

Deborah

After the death of Ehud, once again the Israelites turned away from the True Creator God into pagan worship, so as a corrective act God allowed them to be enslaved by Jabin, King of Canaan, [**Judges 4:1-2**].

As previously the Israelites cried out to God and He responded by giving them Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth.

Deborah showed special abilities as a mediator, advisor and counsellor, [Judges 4:3-5**].**

Deborah's lifestyle shows that she was not power hungry, her court was under a palm tree, not in some grand house.

Wise leaders can accomplish great amounts of work without direct involvement because they know how to work through other people.

They are able to see the big picture that often escapes those who are directly involved, so they make good mediators, advisors and planners.

Deborah fitted the description perfectly, for she had a remarkable relationship with the Creator God.

Deborah was called the mother of Israel, [Judges 5:7**].**

Judges 4:6-8 [New King James] *“Then she sent and called for Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali, and said to him, ‘Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded, “Go and deploy troops at Mount Tabor; take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun; and against you I will deploy Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude at the River Kishon; and I will deliver him into your hand”?’ And Barak said to her, ‘If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go!’”*

Deborah shows the character of a great leader, who took charge as God directed her, encouraged Barak the military leader by confirming that God was with him, but **Barak's lack of faith in God's promise wanted Deborah to go with him.**

Judges 4:9-10 [New King James] *“So she said, ‘I will surely go with you; nevertheless there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking, for the LORD will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.’ Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh; he went up with ten thousand men under his command, and Deborah went up with him.”*

How did Deborah command such respect?

She led the people into battle, but more than that she influences them to live for God after the battle was over, for as a prophetess her main role was to encourage the people to obey the Creator God, as she personally did.

Every person who is a leader must not forget about the spiritual condition of the people they have been called to lead.

A true leader, like Deborah, is concerned about people **not** just about personal success.

Judges 4:11-13 [New King James] *“Now Heber the Kenite, of the children of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, had separated himself from the Kenites and pitched his tent near the terebinth tree at*

Zaanaim, which is beside Kedesh. And they reported to Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor. So Sisera gathered together all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people who were with him, from Harosheth Hagoyim to the River Kishon.”

Heber for some reason turned traitor, maybe because Jabin’s army appeared to have the military advantage.

Judges 4:14-16 [New King James] *“Then Deborah said to Barak, ‘Up! For this is the day in which the LORD has delivered Sisera into your hand. Has not the LORD gone out before you?’ So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him. And the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera alighted from his chariot and fled away on foot. But Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Harosheth Hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not a man was left.”*

The size of the opposition had no influence on Deborah because of her faith in an even greater God.

Judges 4:17-18 [New King James] *“However, Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; for there was peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, ‘Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; do not fear.’ And when he had turned aside with her into the tent, she covered him with a blanket.”*

The cowardly commander of King Jabin’s army must have been pleased when Jael offered to hide him in her tent, and considered she could be trusted as she was the wife of Heber, a man loyal to him. Also because men were never allowed to enter a woman’s tent, no-one would think to look for him there.

Judges 4:19-23 [New King James] *“Then he said to her, ‘Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty.’ So she opened a jug of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him. And he said to her, ‘Stand at the door of the tent, and if any man comes and inquires of you, and says, “Is there any man here?” you shall say, “No.”’ Then Jael, Heber’s wife, took a tent peg and took a hammer in her hand, and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it went down into the ground; for he was fast asleep and weary. So he died. And then, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him, and said to him, ‘Come, I will show you the man whom you seek.’ And when he went into her tent, there lay Sisera, dead with the peg in his temple. So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan in the presence of the children of Israel.”*

Deborah’s prediction [**Judges 4:9**] was fulfilled, the honour of conquering Sisera would be given to the brave and resourceful women, Deborah and Jael.

On the day of victory both Deborah and Barak sang a song of praise to the Creator God for His deliverance, [Judges 5:1-31] an excellent way to retell and preserve the wonderful story from generation to generation.

Deborah’s life challenges us in several ways.

Deborah reminds us of the need to be available to our Creator God and other human beings.

Deborah encourages us to spend our time and efforts on what we can do rather than worrying about what we cannot do.

Deborah demonstrates what a person can accomplish when the Creator God is in control of their lives.

Always remember that the Creator God chooses His physical leaders by His standards, **not** that of other people, for only He knows the true motives that direct our actions, [**Psalms 139:1-16**].

Deborah challenges us all to seek to become wise leaders, seeking Godly wisdom that is available in His Word, the Christian Bible, [James 3:13-17].

It was Deborah's respect and obedience to the Creator God that gave her the wisdom that made her a great leader, [Proverbs 1:7; Proverbs 9:10].

Such wisdom can be ours, but we have to ask God for it, [James 1:5].