



# PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

## JUDGES 4:1-10

### LESSON: DEBORAH AND BARAK —June 4, 2017

#### INTRODUCTION:

**Chapter 3:12-31**<sup>1</sup> Eglon, king of Moab, with his own people and aided by the Amalekites crossed the Jordan, seized Jericho and compelled the Jews to pay tribute (3:12-13). The Amalekites were nomads of the desert who were fierce fighters. Ehud, a Benjamite, the second judge of Israel, brought a tribute to Eglon which was probably in the form of agricultural produce (3:14). He had carefully planned the assassination of the king by sneaking in a 14 inch dagger (3:15-16). Pretending to have a secret message from God for the king, he aroused the king's curiosity and secured a private audience with him. Ehud approached the king as if to reveal the message, but drew the dagger and buried it in the king's belly, leaving him to die on the floor. The fat in his belly closed in over the dagger, so, it couldn't be seen or pulled out. Ehud escaped to Seirath (3:17-26).

Finally, the servants unlocked the king's door, only to find King Eglon dead on the floor. When Ehud had gotten to Mount Ephraim, he sounded the trumpet for his people, asking them to follow him, for the Lord had delivered their enemy Moab into their hand. Ehud mustered a small army and engaged the Moabites in a surprise attack. 10,000 able-bodied and all men of valor were slain; none escaped under the hand of Israel. The result was a great victory for Israel. It was so devastating that for 80 years no enemy wanted to attack them (3:27-30).

Then the Philistines threatened Israel from the other direction. This time God sent Shamgar, the third judge, to deliver His people. He did it single-handedly by killing 600 Philistines with an ox goad. And he became Israel's champion (3:31).

#### LESSON:

#### I. ISRAEL'S CRISIS Judges 4:1-3

**4:1** And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, when Ehud was dead. After the death of Ehud, the eighty year period of rest came to an end. The cause of Israel's crisis was apostasy (*the falling away from the truth*). It returned to Israel, and the Israelites old evil ways and habits resumed in the presence of God.

**4:2** 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. There were consequences for Israel's apostasy. It says that the Israelites were sold into the hand of king Jabin of Canaan whose headquarters was in Hazor by God. You can say the Lord permitted His people to be subjected to Jabin, a Canaanite king—their enemy. There were two kings of Hazor named Jabin (*a king of Hazor in Galilee* defeated by Joshua—Josh.11:1-14 and *the Canaanite king of Hazor*--Jdgs.4:2. Jabin might be known as the official title name of the king of Hazor, and not a

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.family-times.net/commentary/judges-312/>  
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>

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personal name. His commander of the Canaanite army was Sisera dwelling in Harosheth of the Gentiles.

**4:3 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.** For 20 years Israel was oppressed as Jabin's 900 chariots were too much for them. The alliances with idolatrous nations drug Israel into grievous sin. And because of Israel's sin that led to this crisis, they cried to the Lord. Why did Israel wait until times of emergency to call on the Lord? And why do we neglect the things of God until the hour of crisis?

## II. DEBORAH'S LEADERSHIP Judges 4:4-7

**4:4 And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.** At this particular time, their **fourth judge, Deborah** was also both Israel's prophetess and Israel's first and only woman judge; and the wife of Lapidoth. She was a well-respected leader. The wayward Jews were like her children, and she welcomed and counseled them. Some other prophetesses in the bible were: • Miriam (Ex.15:20) • Huddah (2 Kgs.22:14) • Noadiah (Neh.6:14) • Anna (Lk.2:36) • The four daughters of Philip (Acts 21:9).

**4:5 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.** Prophetess Deborah lived in Mount Ephraim traveling between Ramah and Bethel to sit under the palm tree to whom the children of Israel would come up to her for judgment. She held court deciding arguments, legal matters, and matters of justice for the children of Israel. God placed her in the position to pronounce judgment, something only men were always appointed in leadership role to do. But, we see that God was in charge of this appointment. The "*palm tree*" symbolized grace and elegance and became known as "*the tree of Deborah.*" We know that Palm Branches were used to symbolize praise as Jesus entered Jerusalem on his way to the cross.

**4:6 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?**— Barak, a military commander whose name means "*lighting*", the son of Abinoam was summoned by Prophetess Deborah where she questions him: "*Hasn't the Lord God of Israel commanded you to go to Mount Tabor with an army of 10,000 men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun?*" Undoubtedly, God had spoken this to Barak and she is reminding him.

**4:7 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.** Continuing from verse 6, God's Word to Barak was that God would be the One to draw Sisera to the Kishon River. And God would lead and deliver Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army along with his chariots and his multitude into Barak's hand, which would be a win; a triumph for Barak.

## III. BARAK'S RESPONSE Judges 4:8-10

**4:8 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.** But, Barak was not willing to go into battle alone, unless Prophetess Deborah was willing to go with him. And if

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she was not willing to go with him, then he wouldn't go.

**4:9 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.** Therefore, Prophetess Deborah agreed to go into battle with him, but she didn't deceive him about the journey. She prophesied that the final glory and honor of this mission would not go to him (a man), but the Lord would bring down Sisera selling him into the hand of a woman who would thereby get the honor. Sisera would fall into God's trap. The verse does not tell why Barak, a military commander would not go into battle at the Word of God, but needed the Prophetess to accompany him. But we do know that Prophetess Deborah was a well-respected leader and counselor who encouraged the people to obey God, and also showed that she did not waver in her obedience to God. At their coming together, both Prophetess Deborah and commander Barak together arose and went to Kadesh.

**4:10 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.** Barak summoned the 10,000 men out of Zebulun and Naphtali tribes and they went up to Kedesh and Prophetess Deborah went up with him.

## SUMMARY:

After the death of Ehud, the eighty year period of rest came to an end and the Israelites did evil in His sight. God sold the children of Israel into the hand of king Jabin of Canaan, who mightily oppressed them for 20yrs., that they then began to cry out to God (**4:1-3**).

Deborah, the wife of Lapidoth was both Israel's prophetess and its first and only woman judge. She was the fourth judge to give judgment and counsel. She lived in Mount Ephraim traveling between Ramah and Bethel to sit under the palm tree and hold court deciding arguments, legal matters, and matters of justice as the children of Israel came up for her judgment. Prophetess Deborah sent for Barak, Israel's military commander to go toward Mount Tabor, where God would draw Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army including his chariots and his multitude to the river Kishon where God would deliver them into his hand (**4:4-7**).

However, Barak answered that as long as Prophetess Deborah would go into battle with him, he would go. But, if she didn't go, he would not go. Prophetess Deborah assured him that she would go, but that the honor of Sisera's capture would not go to him, but fall into God's trap, thereby, selling Sisera into the hand of a woman. The honor would go to a woman instead of a man. Both Prophetess Deborah and commander Barak together arose and went to Kadesh. Barak summoned the 10,000 men out of Zebulun and Naphtali tribes to accompany them (**4:8-10**).