



Session 6

04/11/21

Theater



DEBORAH AND BARAK

Judges 4–5

The Book of Judges lays out for the reader a consistent cycle of sin, repentance, and rescue. Not unlike our compulsion to sin and thus need for repentance, the nation of Israel would continually forget God, get into trouble with a neighboring power, and God would graciously send a judge to rescue Israel from oppression. The first three chapters of this book highlight some of the earliest judges God chose and how those men were used to rescue Israel.

Chapters 4–5 begin the first of some more detailed looks at some of the judges in Israel. Deborah—a woman—is introduced to us as a prophetess, and a judge, and we see her eventually as the military leader of Israel when she lays out the battle plan to defend Israel against the Canaanites. Apart from Moses and Samuel, Deborah is the only other person in Scripture given authority in all three areas—prophecy, judgment, and military leadership.

As a prophetess, Deborah received a word from God questioning whether or not a military leader named Barak was going to fight against the forces of Sisera, the commander of the Canaanite army. God had given Barak instructions to go, and it seemed that Barak was a bit apprehensive to go. When Barak was summoned by Deborah, he agreed to go fight, but only if Deborah would go fight with him.

From the time Israel moved into the promised land, they were never the strongest military power around. The Canaanites were the ruling super power at that time and they possessed one of the elite military vehicles of the ancient world—iron chariots. The Canaanites had 900 of these chariots that would have been impervious to stones and other weapons most powers used at that time.

Barak, with 10,000 men, came down the slopes of Mount Tabor and pursued Sisera and his army. Sisera was defeated as he and his army were confused by the Lord, rendering their chariots useless and ending the reign of Canaan over Israel.