



DEBORAH

WORKSHEET
LESSON 5



THE WOMAN WHO INSPIRED A NATION

BY BETTY ANN SCOTT

DEBORAH - THE WOMAN WHO INSPIRED A NATION [Judges 4-5]

Deborah's Background

1. Deborah's name means _____. According to science, bees range among the highest in intelligence. Her leadership and wisdom were like honey to her countrymen but to her enemies she had a fatal sting. Deborah stands out as one of the _____ of all the O.T. women. Deborah was a woman who was an inspiration to her countrymen in the faithful and untiring service she gave to Israel through her _____ faith in God. She was fearless and was highly respected in Israel by both men and women alike. She was one of those women who even _____ stepped aside to follow her leading.
2. There is no genealogy given regarding Deborah in Scripture. Her _____ was between Ramah and Beth-el which was in the hill country of Ephraim. Deborah is described as the "wife of Lapidoth" [Judges 4:4]. The Hebrew word *ishshah* is used for _____ or wife. The word "Lapidoth" means torches or lightening flashes. The three views concerning Lapidoth are as follows: (1) the name of her husband; (2) refers to her prophetic office and can be translated a woman of _____, torches or lights; and (3) denotes some unknown place and can be translated a woman from a particular area or town. If she was married, Scripture is silent in giving any details about her husband or if she had any children. The only thing it says is that Deborah became a "_____ of Israel" — a maternal figure to her nation [Judges 5:7].
3. Deborah was a woman of many remarkable _____. She was well known throughout the country. She was a leader who was wise, godly, fearless, public-minded, compassionate, determined and had a magnetic personality to _____ others. As a prophetess, she told the Israelites about God and His power. As a judge, she ruled with God's truth and wisdom. She was a warrior who fought for Israel's _____, and her presence gave _____ to Barak and his army to go to battle even though the odds were against them.
4. Deborah lived in the time of the judges where "there was no king in Israel [Judges 21:25]. The time of the Judges covered a period of around _____ years. It is approximately _____ of the total history of Israel set forth in the Old Testament. Jewish history spans from around 1446 B.C. to 400 B.C. Historically, this period links the conquest of Canaan with that of the _____.

Theologically, this time serves as a reminder that obedience to God brings blessing and disobedience brings _____ and death. The judges' period is summed up very well in Proverbs 14:34, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

5. The book of Judges describes the political, social and _____ decline during this period of Jewish history and shows their effect upon the Jewish people. The book of Judges clearly sets forth a _____ to their religious experience with God. The five stages to this pattern are rest, rebellion, retribution, _____ and restoration. This vicious cycle is repeated many times in the book of Judges.
6. God's ultimate plan for Israel was the theocratic form of government where God Himself would be the _____ ruler over his people. Because Israel disobeyed the commandments of God and followed after _____ gods like Baal and Ashtaroath, God raised up enemies to oppress them [Judges 2:12-19]. In God's infinite wisdom, He chose to raise up judges to deliver them from their oppression when they looked to Him. There are three important aspects to notice about the "judge form" of rule: (1) The judges were appointed by _____ — not elected or appointed by men. (2) It was not a continuous form of government. There were large gaps in the earlier part of Judges between deliverers, and the judges were raised up only when _____. (3) The judges were not obligated to anyone except God —no advisors, no courts, no heads of state, etc. The reason for this form of government was that if the disciplinary measures brought about the desired goal of _____ in the people, the "judge form" of rule could be brought to an immediate close and theocracy in its finest form could be ushered in. *See insert A
7. There are _____ judges in all. Twelve in the book of Judges and two in the book of 1 Samuel. These judges are classified as either _____ or minor judges. There are two main criteria for this distinction: (1) whether the judge effected a _____ deliverance and (2) whether or not the judge's record is extensive in Scripture. The eight major judges are Othneil, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, Eli and Samuel. The six minor judges are Shamgar, Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon and Abdon. The most extensive record of a _____ judge is three verses long. *See insert B
8. The period of the judges was a time of great _____ and oppression for the Jewish people; however, they brought it upon themselves because of their spiritual _____ to God. Their faith was only as good as the last judge before the "children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord" [Judges 4:1].

Even after six oppressions by their enemies, Israel still did not turn to God. The last verse in the book of Judges sums up the _____ state of God's chosen people for it says, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" [Judges 21:25].

Deborah — The Prophetess & Judge

9. When Ehud the judge was dead, the people turned away from God. This time God used the Canaanites to greatly oppress the people of Israel for _____ years [Judges 4:3]. The Canaanites paralyzed Israelite trade and disrupted their normal life style. The Jews couldn't walk the main roads nor farm their lands without fearing for their lives. They loss their _____, their property pillaged, their women were molested and their children taken as slaves. Although Jabin was the king of the Canaanites, it was _____, the captain of Jabin's army, who was the real menace to Israel. Military superiority was evident in the fact that the Canaanites had 900 chariots of iron while the Israelites had none. Any resistance against the Canaanites seemed almost _____ until Deborah arrived on the scene. When the children of Israel cried out to God, it was then that _____ raised up Deborah. At this time, the men of Israel were _____ to lead in the matters of faith and leadership; therefore, God raised up a woman to do His will.
10. Deborah served the Lord in a dual capacity for she was both a judge and a prophetess. She was the _____ woman appointed by God to serve as a judge. This was a high honor for Deborah for this position was usually held by spirit-filled men. However, she was also a prophetess of which only a _____ of women were given the prophetic gift which is the ability to discern the mind and purpose of God. Just like a prophet, a prophetess had to be _____ correct in what they said. Beside Deborah, other prophetesses were Miriam [Exodus 15:20], Huldah [2 Kings 22:14], the prophetesses [Nehemiah 6:14; Isaiah 8:3] and _____ who was present at Jesus' circumcision [Luke 2:36].
11. Deborah used her prophetic gift in strict accordance with Mosaic law to settle disputes among the people and to give _____ direction to all those who came to her. Deborah was completely devoted to the service of God, and she was God's _____ to His people during this time. The meeting place for all in Israel who sought judgment at her hands was between Ramah and Beth-el under a _____ tree [Judges 4:5-6]. It was from here she dispensed wisdom, justice and discernment; it was from here she gained the _____ of all of Israel. *See insert C

12. The ancient world was predominantly a _____ world. Women were treated as slaves and lived a life of hardship. They had no rights and they were regarded as a piece of _____ by their husbands; however when God made the woman, He made her in the image of God and to be the helpmeet of man—_____ in nature but different in sex and role. Because of man's _____ (pride, ignorance and moral perversion), women were considered greatly inferior to man in all areas of life. Only in Israel under the Jewish law did the Jewish women experience more liberties, greater tasks and a _____ social standing than the women in the surrounding heathen nations. God has used and _____ women throughout history to accomplish His redemptive plan for mankind.
13. According to God's instructions, Deborah summoned Barak and gave him the command to gather _____ soldiers from Naphtali and Zebulun, the two tribes most _____ by the Canaanite oppression. God wanted to show Israel and the Canaanites that He _____ is sovereign in the affairs of men. The odds were greatly against Israel for Sisera commanded an army of 100,000 men and 900 chariots. Not only was the Israelite army _____ but they had few weapons and no chariots [Judges 5:8]. God instructed Deborah that Barak was to meet Sisera in the Valley of Jezreel which was to Sisera's _____. Although the task looked humanly impossible, God gives a promise of victory [Judges 4:6-7].
14. Barak _____ that either Deborah go with him or he would not go into battle [Judges 4:8]. For whatever reasons Barak gave this ultimatum, Deborah agreed to go with him. She was _____ to put all aside to serve her beloved country; however, she tells Barak that the honor of the victory would not go to him but to a _____. Deborah accompanies Barak to Kedesh where 10,000 Israelite men respond to Barak's call to service. They all go up to _____ to prepare for battle [Judges 4:6].
15. _____ advances Sisera and his men and chariots to the Kishon River just as God had promised [Judges 4:7]. Deborah does not accompany Barak in actual battle for this was not a place for a woman, but she gives a word of _____ to Barak in that God had gone _____ him to secure Israel the victory [Judges 4:14]. Barak who had little faith in the beginning demonstrates tremendous _____ by leading his little army [outnumbered and ill equipped] into battle. God continued to be with Barak and his men until Jabin, the king of Canaan and his army were _____ [Judges 4:23-24]. It was God who undeniably brought the victory to Israel; without God's

help, Israel would have easily been slaughtered. God commends Barak in that his name is listed among the _____ of faith [Hebrews 11:32].

16. Sisera's confidence was chiefly in his _____ might. It was God who fought for Israel and confused the Canaanite army by sending a violent _____ with torrential rains. Sisera's chariots became inoperable when the Kishon River overflowed its banks. This _____ event made victory possible for the small Israeli army. Barak and his men relentlessly pursued the fleeing enemy to Harosheth killing all of Sisera's men while Sisera _____ north in an attempt to reach Hazor to report the battle to King Jabin. However, Sisera took refuge in the tent of _____, the Kenite [Judges 4:15-17] which was located not far from Barak's hometown of Kedesh.

17. Jael _____ the weary Sisera into her tent in the usual form of Oriental hospitality. Under the guise of hospitality, she removed any _____ by giving him food and shelter. While he was asleep, she killed him by driving a tent nail through his temples. Shortly afterwards when Barak arrived and was invited into Jael's tent, he witnessed the _____ of Deborah's prophesy that Sisera would be delivered into the hands of a woman. There before him, Sisera was dead; thus depriving Barak the _____ of victory [Judges 4:21-22].

18. Jael, the Kenite, _____ and deceive Sisera which ultimately lead to his death. Was this right? The Scriptures say that God of Israel does not like lying and hates wickedness and _____ of every kind [Proverbs 12:22; Psm. 120: 2]. Deborah did prophesied that Sisera was going to meet his death by the hands of a woman. However, does this _____ the way Jael did it? Was it right that she used lying and deceit to lure Sisera into her tent and then murder him in cold blood while he was sleeping. Or did Jael err when she took the situation in her _____ hands by not allowing God to designate the means of punishment? Again, there are two thoughts on this — (1) never lie under any circumstances [Prov 6:16-17] or (2) lying during times of _____ or when saving a life is permissible [Exodus 1:17, 20-21]. It appears that Deborah praises Jael for killing Sisera. It may be because Sisera's death was justified because of war and she was praising Jael for her _____ not her deceit [Judges 5:24-27]. *See insert D

19. Deborah, the prophetess and judge, also had a remarkable _____ ability [Judges 5]. After the Canaanite defeat, Deborah composed a song which she sang with Barak that is considered one of the _____ in ancient Hebrew poetry. The song is a brilliant piece of work in which the language is descriptive and full of

meaning. This song is a song of praise and _____ the Lord who enabled Israel to have complete victory over their enemies. R.H. Feiffer states that it “deserves a place among the best songs of _____ ever written”. This God-given victory over their enemies brought _____ years of peace and rest to the land of Israel [Judges 5:31]. *See notes on Deborah’s Song of Victory.

Conclusion: Deborah is known as one of the most amazing women in the O.T. God raised her up in a time of _____ and spiritual decay. She was such an outstanding leader that even men admired her character, wisdom and courage. She was a woman who possessed many incredible gifts. She was not only _____ the gift by God to prophesy but she was the only woman judge appointed by God during this dark time in Israel’s history. She was a warrior, encourager, and poetess. However, among her greatest assets were her _____ in God. She was wise in her counsel, fearless in her leadership and steadfast in her faith. She was also known as the “mother of Israel” for her love and concern for her people and nation. Her remarkable life and _____ legacy are a wonderful testament in how God can use any woman who allows God to be in _____ control of her life.

DEBORAH'S SONG OF VICTORY

[Judges 5]

First Section

- Vs. 1 Deborah & Barak sang the song but it was Deborah who wrote it.
- Vs. 2 Praises God for the courage of the people to fight against their enemies.
- Vss. 3-5 Glorious time when Israel was exalted to be a nation.
- Vss. 6-8 The disgraceful decline of the nation.
- Vss. 9-11 The joyful turn of events following the appearance of Deborah.
- Vs. 12 Deborah summons them to rejoice in their victory.

Second Section

- Vss. 13-15a The mighty gathering of the brave to battle.
- Vss. 15b-18 The cowardice of those who stayed away from the battle and the bravery of the warriors who risked their lives.
- Vss. 19-21 The successful result of conflict.

Third Section

- Vss. 22-23 The flight and pursuit of the foe.
- Vss. 24-27 A commemoration of the slaying of Sisera by Jael.
- Vss. 28-30 A scornful description of the disappointment of Sisera's mother, who was counting upon the large arrival of booty.
- Vs. 31a The hope that all the enemies of the Lord might perish and Israel increase in strength.
- Vs. 31b The account of this event is brought to a close.

*Please note: The above information was taken from the book, Commentary on the Old Testament by Kiel and Delitzsch, Vol. 2, pages 307-308.

INSERTS FOR THE STUDY OF DEBORAH

“A”

Leon Wood, Distressing Days of the Judges, p. 24 comments on theocracy:

A true theocracy, for this form of government, knows no earthly king at all. There are no ministers of state, no court, no parliament, no congress. God Himself is Ruler, and He employs no earthly representatives through whom to work. He expects people to look to Him for leadership and to render obedience to Him. In this way, God is made the center of interest for people, the focal point of their lives, and the highest object of their attention. It was this form of rule that God desired and planned for Israel as the twelve tribes came to dwell in the promised land of Canaan.

“B”

Leon Woods, Distressing Days of the Judges, p. 24 explains why Eli and Samuel are considered major judges:

Two of the eight major judges are presented outside of the Book of Judges and neither effected a military deliverance. They are Eli and Samuel. On what basis can they be called major. The answer is twofold: First, both qualify on the score of the length of report. In fact, each is talked about in considerable detail in the early chapters of 1 Samuel. Second, both were unusually important in Israel's history . . . Samuel was easily the most important of all the judges, and Eli, too, carried a significance not usually recognized.

“C”

Jamison Fausset and Brown, A Commentary, Critical and Exploratory on the Old and New Testament, Vol. 1, p. 78 remarks about Deborah:

She was a woman of extraordinary wisdom and piety, instructed in divine knowledge by the Spirit and accustomed to interpret the will of God. She acquired an extensive influence, and was held in universal respect, insomuch that she became the animating mind of the government and discharged all the special duties of a judge except that of a military leader.

“D”

Kiel-Delitzsch, Commentary on the Old Testament, Vol. 2, p. 306 comments on Jael’s deception:

For Jehovah God of Israel not only abhors lying lips (Proverbs 12:22), but hates wickedness and deception of every kind . . . God had no doubt so ordered it, that Sisera should meet with his death in Jael’s tent, where he had taken refuge; but this divine purpose did not justify Jael in giving to the enemy of Israel a hospitable reception into her tent, making him feel secure both by word and deed, and then murdering him secretly while he was asleep. Such conduct as that was not the operation of the Spirit of God, but the fruit of a heroism inspired by flesh and blood; and even in Deborah’s song it is not lauded as a divine act. . . The act itself was not morally justified, either by this prophetic announcement, or by the fact that it is commemorated in the song of Deborah.