

Judges Chapter 04 Commentary

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

The continuing pattern of forgetting God, and in disobedience turning to idolatry, is continually confirmed in this book of Judges. Remember, this pattern of sin is from disobedience of Israel, even before they entered the land of promise. Remember, two and one-half tribes settled on the east side of Jordan, instead of entering the land of promise. Do you see the consequence of not obeying all of God's commandments? Israel's failure, in these two and one-half tribes settling on the east side of Jordan, was simply disobeying of God's command and will, and choosing to live in their own will. As we go through Judges, we see the continuing consequence of this sin against God.

What lesson can we derive from this circumstance in application to our own lives? Consider: **Mt 6:33 "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."** In this text, Jesus is telling the people, you have need of the things of nature to live naturally. Jesus is teaching; these things are the things which the people of the world seek after, forgetting, all the abundance of the earth is from God. You are not to be like the rest of the people of the earth. You are to seek me first, understanding that God will provide your needs in nature, while you are obedient to him.

Remember, just as God allowed these two and one-half tribes to choose the wrong place to live, so, God will allow us to choose our own way in the decisions we make in life. That is why "**But seek ye first the kingdom of God,**" should be the deciding factor in our life choices. We are to always seek the council of God, and always obey "**thus saith the Lord.**" How can we know if we are making the right decision or choice? Search out our hearts and minds, does our choice glorify God? Or, upon examination, is our choice for our own glory.

Remember also, Israel was allowed to have their own way, but the consequence of this decision is an ongoing affliction in the life of all of Israel. Wherefore, we are to quickly confess our sin when we understand that we have erred. We are to confess, and forsake, the confessed sin, and plead to God for forgiveness. We should ask God to get us back to his will and purpose, directing us back to the pathway of truth and righteousness.

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

Here, we have an example of the failure of men, to do their God prescribed duty, to be the head of the woman, and we see a woman stepping up to fill in the gap. This truth is found in both Old and New Testament scriptures, seen in:

- **Ge 3:16 ¶ "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."** Because the woman failed to resist temptation and sinned, then enticed her husband Adam, to sin, she received the curse, from God, that she should be ruled over by the man who is her husband. In conjunction with this curse, God charges the man, with the duty, and the responsibility, to take care of the wife and protecting her.
- **1Co 11:3 "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."** God puts this very plainly in scripture, from Genesis all the way through the bible, the man is charged with the responsibility of caring for the woman. This does not make the woman the man's slave. She is not to be abused, but she is to be provided for and protected by the husband. He is to love her as his own self.
- **Eph 5:22-24; 22 "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything."** Christ is the head of the church, and the church is to be subject to God, and his word, in all that she does.

There is a great sin that is prevalent in the world today, which is women serving in positions of rule in government, and in the church, as we see here in the life of Deborah. This sin is the shame of the males of the world, and the church. It demonstrates; males have failed to stand up and be men of faith. They have failed to trust in God to willingly serve in their prescribed offices and duties.

This sin of the man gives reason for women to step up and fill the gap. It also demonstrates; there are females who desire usurp the command of God, which means they are defying God, having fallen in idolatry. How are they in idolatry you ask? They have chosen their own glory over the commandment of God. They adore themselves more than God, therefore they are idolaters.

We further understand; as the sin of Adam brought upon all mankind the curse of death, and the earth bringing forth briars and thorns as a punishment of the man, so, the sin of Eve brought upon all women, the God given curse of being under the headship of the man, seen in the commentary and scriptures above.

Praise God, for the relief we find for the penalty of death for sin. This relief is found in the eternal remission of sins, for all of God's chosen people, and their resurrection of the dead in the New Testament, seen in: **1Co 15:20-22; 20 ¶ "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."**

However, God, in his infinite mercy, having heard the prayers of his afflicted people will still bring about their deliverance. God moved Deborah to get Israel back on the right track, by calling Barak to step up and take his rightful position. God even gives Deborah the plan of action, which will bring about a successful campaign against Jabin and the Canaanites. God even tells Barak, you will be successful in battle against the enemy of Israel, and still Barak refuses to assume his responsibility.

Surely, there is a rebuke to all God's people in this scenario. We should all be sure we are serving God faithfully, in assuming the responsibility of the position that he has called us to serve in, in accordance with his established word. We should not allow someone else to assume the responsibility of the position we should be fulfilling. God has commanded this of men, and of women, to maintain their prescribed positions and responsibilities.

Israeli men having failed in their prescribed duty; God allows Deborah to become a Judge over Israel. The men of Israel have gotten so far from God, and the responsibility of their place of leadership; their responsibility of being head of the family; their responsibility of serving in the leadership of government; that when rebuked and called to service, they still shun their duty.

Barak was given opportunity, to be the one renowned for getting Israeli men back on track. He is called by God, specifically, to this position of leadership, by God. He fails to trust God. He fails to take proper action. He fails to fill the position and responsibility, to which God has called him. Thus, God removes the honor that would have been his and gives it to another woman.

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

God does what he says, as always, and he goes before Israel and destroys the enemy, giving Israel freedom from their captivity. Notice, the army of Sisera took their own lives. Israel did not have to kill any of them. The battle is the Lord's.

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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 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. 23 So God subdued on that day Jabin the

king of Canaan before the children of Israel. 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.

Remember what Deborah told Barak in: *Jg 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."* Because Barak was afraid and would not go to battle, except Deborah went with him, God took the honor of the victory from Barak, and gave it to Jael, who slew Sisera with a nail.

God did give Israel victory over Jabin and the Canaanites, and they are free again. What lessons of life can we learn from this chapter? One constant reminder we find is that God will do what he says. Another lesson: God will allow others, who are not rightfully authorized to take a position, to take the absented and vacant position, when the rightful persons refuse to do their duty and fill their position.

Scripture clearly teaches that the males are to serve in the office of minister, seen in:

- *1Ti 3:1-6; 1 ¶ "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil."* It is easily discerned that the office of minister is assigned to the man, not the woman.
- *1Ti 2:12 "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."* Again, we see, the woman is not to take the position of preaching/teaching in public speaking, which God has assigned to the male gender.

May God strengthen each, of his chosen people. to seek out his guidance and serve faithfully in whatever he lays upon us to do.