

## The Unlikely: The Women Judges 4 passim

- “At church we sang a hymn, “Wherever He Leads I’ll Go,” and I thought that meant girls too.”
- Judges 4:1-3 - Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of the LORD, now that Ehud was dead. <sup>2</sup> So the LORD sold them into the hands of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. Sisera, the commander of his army, was based in Harosheth Haggoyim. <sup>3</sup> Because he had nine hundred chariots fitted with iron and had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years, they cried to the LORD for help.
- <sup>4</sup> Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading<sup>[a]</sup> Israel at that time. <sup>5</sup> She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided.
- <sup>6</sup> She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, “The LORD, the God of Israel, commands you: ‘Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them up to Mount Tabor. <sup>7</sup> I will lead Sisera, the commander of Jabin’s army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands.’”
- <sup>8</sup> Barak said to her, “If you go with me, I will go; but if you don’t go with me, I won’t go.” <sup>9</sup> “Certainly I will go with you,” said Deborah. “But because of the course you are taking, the honor will not be yours, for the LORD will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman.” So Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh. <sup>10</sup> There Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali, and ten thousand men went up under his command. Deborah also went up with him.
- The best faith is the one that helps you take your next step toward Jesus
- <sup>17</sup> Sisera, meanwhile, fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, because there was an alliance between Jabin king of Hazor and the family of Heber the Kenite.
- <sup>18</sup> Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, “Come, my lord, come right in. Don’t be afraid.” So he entered her tent, and she covered him with a blanket. <sup>19</sup> “I’m thirsty,” he said. “Please give me some water.” She opened a skin of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him up.  
<sup>20</sup> “Stand in the doorway of the tent,” he told her. “If someone comes by and asks you, ‘Is anyone in there?’ say ‘No.’”
- <sup>21</sup> But Jael, Heber’s wife, picked up a tent peg and a hammer and went quietly to him while he lay fast asleep, exhausted. She drove the peg through his temple into the ground, and he died.
- Her loyalty is not first to her husband, but to her God.
- “Seek first the Kingdom of heaven, and all these things will be added to you as well.”
- <sup>22</sup> Just then Barak came by in pursuit of Sisera, and Jael went out to meet him. “Come,” she said, “I will show you the man you’re looking for.” So he went in with her, and there lay Sisera with the tent peg through his temple—dead. <sup>23</sup> On that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan before the Israelites. <sup>24</sup> And the hand of the

**Israelites pressed harder and harder against Jabin king of Canaan until they destroyed him.**

- **Your gender does not determine your relationship with God; your faith does.**
- **Galatians 3:28 - <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**
- **“Wherever He Leads, I will Go.”**

**Starter Question:** Has a woman been instrumental in your faith journey? Who? In what way did she encourage/assist you?

1. Read Judges 4:4-5
2. What is your reaction to Deborah as a prophetess and a leader? How does it challenge your thinking?
3. Read Judges 4:6-10
4. Put yourself in Barak’s sandals. Why do you think he insists on Deborah going with him to battle? Should we think less of Barak because he will not the glory for winning the battle?
5. Read Judges 4:17-21 and Ephesians 5:22
6. How would you reconcile the actions of Jael with Paul’s admonition for Wives to submit themselves to their husbands?
7. Considering the whole story, who stands out as the most courageous character?