

Dark Times. Broken People. FAITHFUL KING.

Week 3

Judges 4-5

Judges 4-5 both tell the same story. Judges 4 is historical narrative. Judges 5 is a poetic song sung by Deborah and Barak.

"Othniel teaches us that our sin stems from gospel amnesia, and Ehud teaches us that our sin is vile and disgusting. Now Deborah and Barak, Jael and Sisera teach us that our sin is ancient and evil, yet God's promises to destroy sin and evil (Genesis 3:15) still hold true, both in the dark days of the judges and in our current day" (J. I. Packer, *Judges*, p. 30).

I. The 3rd Sin Cycle - "Then the sons of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord" (Judges 4:1).

II. Deborah - Judges 4:2-5

Prophetess and Judge - "In this way, Deborah is very different from all the other judges, before and after her. She led from wisdom and character, rather than sheer might" (Tim Keller, *Judges for You*, Loc. 671).

Men and women were created in the image of God. Both were told to be fruitful and multiply and subdue the earth. God gifts women and men with the same gifts. The only office limited to men in the Old Testament, was the office of Priest/Levite and the only one limited in the New Testament is that of Pastor/Elder. Many churches also limit the role of deacon to men because the early church chose only men as deacons (Acts 6).

"It is not good for the man to be alone, I will make a helper (ezer) suitable for him" (Genesis 2:18). Ezer - "strong helper" - used 21 times in the Old Testament, 16 of which refer to God as Israel's helper in times of trouble.

"Further research indicates ezer is a powerful military word whose significance we have barely begun to unpack. The ezer is a warrior, and this has far reaching implications for women, not only in marriage, but in every relationship, season, and walk of life" (Carolyn Custis James, *The Lost Women of the Bible*, p. 36).

It takes a man and a woman to procreate - "to be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). It also takes men and women to see people born again and to fulfill the mandate to: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

God poured out His Spirit on men and women on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). The Bible says the Spirit rested upon each one of them as "tongues of fire" and "they all began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance." We know that people were in Jerusalem "from every nation under heaven...and they were all bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language" (Acts 2:6).

Tim Keller said, "The Old Testament tells us that women are equal in value, dignity and ability, created as they are in God's image and given dominion under him over his creation (Genesis 1:26-28). It also shows us that women were free to use their gifts in any role but that of priest. God shows his Old Testament people that men and women are equal, but not equivalent" (Tim Keller, *Judges for You*, Loc. 726).

Kadi Cole – *Developing Female Leaders*

Egalitarians – "People who hold an egalitarian view of the Trinity often believe that men and women are equal in being and are free to fulfill any role in the home, in church, at work, or in community based on their individual giftedness and calling as validated by the community" (p. 26).

Complementarians – "People who follow the hierarchical view of the Trinity believe that men and women are equal in value but have different roles and functions because of the gender God has given them, including roles of leading and roles of following. Relationships between men and women have an established and god-ordained order that, if lived out in Christlikeness, creates freedom and peace for everyone" (p. 27).

Huldah – 2 Kings 22:11-20

- A. Seek the Lord not a position– Love Him with your whole being
- B. Serve others – Love your neighbor as yourself

"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time" (1 Peter 5:6).

III. Barak – Judges 4:6-16

Hero or Coward?

"An iron chariot could cut through foot-soldiers like a hot knife through butter. Nine hundred chariots would beat 10,000 men every time. But Barak still fights" (Tim Keller, *Judges for You*, Loc. 697).

"But just try and imagine what it would have been like for an army of Israelite farmers, poorly armed (Judges 5:8: 'Was shield or spear to be seen among forty thousand in Israel?') to go up against an army of trained soldiers with 900 iron chariots. Victory would have seemed impossible. But this is exactly the point. God's salvation of his people is never accomplished by means of human strength but rather by the strength of God through human weakness" (J. I. Packer, *Judges*, p. 33).

Judges 4:15 – The Lord routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army..."

"It is remarkable to remember that our Savior stood His ground unto death in order that all of His people might live and return victorious from battle. And thus, 'in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us' (Rom. 8:37)" (J. I. Packer, *Judges*, p. 33).

IV. Jael – Judges 4:18-24

"The gruesome account of the striking, crushing, shattering, and piercing (5:26) of Sisera's head should cause us to remember one of the ancient promises of God from Genesis 3:15, that the offspring of the woman would one day deal the final blow to Satan and sin by crushing his head. In seeing this connection, we are reminded that Israel's greatest need is not salvation from foreign oppression but salvation from the sin that led to the oppression" (J. I. Packer, *Judges*, p. 34).

V. The Song of Deborah and Barak – Judges 5

- A. Judges 5:1-5 - God fought for Israel
- B. Judges 5:6-11 - Life under oppression
- C. Judges 5:12-18 - Deborah arose a Mother in Israel, tribes gathered
- D. Judges 5:19-23 - The stars fought from heaven
- E. Judges 5:24-27 - Jael, most blessed of women
- F. Judges 5:28-30 - Sisera's reputation
- G. Judges 5:31 - Victory

"So in this way may all your enemies perish, O LORD!" (Judges 5:31). This praise and request points to the description of the last battle (Revelation 19) where Christ will lead us to victory over the enemy and evil will be conquered once and for all!