

Deborah & Barak

Judges 4-5

Read Judges 4:1-11

1. What situation are the Israelites facing in v 1-3? Does this remind you of any other situations they've faced?
2. What strikes you about Israel's judge?
3. Does Deborah remind you of anyone else you've met in Judges so far?
4. How is Barak portrayed? How does he compare with Deborah?
5. Who's going to end up with the glory from this campaign?
6. What does vs 11 suggest about Heber the Kennite's relationship with Israel?

Read Judges 4:12-24

7. What happens in the battle?
8. What kind of reception would Sisera have expected to find with Jael and Heber (v17)?
9. How does Jael add to these expectations (v18-19)?
10. How would you describe Jael?



11. Does Sisera's downfall remind you of any other events you've seen in Judges? How?
12. How does the end of the story fit with what Deborah said would happen?

As with Ehud in chapter 3, God chooses an unlikely deliverer to rescue his people. Rather than general Barak, God uses a non-Israelite woman who's clan is allied with the enemy!

13. Does God still prefer to use people like Jael today (have a look at 1 Cor 1:26-31)? Why?

Read Judges 5

This song looks at the events of chapter 4 from God's perspective?

14. What worrying development does the song lament in v 15-18?

It seems that like their general, many of the Israelite tribes aren't interested in joining the fight against God's enemies. They want to stay at home with their sheep. This will be an increasing problem as we go on through Judges.

15. How is the victory pictured in v 19-23?

16. Who is the main player?

17. What is the tone of v 24-31?

18. How does this kind of celebration of a victory make you feel?

19. Barak's song celebrates Sisera's downfall in graphic and joyful terms. This can make us feel uncomfortable. Does the New Testament celebrate God's judgement in this way?

20. What is it that makes God's judgement a good thing ?

21. Should we celebrate God's judgement? What dangers might there be?