

#12 Deborah | April 22, 2018

The Events Leading up to Deborah

- After the death of Joshua, the next generation had forgotten the mighty acts of God and had strayed from their faith. Judges 2:10-13
- This began a cycle in which the people rebelled, God sent an enemy to punish the people, then the people cried out to God, and He would send a “Judge” to come to the aid of the nation. Judges 2:14-18.
- As the period progressed, the nation went excessively further than they had before. Judges 2:19.
- Eventually the Lord quit driving the nations out of the land and left them there to test the faith of the Israelites, and to teach them the art of war. Judges 2:21-3:2
- A little information about Judges-  
(1) *They were 13 in number* [if we include Abimelech in our count]; (2) *they were more than “judges”* [they were military deliverers, civil rulers, and judicial arbiters]; (3) *they were chosen and called by God*; (4) *they were local in their work* [they usually delivered and ruled over only a part of Israel]; (5) *they were often contemporaneous in their work* [while one ruled over one part of Israel, another ruled over another part of Israel]; (6) *they were, many of them, defective in their character*; (7) *they were supernaturally empowered by God*; and (8) *they were strong in faith* [several of them are mentioned in the faith chapter of Hebrews, chapter eleven.] Roy E. Gingrich, *The Books of Judges & Ruth* (Memphis, TN: Riverside Printing, 2006), 11.
- The Judges:
  - Othniel – Judges 3:5-11
  - Ehud – Judges 3:12-30
  - Shamgar – Judges 3:31
  - Deborah – Judges 4-5
  - Gideon – Judges 6-8 (#13 in our series)
  - Abimelech – Judges 9
  - Tola – Judges 10:1-2
  - Jair – Judges 10:3-5
  - Jephthah – Judges 10:6-12:7
  - Ibzan – Judges 12:8-10
  - Elon – Judges 12:11-12
  - Abdon – Judges 12: 13-15
  - Samson – Judges 13-16

Deborah: the woman God used

- The land of Israel had peace for over 40 years under Ehud (Jdg 3:30), but after Ehud’s death, the nation again wandered from the Lord (Jdg 4:1).
- The Lord allowed Jabin, King of Hazor (in Galilee), under the leadership of Sisera, to overtake the Jews for 20 years (Jdg 4:2-3).
- Deborah received a prophetic word to contact a man named Barak to gather an army of 10,000 in order to defeat Sisera (Jdg. 4:4-7).
- Deborah understood the weakness of male leadership in her day, and shamed Barak for his weakness (Jdg. 4:8-9).
- When the battle arrived, Sisera’s army was totally decimated and Sisera fled on foot to escape (Jdg. 4:14-16).
- Sisera fled to the tent of a woman named Jael, who was married to one of the decedents of one of Moses’ fathers-in-law, Heber. Jael brutally killed Sisera, without shame, and presented the dead warrior to Barak (Jdg. 4:21-22).
- A great song of victory was sung, celebrating the strength of the Lord on behalf of His people (Jdg. 5). Note especially the praise for Jael (Jdg. 5:24-27).
- The defeat of this enemy brought another 40 years of peace (Jdg. 5:31).

Things You May Not Know

- Deborah is the only female judge.
- Deborah is one of five Jewish women which the Bible calls a *prophetess* (Jdg. 4:4). The others are Miraim (Ex. 15:20), the wife of Isaiah (Is. 8:3), Hulda (2 Kings 22:14), Noadiah, a false prophet (Neh. 6:14). Rabbinical literature claims seven, adding Sarah, Hannah, and Esther to the list and removing Noadiah.
- It appears that Deborah restored order and justice in a land that was dangerous and chaotic (Jdg 5:6-7).
- Deborah is mentioned as the **wife of Lapidoth** (Jdg 4:2), but some believe that Lapidoth was not a person, but a description, and that the Scripture describes her as the *woman of torches, or fiery woman*.
- Some believe that Barak was Deborah’s husband (thus they accept the previous point that Lapidoth was a description and not a name).
- The prophecy of Deborah that a woman would get the glory was not a reference to herself, but to Jael (Jdg. 5:24-27).
- The Song of Deborah is the 6<sup>th</sup> out of 10 songs of the Hebrew Scriptures.
- Barak is listed in Hebrews 11:31-32 as one **who by faith subdued kingdoms**.