

THE FAITHFUL JUDGES IN ISRAEL

PLEASE do not read these comments until you have prayed for wisdom and read the Bible to learn what the Holy Spirit wants you to teach your students. Then let Him guide you in using these notes below to meet the needs of your students.

Lesson Aim: God gives us victory over our proud enemies when we pray to Him with humble hearts.

Suggestion: Give next week's Student Lesson to your class to answer the questions. Let them share their answers in class. The questions below will reveal important truths you may want to emphasize.

Introduction: The Israelites sinned against the Lord by returning to their idolatry. For doing this the Lord sold them into the hands of the Canaanites to severely oppress them for twenty years by their military power. When there was no hope of delivering themselves, the Israelites cried unto the Lord in repentant sorrow. The Lord heard their cry and delivered them from the military power of the Canaanites, even though Israel had a poorly equipped army. "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1 Cor 1:27).

Why did God allow the Canaanites to oppress Israel? 4:1

The Israelites did evil in the sight of the LORD, which means they rejected Him and worshipped idols (cf. 3:7; 10:6). An idol can be anything that excites us more than the LORD. Are there any idols in your life?

Why were the Canaanites able to oppress Israel for 20 years? 4:2-3

First, they had a mighty army with 900 iron chariots. Second, the LORD used them to punish Israel's sin. If you sin against the LORD, He will chasten you as a believer or punish you as an unbeliever. Count on it.

How did Barak learn that the LORD God wanted him to fight against the Canaanites? 4:4-6

He used Deborah, a woman judge, to tell him that he was chosen by the LORD to gather 10,000 men and fight the Canaanites. This was a big order. God may give you a big assignment. Don't panic. Do it.

What promises did the LORD God give to Barak? 4:7

He would draw Sisera and his Canaanite army with 900 iron chariots to the Kishon River and He would give this army to him. God has given us many promises in the Bible. Do you believe them and depend on them?

How was the faith of Deborah stronger than Barak's? 4:8-9

Barak would not fight against the Canaanites unless Deborah would go with him. She showed her faith in the LORD by going; then Barak went with her. Are you willing to be the first in your group to do God's will?

How did the LORD use Heber to draw Sisera, the Canaanite captain, to the Kishon River? 4:10-13

Heber lived near Kedesh where Barak gathered 10,000 men to fight against Sisera and his army. He warned Sisera of Israel's imminent attack. Sisera brought his army to the level ground by the Kishon River where he could use his chariots to defeat Israel. Do not be afraid of your enemies' apparent power. God is in control.

How did Barak respond to Deborah's message from the LORD? 4:14

Barak believed the LORD, led his army down Mt. Tabor, and attacked Sisera and his army. When the Spirit of the LORD tells you to witness, believe He will work with you and boldly witness to that person or persons.

How did the LORD give Barak the victory over Sisera and his army? 4:15-16; 5:19-22

He used a heavy rainstorm to overflow the banks of the Kishon River and flood the level area around it. This caused the wheels of the 900 chariots to get stuck in the mud and made them useless. This gave Barak and his army the upper hand and they destroyed all the men in Sisera's army. If you obey the LORD by faith in His promises, He will enable you to be successful in the task He has given you.

How did the LORD use Jael, Heber's wife, to bring final defeat to the Canaanites? 4:17-24

When Sisera saw his battle with the Israelites was lost, he fled on foot to escape. When he was passing by Heber's tent, Jael invited him into their tent. Heber had warned him of Israel's attack, so he trusted her. He was exhausted and thirsty from the battle, so he asked for water, but she gave him milk to drink and covered him. He told her to stand in the tent door to tell anyone looking for him that he was not there. When he fell asleep, she took a tent stake and drove it through his temples. When Barak came looking for Sisera, Jael showed him his enemy. He was dead. Barak was a brave man, but Jael had the honor of destroying the man that terrorized Israel. Whether you are a man or a woman, be ready to do whatever God tells you to do.