Judges 4-5

Review…

- **Chapter 1-2…**
  - The cycle of sin - God let them be conquered by their enemies - the would repent...
  - God would raise up a Judge t save them - they would follow God - for a while...
- **Chapter 3…**
  - The first Judge of Israel - Othneil - the Lion of God...
    - The very next generation after Joshua - rebelled against God - conquered for 8 years...
    - God raised up a savior - who delivered them from their enemies - served God 40 years
  - Israel rebelled again - so God let them be conquered for 18 years...
    - Israel repented and God raised up Ehud - to go and kill the King Eglon of Moab...
    - He hesitated at first - but when he saw they idols at Gilgal - he went back...
    - Killed the VERY fat king - raised up and army and saved Israel - served God 80 years
    - God used one man - willing to stand up against the world - to save Israel!
  - Israel rebelled again - and God let the Philistines conquer them...
    - God raised up Shamgar - who killed 600 Philistines with an ox goad...
    - God used a simple farmer to save Israel from their sin!

Deborah - the 4th Judge of Israel… (*5 things*)

- **1st - The 4th time around…vs. 1-3** Read: Judges 4:1-5
  - After the death of Ehud - Israel rebelled again against the Lord...vs. 1-3
    - Having gone through the cycle 3 times - you would think Israel would have learned...
      - But people are like sheep - they follow the crowd no matter where they are going...
      - If one sheep sees another sheep jumping into a pit - they will jump in too...
      - To often in life we blindly follow the examples of others...
      - We do what others do - because everyone else is doing the same thing...
      - It is always a wise question to ask - whom am I following - where are they going...
      - **Matthew 15:14 -** "If the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch."
    - So God let King Jabin - who ruled in Hazor (*a castle*) - conquer Israel...
      - Israel was thick headed - so God made things VERY uncomfortable for them...
      - The captain of Jabin's arm was Sisera - who was from the 'woodland people'...
      - With 900 iron chariots - 'tanks' - he ruthlessly oppressed Israel for 20 years...
      - We tend to be stubborn - we do not easily let go of the sin in our lives...
      - Even when we face the consequences of our actions - we still do not give up...
      - I think of those who wake up with a hangover - only to grab another drink!
      - You have to wonder sometimes - how much will it take to get our attention...
      - God loves us enough - there is 'no limit' - to what He will do to get us to run to Him!

- **2ND - A WOMAN TO JUDGE ISRAEL… VS. 4-5**
  - Israel repented and cried out to the Lord... vs. 4-5
    - So God raised up a Deborah - the wife of Lapidoth - to 'Judge' Israel...
      - All of the people would come to her for her wisdom and judgment...
      - Unlike Othneil / Ehud / or Shamgar - Deborah was not a warrior...
      - But there can be no doubt she was the one God choose to lead His nation!
    - Can a woman be a leader...
      - It turns out it depends on where - in society or in the church...
      - The example of Deborah obviously shows us women can absolutely lead...
      - In fact some of the greatest secular leaders in history were women...
      - Margaret Thatcher - Prime Ministry of England - helped topple Communism...
      - Golda Meir - Prime Minister of Israel - led Israel in the Yom Kippur war...
  - Can a woman be a pastor - a hotly debated issue in the church today...
    - God does not work in chaos - God is God of order - He works through structure...
      - **I Corinthians 14:33** - "God is not the author of confusion but of peace..."
      - Part of that order/structure - is a hierarchy of authority within the church...
      - **I Corinthians 11:3** - "The head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God."
    - That structure is the reason why only men are called to be pastors in the church...
      - **I Timothy 2:13** - "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man..."
      - This had nothing to do with ability or intellect - it is simply about structure...
      - Though as a general statement - there may be a purpose in God's design...
      - In general women tend to be more emotional/compassionate than men...
      - But that can also be a down side for women - emotions can be deceptive...
      - **I Timothy 2:14 - "**Adam was not deceived by Satan. The woman was deceived..."
      - God has gifted women with a heart to love and nurture the body of Christ...
      - The famous lack of emotions men are known for - gives them the ability to lead
    - But - men are not greater/more important than women - **Galatians 3:28**…
      - Ultimately we are all equal under God - all sinners saved by the same grace!
      - God assigns positions for each one of us within the body of Christ...
      - WE give those positions value - WE elevate one above another...
      - But God does not say that one position is greater than another - all are equal!

- **3RD - TAKING A STEP FOR GOD… VS. 6-16** READ: JUDGES 4:6-9
  - Deborah called for Barak (*lightning*) to lead Israel to war...vs. 6-7
    - He was to gather an army of 10,000 men from Naphtali and Zebulun...
      - They would meet Sisera at the Kishon River - and God would give them victory!
      - Unlike some of the more powerful tribes - like Judah / Ephraim...
      - Naphtali and Zebulun are two tribes you almost never hear about in the Bible...
      - But this battle was 'in their backyard' - so they fought for THEIR people!
    - We may not be motivated to fight for those who live far away from us...
      - But we should be stirred up to fight for the salvation of our family / friends...
      - If we do not stand up and tell them about Jesus - who will!

  - Barak agreed to go - but only if Deborah came along... vs. 8-9

- The LXX (*Greek OT*) adds to the comment of Barak why he wanted Deborah to go...
  - 'Because I do not know the day the Lord will send his angel to give me success.'
  - In other words Barak recognized the Lord spoke through Deborah...
  - And He did not want to move until he was certain it was 'God's timing'...
  - It is one thing to know what God has called us to do...
  - But it is just as important to wait for God's timing so we are successful...
  - One way to know God's timing - is to seek the advice of godly men/women...
  - **Proverbs 15:22** - "Plans go wrong for lack of advice; many advisers bring success."
- Deborah agreed to go along with him - but a woman would end up defeating Sisera...
  - This has often been seen as a rebuke - as if Barak were wrong for asking for help...
  - But Deborah was a prophet - more likely she just prophesied how Sisera would die
  - I know a lot of husbands who make decisions without consulting their wives...
  - Yet God has given great insight to women - and we would be smart to ask for it...
  - Men tend to see very well 'down the road' - but miss what is next to them...
  - Wives miss nothing - and a wise husband knows to seek their counsel in decisions!

o The defeat of Sisera... vs. 10-16
- When Sisera heard Barak had gathered 10,000 men to battle - he marched to war...
  - He brought all 900 of his chariots - and the full force of his army to the battle...
  - Deborah told Barak to 'Get ready' - God was going to give him the victory...
  - So often we miss opportunities - because we doubt if God is behind us...
  - **James 1:6** - "Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind."
  - When the time comes to step out for Jesus - do not hesitate - just go!
- Barak set his army on the top of Mt. Tabor...
  - It is a steep mountain - that offers an excellent view on all sides...
    - At the base of the mountain is the Kishon River - small in the dry season...
    - But in the rainy season it swells making it almost impossible to cross...
    - It is thought Sisera tries to cross the river - losing many men and chariots...
    - **Judges 5:21** - "The Kishon River swept them away — that ancient torrent..."
    - So Barak easily defeated Sisera - not one of the warriors was left alive!
  - With God on our side - we can be certain of the outcome...
    - If the Lord is stirring your heart do something - perhaps share Jesus with someone
    - Seek the Godly counsel of others - but when the time comes - step out...
    - Do not be afraid - the Lord will be with you - give you the words to say!

- **4TH - THE CONSIQUNECE OF REJECTING GOD... VS. 17-24** READ: JUDGES 4:17-21

o A man named Heber - a descendent of Hobab - the father-in-law of Moses...
- Left his tribe - and pitched his tent near the city of Kedesh...
- Sisera fled from the battle - and ran to the tent of Jael (*the wife of Heber*)...
- He asked for some water - he was thirsty / tired from the battle...

o Jael comforted Sisera - offered him a bottle of warm milk - covered him with a blanket...
- Tired / discouraged from defeat / and full of warm milk - Sisera fell asleep...
- He felt safe there because Heber was a good friend of King Jabin...
- But Jael snuck into the tent - hammered a peg into his skull pinning him to the ground!

o People think they can run from the judgment of God...

- When people sin - they often try to hide by blending in with other sinners...
- If everyone is doing the same thing - then somehow it does not seem wrong...
- But in the end the only safe place - is with a broken and repentant heart...
- That is why we share Jesus - because the alternative is the judgment of God!

o When Barak arrived at the tend looking for Sisera -Jael showed him the body...
- Sisera and his armies were defeated - Israel was delivered from King Jabin...
- Again Israel had peace - this time for 40 years

- **5TH - THE SONG OF DEBORAH... VS. 1-31 (*3 PARTS*)**

o 1st - The people were afraid to even go outside...vs. 1-7 READ: JUDGES 5:6-7
- A nation that forgets about the Lord - is a nation where people live in fear...
  - Living in fear of the knock on the door by the Nazi Gestapo...
  - Afraid to say anything in public because the Russian KGB might be listening...
  - Careful to let no one know you have a Bible because the mutaween might find out...
  - Whether fascist / communist / of muslim - they all have one thing in common...
  - A life lived in terror and fear - because of a nation without Jesus!
  - It is only in a nation that serves and follows the Lord there is freedom...

o 2nd - There were only a few who stood up to fight... vs. 8-18 READ: JUDGES 5:15-16
- The volunteers came from Ephraim / Benjamin / Zebulun / Issachar...
  - But no one from Rueben / Dan / Asher / those on the east side of the Jordan...
  - They were 'too busy' watching their sheep / looking after their 'business'...
  - They could not walk away and leave their store un-attended...
  - Or they had to go and harvest in the rice field - they were too busy...
  - Or they had to 'watch the caribou' - they did not have time for God...
- Funny that excuses from 3000 years ago - have not changed a bit!
  - There is always going to be a 'good reason' not to stand up for Jesus...
  - There is always going to be a distraction that keeps us from the Bible / Church....
  - But there is nothing more important for us / our nation - than taking that stand!

o 3rd - There will be no plunder for Sisera... vs. 19-31 READ: JUDGES 5:28-31
- Sisera came to take from Israel - but did not even come out with his life...
  - The mother of Sisera waited for her son to return...
  - She wondered where he was - why she did not hear the sound of his chariot...
  - She assumed the reason - 'he is dividing the plunder of his victory'...
  - She imagined all the beautiful robes he would bring to her as a gift...
  - But she would wait in vain - Sisera got his last 'reward' from Jael
- Lord - let all your enemies die like Sisera - but those who love you rise like the sun!
  - The blessings of God are not reserved for those who seek after wealth...
  - Those who dedicate their lives to rebellion and sin - end up with nothing in the end!
  - The blessings of God are given to those who stand up for the Lord!