

BARAK – THE RELUCTANT JUDGE – PART 2

--JUDGES 4:1-24--

INTRODUCTION:

We will look at the second half of Judges 4 this morning as we continue to look at Barak, the reluctant judge. Last week we began by looking at the major actors in the events taking place in the judgeship of Barak. The antagonists are Jabin and Sisera, the protagonists are Deborah the prophetess and Barak. A fifth character who seemed out of place was introduced, Heber the Kenite. We will learn this morning why he is important to this history.

Barak had been reluctant to be Israel's judge unless Deborah accompanied him, even though God had clearly promised victory. This reluctance caused Barak to forfeit the honor that would have been his at the death of Sisera, instead God would sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. When we left off last week Barak and 10,000 men from Naphtali and Zebulun were gathered on Mt. Tabor at the entrance to the Jezreel valley.

I. SISERA (Judges 4:12-13)

- a. In verse 12 we are told that Sisera was _____ that Barak and 10,000 men have gathered on Mt. Tabor.
- b. Immediately Sisera calls out his 900 iron _____ and all the people who were with him.

II. BARAK (Judges 4:14-16)

- a. Barak had already witnessed God at work, He had assembled an _____ of 10,000 from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun.
- b. So, when Deborah spoke again to Barak, his response was not reluctance but _____.
- c. The word translated "routed" is a word that means "_____."

III. JAEL (Judges 4:17-22)

- a. The fact that Sisera fled in the opposite direction of his army shifts the focus of this event from the victory at the river Kishon, which we would expect to be the climax, to the _____ of Sisera.
- b. Jael goes out to meet him and assures him that he can turn aside to her and that he does not have to be _____.
- c. Jael understands that if Sisera is fleeing then his army is _____, especially since he is fleeing by himself.
- d. Jael then returned to the doorway of her tent and waited for _____; she knew he would be pursuing Sisera.
- e. And behind all this we see the sovereign hand of _____.

IV. JABIN (Judges 4:23-24)

- a. This event in the history of the judges ends by reminding us how it _____, and it makes the point by showing us what a mighty reversal has taken place.
- b. Notice again that the _____, the God of Israel is the One who subdued Jabin.

CONCLUSION:

We are not done with Barak yet; chapter 5 will revisit his judgeship with additional details. Besides Judges 4 and 5, Barak is mentioned two more times in Scripture, in Samuel's farewell address to Israel (1 Samuel 12:11), and in the Hall of faith in the book of Hebrews (Hebrews 11:32-34). We saw this morning how Barak's reluctance turned into confidence and the reference of him in 1 Samuel and Hebrews highlights three important truths about him that we should recognize:

1. According to 1 Samuel 12:11 the LORD "sent" Barak and used him to "deliver" Israel. He was chosen by God.
2. Barak won a major battle, which certainly ranks him with those in Hebrews 11:33-34 who "obtained promises" and "put foreign armies to flight."
3. Most important of all, according to Hebrews 11:33, Barak did what he did "by faith." That courageous faith should inspire us to trust God also, no matter the doubts.