

By faith, God is fighting the battle for Barak. He is the same God today. Sisera's army is killed. Notice when you are following the wrong leader, there are consequences. **When you hang out with people who are not God's people, there may be consequences.** When you pursue the wrong things with the wrong people God might start working against you rather than for you.....defeat is imminent.

**<sup>18</sup> And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said unto him, Turn in, my lord, turn in to me; fear not. And when he had turned in unto her into the tent, she covered him with a mantle. <sup>19</sup> And he said unto her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink; for I am thirsty. And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink, and covered him.**

**<sup>20</sup> Again he said unto her, Stand in the door of the tent, and it shall be, when any man doth come and enquire of thee, and say, Is there any man here? That thou shalt say, No.**

**<sup>21</sup> Then Jael Heber's wife took a nail of the tent, and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly unto him, and smote the nail into his temples, and fastened it into the ground: for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died.**

1. Jael = mountain goat; meets him and invites him to hide there.
2. Enemy was tired and needed a place to rest and recover.
3. Asks her to lie for him, to deceive anyone who is coming to seek him out. Enemy likes to hide.
4. She goes softly and takes the enemy out by pounding a nail into his head.

I have no great revelation behind this sequence except perhaps, God has fulfilled the plan as outlined and revealed to Deborah. A woman defeats Sisera. Additionally, note, it is important and God's plan that your problem be completely defeated.

Women and their ministries play an important role in the story and are a key to Barak's increasing faith and ultimate victory.

Jael - is silent, but deadly! That's what the class said.

**<sup>22</sup> And, behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said unto him, Come, and I will shew thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the nail was in his temples.**

When you do this right, for His glory, the enemy will not get up from this.

**<sup>23</sup> So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel.**

**<sup>24</sup> And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan.**

22. Barak still pursuing after him, Jael delivers him to Barak.
23. Credit goes to God but He does it in the presence of or in front of Israel.
24. Once the enemy was nailed down, they prospered and prevailed against the enemy. Eventually, the enemy was totally destroyed. Eventually, if you do this thing correct, the enemy won't be around for long and you can expect prosperity.

God can bless something greater than you ever imagined, even though it doesn't happen the way you imagined it would. Just better. Barak doesn't complain because he didn't have the honor taking out Sisera. Is there an application today?

## Chapter 5

Deborah sings a victory song. Easy to remember songs. There is power in music and praise.

Starts out by praising God.

People willingly offered themselves and God moved. He will not force you to come correct. You still have a choice.

Honor for those tribes that participated, verses 14-15, 18.

Some tribes didn't participate and got called out. Reuben (had to think about it and missed the opportunity, Gilead (not my area or turf), Dan stayed on the ships. They missed the event and it passed them by. Asher stayed at the beach. Some cursed for not getting involved.

**Application:** Please take advantage of the opportunities to support Kingdom ministries. There is a blessing when you do. Also, don't be discouraged when you don't receive the support from others you would expect....God will bless you with what you need and use what you have for the victory.