

Two Great Women

Introduction:

1. This true historical event is found in *Judges chapters 4 and 5*, where we have the event and a song.
2. Most of the heroes in the Bible are boys and men, but there are two women exalted in two chapters.
3. We want more than courageous and dedicated boys and men; we also want such girls and women.
4. We recently studied the rule for women not to be fearful of husbands to any amazement (I Pet 3:6).
5. Peter wrote that today's women can be daughters of O.T. holy women by godly character (I Pet 3:5).
6. This great event of faith is mentioned in Hebrews 11, but Barak is the one listed by the grace of God.
7. It is God's ordinary plan for husbands and fathers to lead families, but sometimes women must do so.
8. There is much to learn of faith, courage, and zeal in the inspired history of Deborah, Barak, and Jael.
9. No matter how great the odds may be against you in any matter, the Lord is able to deliver gloriously!
10. Is there not a cause? When there is a cause in the kingdom of God, some volunteer and others avoid!
11. The character of God is learned by reading the history and considering the song of praise following it.
12. If nothing else, the study of these chapters will assist your ability to read and understand scripture.

1 And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead.

- A. To the great shame of Israel, they could not remain faithful after the death of their deliverers.
- B. When Joshua's generation died, the nation backslid; and they did it again after Ehud died.
- C. We must, by God's grace, teach commitment and dedication for our children to stay faithful.
- D. Here is one of the object lessons of the Old Testament to keep us faithful (I Cor 10:6-11).

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.

- A. This is a fair and just sale. If a man or a nation does evil, then the LORD will justly punish.
- B. Spiritual adultery is a terrible sin, so it justifies the Lord giving His bride to pagan lovers.
- C. The lead king in this persecution was Jabin; the military commander of forces was Sisera.

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.

- A. God gave Israel over to chastening by Jabin and his terrifying military power for 20 years.
- B. The LORD, especially in light of disobedience, is not bound to respond immediately to any.
- C. They cried, for the oppression was terrible, and the possibility of deliverance seemed remote.
- D. When you are in trouble and cannot see any deliverance or escape, cry mightily unto God.

4 And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time.

- A. God may either raise up or use a person already in place to save His people from oppressors.
- B. Sometimes a man may marry a woman more righteous or capable than he, as did Lapidoth.
- C. It is God's ordinary plan for husbands and fathers to lead families, but sometimes women must do so.
- D. Under the Old Covenant and in apostolic times, God called prophetesses (Acts 2:17; 21:9).
- E. God used judges for about 450 years, between Joshua and Samuel the prophet (Acts 13:20).

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.

- A. The place of civil judgment identified with her was a palm tree between Ramah and Bethel.
- B. These judges would settle all sort of disputes among the people, as nearly wore Moses out.
- C. She was no mere tribal or city judge, the whole nation looked to her for God's judgment.

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?

- A. God inspired Deborah to draft Barak to be the leader of the military campaign against Jabin.
- B. She did not request his services in her name or by her strategy, but by the word of the Lord.
- C. Barak was to gather a voluntary force primarily from two tribes for the expedition (5:2,9,18).
- D. Success is guaranteed, when we hear and obey the commands of the LORD God of Israel.

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.

- A. Continuing the inspired mandate, the LORD promised to arrange the battle and the victory!
- B. As with kings, the hearts of all men are in the hand of the Lord for His will (Proverbs 21:1).
- C. Note here for future reference that the battle would occur in proximity to the River Kishon.

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.

- A. Barak would not go without Deborah. He was not guiltless in this fear, due to the next verse.
- B. We might reason he wanted the woman of God for God's presence, but he feared too much.
- C. Howbeit, the Lord was very merciful by including his name, not Deborah's, in Hebrews 11.
- D. There is comfort in the LORD including Barak, Gideon, and even Samson in Hebrews 11.
- E. Though the LORD has and will give us great women, it is the duty of the men to be leaders.

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.

- A. Deborah was convinced of the duty and success of the expedition, so she went with him.
- B. But she gently rebuked Barak that a woman – Jael – would get the honour instead of him.
- C. Though the LORD has and will give us great women, it is the duty of the men to be leaders.
- D. God sells men (2:14). He sold Egypt a ransom for Israel. And He sold Sisera to Jael. Glory!
- E. Here is God's reversal of fortune: He sold Israel (4:2), and now He purposed to sell Sisera.

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.

- A. Per the LORD's inspired instructions, Barak took 10,000 men of Zebulun and Naphtali.
- B. In light of other Old Testament historical accounts of battles, this was a very small force.
- C. The LORD gets far greater glory when the odds are stacked against us very unfavorably.
- D. Note the Holy Spirit's last clause ... Barak the military commander had Deborah with him!

11 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.

- A. This Hobab is the same as Jethro, whom Moses invited to join Israel in Canaan (Num 10:29).
- B. The Kenites generally lived among the tribe of Judah, but Heber had moved (Judges 1:16).
- C. By the providence of God, this man and his illustrious wife would be in the path of the battle.

12 And they shewed Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam was gone up to mount Tabor.

- A. Recon teams from Sisera identified troop movements of Barak and Deborah's small army.
- B. The LORD God made sure Sisera knew the situation at the right time and in the right way.

13 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.

- A. Sisera had not had action from Israel for 20 years, so he gathered his whole host for battle.
- B. Why would we want only part of His host present? Out of fear? Let the Lord destroy all of it!
- C. Note again, that the Lord's prediction of the location at the River Kishon is being met (4:7).

14 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.

- A. Deborah exhorted Barak to the battle, and he took the 10,000 men with him down to fight.
- B. Deborah did not engage in fighting herself, but she went with Barak nearly to the battle.
- C. The greatest exhortation we can give a man or woman of faith is God's presence or word.
- D. Though Jael would get great honor from the battle, Barak would also have his share as said.
- E. If the Lord is for us, or gone out before us, there is no enemy in the universe we should fear.

15 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.

- A. The LORD so confused and terrified the enemy forces that Barak easily slaughtered them.
- B. There is more to be understood here than readily apparent by what we read later (5:19-21).
- C. When God is on our side, He brings factors to play in the matter we do not know or control.
- D. When a general knows defeat is sure, it is best to look like a common soldier (I Kgs 22:30).

16 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.

- A. Barak, with God's supernatural blessing, kept after the chariots and host for total slaughter.
- B. When God gives an assignment, it is our duty to fulfill the task completely (I Sam 15:1-23).
- C. It is very terrible when God brings vengeance on the enemies of His people (II Thess 1:6-9).
- D. Though the information is worth little, the pagan historian Philo Byblius says 997,000 died!

17 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.

- A. The great captain of the forces of Jabin is running for his life from the Lord and from Barak.
- B. By the providence of God, Heber and his wife had moved from Judah to be in Sisera's path.
- C. Since Heber the Kenite was not an Israelite, Jabin king of Hazor had no quarrel with him.
- D. Sisera ran away from his host and chariots to take refuge in the tent of Jael, Heber's wife.
- E. It was common, remember polygamy, for wives to have their own tents (Gen 24:67; 31:33).

18 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.

- A. The courageous woman went out to meet the enemy of God's people and fully disarmed him.
- B. Bible skeptics and scorners attack this passage and those following as being so contrary to morality and human nature that it denies the integrity and righteousness of God. God forbid!
- C. But there is no difference in this subterfuge and ordinary battle strategy involving deception.
- D. There is no lie in the sight of God when the deception is for God's glory and to preserve life.
- E. This does not mean we use this and similar passages to justify deception in other situations.
- F. She covered him with a mantle, which was a loose sleeveless cloak used as an outer garment.

19 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.

- A. Thirsty Sisera asked for a little water to drink, but Jael did him one better and brought milk!
- B. As we read later in the song celebrating this event, she brought butter in a lordly dish (5:25)!
- C. If you are going to do something for the Lord, then do it with all your wits and zeal, as Jael!
- D. Tired from battle, covered in the privacy of Jael's tent, some cream helped him go to sleep!

20 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.

- A. Before sleep, he considered his risks and took precautions to protect himself ... from Barak!
- B. Note how much he trusted Jael and feared Barak, when he should have feared this woman!
- C. He gave Jael instructions to answer any inquiries the pursuing army of Barak might make.
- D. She obviously gave assent to his request, in light of her other efforts and his choice of sleep.

21 Then Jael Heber's wife took a nail of the tent, and took an 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.

- A. Without military arms or knowing their use, bold Jael chose tools she knew for her weapons.
- B. Tent stakes must be long enough to securely anchor a tent in the ground from strong winds.
- C. The temples would provide little resistance to the jarring impact of a hammer on a sharp nail!
- D. The single nail pierced both temples and went into the ground, where he was firmly held.
- E. Battle fatigue had caused him to fall completely asleep, so he had no chance against Jael!

22 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.

- A. As Deborah had prophesied, Jael approached Barak and declared that she had Sisera for him.
- B. The general of the army, having let Sisera escape, finds him nailed to the ground by a stake!
- C. Though he had led the military campaign, the capture and death of Sisera was by a woman.

23 So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel.

- A. No matter what we may say about Deborah, Barak, or Jael ... the battle is always the Lord's!
- B. The children of Israel had cried unto the Lord, and He had heard and responded to their cry!
- C. There was no evidence Jabin was in the battle, but his army under Sisera had been destroyed.
- D. A king is rightly subdued when his army is destroyed, for then his enemies have a free hand.

24 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.

- A. With his army destroyed and general dead, Jabin could not resist Israel's further rebellion.
- B. Though appearing impossible, the children of Israel prospered and prevailed by God's help.
- C. They sinned, were chastened 20 years, and cried to the Lord. And He reversed the situation!

Judges 5

1 Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying,

- A. Does the slaughter of an entire army and the decapitation of a general deserve a song? Yes!
- B. Remember 20 years of mighty oppression (4:3)! Why pity the vicious children of the devil!
- C. Compare this to the song of Moses and dance of Miriam at the Red Sea (Exodus 15:1-21).
- D. When God delivers you, especially from chastening for sins, you owe Him (Ps 50:14-15).
- E. Since it is a song, the arrangement, wording, and style will be different than simple history.

2 Praise ye the LORD for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves.

- A. When God's people suffer, there is good reason to praise God for vengeance (Ps 137:1-9)!
- B. God is righteous to bring tribulation on the devil's children for troubling saints (II Thess 1:6).
- C. Do you love to praise the Lord Jesus Christ for avenging us of the devil in Eden? Glory!
- D. Those who had gone to the battle went voluntarily in a small force against a terrible enemy.
- E. It is wonderful when the people of God voluntarily offer to serve others in His kingdom.

3 Hear, O ye kings; give ear, O ye princes; I, even I, will sing unto the LORD; I will sing praise to the LORD God of Israel.

- A. Israel had no kings or princes, so this song is addressed to other kings in the vicinity of Israel.
- B. If Jabin and the Canaanites being destroyed gave them thoughts against Israel, think again!
- C. Barak and Deborah personally sang praise to the LORD, which we must also do personally!
- D. They did not praise the army; they did not praise the general; they did not praise Jael yet!

4 LORD, when thou wentest out of Seir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped, the clouds also dropped water.

- A. As in other places of scripture, remembrance is made of great acts of the LORD (Hab 3:3-7).
- B. Seir and Edom are names for Esau and his country, along the route from Egypt to Canaan.
- C. God's leading of His people out of Egypt to Canaan was a fantastic event often remembered.
- D. By combination of earthquakes, volcanoes, storms, and rain, the march of God was terrible.

5 The mountains melted from before the LORD, even that Sinai from before the LORD God of Israel.

- A. Hills can melt from erupting volcanoes, and they can melt from landslides by torrential rains.
- B. And they can shake and move, as Mount Sinai did during God's giving of the law to Moses.

6 In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied, and the travellers walked through byways.

- A. Leaving the glory of God by previous works (5:4-5), Deborah recounts the troubles in Israel.
- B. Shamgar the son of Anath was a recent hero, killing 600 Philistines with an ox goad (3:31)!
- C. Jael, the new heroine of the hour, is ranked alongside Shamgar for her courage and zeal.
- D. During their days, due to mighty oppression of Jabin (4:3), travelers avoided public roads.

7 The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel.

- A. Because of military incursions and oppression, inhabitants in un-walled villages had to move.
- B. The Lord sent spoilers among the people to create constant fear and trouble (Judges 2:14).
- C. The mighty oppression (4:3) continued until God raised a mother, instead of father, for Israel.
- D. If she were a biological mother, we do not know. Her office made her "mother" of the nation.

8 They chose new gods; then was war in the gates: was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?

- A. What caused this horrible situation in Israel (5:6-7)? Idolatry after Joshua (2:10-13; 4:1)!
- B. For idolatry, God brought spoilers and kings against Israel to chasten them for their sins.
- C. They chose new gods, not the God of their fathers. They committed spiritual adultery!
- D. What was the punishment? God brought war in the very gates of their principal walled cities.
- E. There was no ability to defend their nation, either out of sloth, ignorance, or disarmament.

9 My heart is toward the governors of Israel, that offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless ye the LORD.

- A. Deborah repeated a blessing from 5:2 for leaders that voluntarily offered to help the revolt.
- B. She did not bless them alone, but she blessed the LORD that put such a thing in their hearts.
- C. Observe the switch from the singular "my" to the plural "ye." They were to bless the LORD.
- D. It is a principal responsibility of leaders to promote God's worship, which includes praise.

10 Speak, ye that ride on white asses, ye that sit in judgment, and walk by the way.

- A. Speak! Cry out! Sing aloud! Bless ye the LORD (5:9)! Praise the Lord! Give God the glory!
- B. She called on the governors, rich, and judges to participate with her in praising the Lord.
- C. She also included those then using the highways without fear of marauding bands (5:6).

11 They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD, even the righteous acts toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel: then shall the people of the LORD go down to the gates.

- A. Consider the mighty oppression of snipers mocking their victims forced to come for water.
- B. Now they can gather at the same public wells and rehearse the righteous acts of the LORD.
- C. The poor who could not stay in their unwallled villages could also praise the LORD (5:7).
- D. They all, various classes of Israel, could gather at city gates and celebrate God's goodness.

12 Awake, awake, Deborah: awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam.

- A. An interlude in the song, Deborah was to rise to the occasion and continue praise to the Lord!
- B. Barak took the rest of the kingdom of the Canaanites captive, for they had no defense – after Sisera and his army were killed that great day of celebration (4:24).

13 Then he made him that remaineth have dominion over the nobles among the people: the LORD made me have dominion over the mighty.

- A. God blessed the few that remained in Israel to have dominion over the Canaanite nobles.
- B. If the singular male pronoun be followed strictly, then it speaks of Barak's rule over Jabin.
- C. And the Lord took the weaker vessel, Deborah, and gave her dominion over great men.
- D. This verse could be understood for Deborah's womanly rule over noble and mighty Israelites.

14 Out of Ephraim was there a root of them against Amalek; after thee, Benjamin, among thy people; out of Machir came down governors, and out of Zebulun they that handle the pen of the writer.

- A. Deborah now praised or rebuked various tribes for their help or lack of help in the battle.
- B. The populous tribe of Ephraim sent out only a single root, or small band, against Amalek, which must have been confederate with Jabin, as they had been with the Moabites (3:13).
- C. They had to follow behind inferior Benjamin, which went forth with a larger group of people.
- D. Machir is the son of Manasseh, those on this side of Jordan that helped (5:9; Gen 50:23).
- E. Zebulun even had those in other professions that laid down the pen and took up the sword!
- F. It is not wrong to name names. Paul praised some (Timothy) and rebuked others (Demas).

15 And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; even Issachar, and also Barak: he was sent on foot into the valley. For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart.

- A. The princes and tribe of Issachar showed up in force on Mt. Tabor to help Deborah as Barak.
- B. From Mount Tabor, Deborah directed Barak and those with him to River Kishon for battle.

- C. The reluctance of firstborn Reuben to assist the campaign caused consternation in Israel.
- D. The “divisions” here are internal divisions in Reuben or divisions against the rest of Israel.
- E. It is very discouraging to the rest of the church, when only a few are the primary workers.

**16 Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks?
For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart.**

- A. Deborah mocks the firstborn and great tribe of Reuben for staying at home with their sheep.
- B. Performance is the measure of a saint, which caused Paul to avoid John Mark (Act 15:36-41).
- C. How can you sit at home and hear the call for any need in the church and not participate?
- D. It is very discouraging to the rest of the church, when only a few are the primary workers.

17 Gilead abode beyond Jordan: and why did Dan remain in ships? Asher continued on the sea shore, and abode in his breaches.

- A. Deborah continued to criticize those who did not follow the 10,000 man first assault wave.
- B. Gilead (Gad and ½ Manasseh) stayed beyond Jordan and abused their relative security there.
- C. Dan, near the Mediterranean, continued its shipping activities and avoided the risk of war.
- D. Asher, also near the Mediterranean, continued in her territory and her ports from the sea.
- E. Every man has a duty to help when there is a cause, and those who sleep are to be rebuked.

18 Zebulun and Naphtali were a people that jeopardized their lives unto the death in the high places of the field.

- A. Deborah, after rebuking the fearful and/or selfish, returned to praising the two tribes (4:6).
- B. With only 10,000 volunteers, the two tribes came down from Mt. Tabor to fight a great army.
- C. They put their lives at risk in this expedition for the whole nation, while some tribes slept!
- D. It is true that most churches have zealous members like these two tribes that do much of the work and slothful members like those of Reuben, Dan, Asher, and others that do little.

19 The kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money.

- A. Though only Jabin has been named, there were often inferior kings, as Amalek (3:13; 5:14).
- B. The confederate kings of Canaan, under Jabin, came to Taanach near Mt. Tabor and Kishon.
- C. Remember the mention of waters, for the River Kishon has been duly noted already (4:7,13).
- D. These greedy and vicious kings came to plunder God’s people, but ended dead with nothing!

20 They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.

- A. What is this plural pronoun “they” fighting from heaven? The angels under the Lord of hosts!
- B. The battle included a plural use of the elements, which caused confusion and fear to Sisera.
- C. The Lord so used the heavens, represented by the stars, to alter nature and overthrow Sisera.
- D. We understand “stars” as synecdoche, as when a naval vessel calls for all “hands” on deck.
- E. Recall the sun standing still for Joshua and hailstones and other supernatural weather events.

21 The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.

- A. From a sudden storm or miraculous moving of water, Kishon drowned many of the enemy.
- B. The ancient river, well known for ages for its course and depth, washed away Sisera’s army.
- C. The 10,000-man assault force chased confused and terrified Canaanites into Kishon’s rage!

22 Then were the horsehoofs broken by the means of the pransings, the pransings of their mighty ones.

- A. The mighty horses of the Canaanite army, some pulling 900 chariots, were thrashing in fear.
- B. The most fearful part of the army, the chariots and their mighty horses, were swept away.
- C. Visualize horses bound to chariots being swept under water and breaking hoofs on the rocks.

23 Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.

- A. An unknown city that could have helped Israel, and it is unknown by the curse (Mark 11:21)!
- B. It must have been of sufficient power and wealth at one time to have helped, but they did not.
- C. The LORD did not and does not need help, but by helping Israel they could have helped God.
- D. Reuben and others were not cursed directly, but Meroz is a warning to those who do not help.

24 Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent.

- A. Here is a greater blessing than even that inspired of Mary – “above” or “among” (Luke 1:28).
- B. Of all the common women who lived in nomadic tents rather than palaces, Jael is queen!
- C. This poor woman, just a tentwife, is blessed above women for her great zeal for the Lord.
- D. There is no reason for a woman to think of her life as housewife to be lost in God’s sight.

25 He asked water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish.

- A. Notice is taken of Jael’s ingenious design to comfort, deceive, and disarm Sisera into sleep.
- B. She brought the best drink and dish she had, all to prepare him for an ugly death and burial.
- C. Was it milk or butter? He wanted a drink, so it was milk, but the metonym tells its richness.
- D. Consider in this verse and others, we are analyzing a song, which takes literary liberties.

26 She put her hand to the nail, and her right hand to the workmen’s hammer; and with the hammer she smote Sisera, she smote off his head, when she had pierced and stricken through his temples.

- A. As we learned in the history (4:21), Jael put a tent stake through his temples into the ground.
- B. After piercing him dead through his temples, she then cut off his head for good measure!
- C. Barak and the army sought the general Sisera, finding him in such a condition in Jael’s tent!

27 At her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down: at her feet he bowed, he fell: where he bowed, there he fell down dead.

- A. The appearance gave every indication that he had bowed at her feet in prostrate submission.
- B. At the first blow, he may have awakened to move, but he was quickly dispatched by another!
- C. How else can we describe a feared general lying in such a state of death in a woman’s tent!

28 The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming? why tarry the wheels of his chariots?

- A. Here is holy mockery, as Deborah makes fun of Sisera's mother wondering about his return.
- B. What is taking the great general so long? Who could have guessed a farmer's wife and a nail!
- C. He always returned quickly from his military expeditions, so there was reason to question.

29 Her wise ladies answered her, yea, she returned answer to herself,

- A. It was the general consensus of all present that Sisera was gathering spoil to bring with him.
- B. While they imagined the fine gifts they should soon receive, Barak was viewing the corpse!

30 Have they not sped? have they not divided the prey; to every man a damsel or two; to Sisera a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil?

- A. They assumed that this military expedition would be as quickly over as the previous ones.
- B. Yes, of course, they were used to stealing women, but this time a woman had the upper hand!
- C. Sisera's mother, through Deborah's mocking, is imagining fine needlework in the war spoils.
- D. Oh, they were so confident in the arm of flesh, but the arm of the LORD has been revealed!

31 So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest forty years.

- A. Here we can emphasize the adverb "so," for it indicates that Sisera's end is a good example!
- B. Observe that Sisera was God's enemy by virtue of his wicked cruelty against the Lord's people, even when the Lord was using him to righteously chasten them (Isaiah 10:5-15)!
- C. What is the best comparison for those who love the Lord? The sun in the morning (Ps 19:5)!
- D. As opposed to God driving a tent stake through Sisera's head, let those who fear the Lord rejoice in courageous zeal and glorious joy! Let them burst forth in glorious prosperity!
- E. God heard Israel's cry after 20 years of trouble, and He gave them double in peace and rest!

Conclusion:

- 1. There is much to learn of faith, courage, and zeal in the inspired history of Deborah, Barak, and Jael.
- 2. We want more than courageous and dedicated boys and men; we also want such girls and women.
- 3. No matter the odds or terrifying prospects of conflict, God is able to deliver His people from trouble.
- 4. When there is a godly cause, it is to your praise to volunteer willingly and to your shame to avoid it.
- 5. The character of God is learned by reading the history and considering the song of praise following it.
- 6. Do you love to praise the LORD for all His goodness toward you, including victory over death itself?
- 7. If nothing else, the study of these chapters will assist your ability to read and understand scripture.