

DEBORAH AND BARAK: Judges 4-5

By Brett Baggett on Sunday, February 2nd, 2020

- Chapter 4 is the story; chapter 5 the song. Look at the first 3 verses of chapter 4, that we may understand the context.

I. The people of God live by faith in the promises of God which are revealed the Word of God (4:4-7, 5:)

II. Weak faith is better than no faith (4:8-10, 5:)

- Notice those who take part in the song of Thanksgiving in chapter 5!
- **1. First, notice the FAITHFUL:** Deborah, Barak, Jael, the leaders who willingly followed Barak, especially Zubulin and Naphtali “risked their lives!” (Chapter 5, Verse 18).
- **Though Barak’s faith seems weak**, he is among those mentioned in **Hebrews chapter 11** as an example of faith!
- **This should be a great comfort** to us who feel our faith is too weak to be used by God!
- **If you feel your faith may fail, take heart—look at Barak in Judges 4 and 5!** And like the struggling father in **Mark 9**, cry out to Jesus, “I believe; Help my unbelief!”
- **2. Second, notice the WAVERERS:** Rueben - “Among the clans of Rueben there were great searching of heart” (5:15-16). They knew what they should do, and they thought about it, but wavered. They did not obey.
- **3. Third, notice the IDLE:** those like Gilead, Dan, and Asher who remained as they were, without a thought to do what the LORD commanded! (Judges 5:17).
- **4. Fourth, look at the WASTERS:** Meroz, having the best opportunities and the greatest abilities for serving the LORD’s cause, and yet they did not come. To whom much is given, much is required. The LORD saves his most bitter curse for them (Judges 5:23).
- **Q.** Are you a WASTER? IDLE? WAVERER? Or are you FAITHFUL? Barak’s faith was weak it seems, but weak faith is better no faith! Why? Because..

III. It is not the strength of our faith that saves us; it is our Sovereign God (4:11-16, 5:20-21)

- **First, we see this is the natural ways the LORD saved his people.** This is the only cycle in the book of Judges that does not have one hero leading the people to victory. We have Deborah, Barak, and Jael. **Q. Who gets the honor?**
A. As always—and so clear in this passage—The LORD. The LORD gets the Honor and Glory. It is God Himself who works through these imperfect people to accomplish His saving work.
- **Second, we see this is the supernatural ways the LORD saved his people.** He “routed Sicera” (Judges 4:15). What does that mean? **Look at chapter 5, verses 20-21.**
- **It is not the strength of anyone’s faith that saves them;** we are saved by our Sovereign God who works in spite of our weakness, our limitations, and our sin to deliver us from death by His work alone.
- **Be reminded, Christian, that The LORD providentially rules over every single particle in existence!**
As the late Dr. Sproul famously said, “There are no maverick molecules.”
- **If you belong to Jesus—if your faith is in Jesus alone to count you righteous before God—**this same LORD who defeats his enemies by his supernatural actions is working in every single part of existence to make you more like Jesus, protect you from what would destroy your faith, and bring you safely home to His loving arms!
- **IN THIS WE SHOULD SEE THE GOSPEL OF JESUS: The gospel does NOT say:** If you do your part, Jesus will do his part. It does not say, God helps those who help themselves. The gospel does not say, if we love God He will save us. That is nothing but man-made Religion and it leads to death. **The gospel SAYS:** Since you could never do your part, Jesus did it all for you. It says, Jesus saves those who cannot save themselves and *KNOW* they cannot save themselves. The gospel is the good news that says, “God will save us in Christ, by Christ, and for Christ’s glory because He loves us.”
- **Take heart, you who trust Jesus alone to forgive you and count you righteous:** It was not the strength of Barak’s faith that saved him; it was His sovereign God who intervened on his peoples behalf!

should not drown the earth, is a wonder of Providence. The prophet Jonah saw the wonders of God in the deep, when the very fish which devoured him and swallowed him brought him safe to shore. (2.) God’s providence reaches to all persons, especially the persons of the godly, who in a special manner are taken notice of. God takes care of every saint in particular, as if he had none else to care for. ‘He careth for you,’ 1 Pet v 7, i.e., the elect in a special manner. ‘The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him; to preserve them from death, and to keep them alive in famine.’ Psa xxxiii 18, 19. God by his providential care shields off dangers from his people, and sets a life-guard of angels about them. Psa xxxiv 7. God’s providence keeps the very bones of the saints. Psa xxxiv 20. It bottles their tears. Psa lvi 8. It strengthens the saints in their weakness. Heb xi 34. It supplies all their wants out of its alms basket. Psa xxiii 5. Thus Providence wonderfully supplies the wants of the elect. When the

IV. The LORD will humiliate his enemies (4:17-24, 5:)

- The LORD chose weak things to shame the strong, foolish things to shame the wise.
- **Romans 2:4** - The fact that God did not kill us in our sleep last night for our sin is because he is abundantly kind, richly tolerant, and wealthily patient. That patient-kindness is meant to lead you and I to repentance, not presumption.
- **Q. How are any of us going to escape?**
- **Here's what I must face, friends:**
- **If I depend on myself and my thoughts and my ways**, it will lead to the LORD giving me what I deserve: humiliation, death—much worse than a rushing river drowning my chariots and a tent peg driven through my head.
- What I deserve for my sin is the rushing river of the LORD's righteous anger; I deserve the tent peg of the LORD's wrath against traitors like me to be driven through my head for all eternity.
- **If I look to myself, or anyone or anything else, that is my end.** My end will be darker than the blackest night of winter. You must face that as well.
- **Oh! but if I look to Jesus!** If I look to Jesus in faith I “will be like the sun as he rises in his might!” HOW?!

V. The LORD Jesus Christ became a man and was Humiliated for his enemies, so that we would be Redeemed!

1. (falsely arrested, etc.) **The night before he was crucified for his peoples' sin**, Jesus was unjustly arrested, falsely tried, lied about, mocked, struck with fists, and then they spit in his face.
 2. (scourge) **The morning of his crucifixion they stripped off his clothes**, chained him to a wooden stump and repeatedly ripped off his skin with the cat of nine tails.
 3. (mocked/spit in his face) **After this scourging, the Roman Soldiers mocked him again.** “Hail king of the Jews!” they said. As they beat him with rods and punched him in the face they cried out, “Prophecy Jesus! Tell us which one of us hit you.” They then ridiculed him by placing both a crown of thorns on his head and a purple robe on the open flesh of his back. After this he was forced to carry his own cross outside the city.
 4. (nailed) **Upon arrival at Golgotha, he was laid down on the wood** as they drove thin railroad spikes through the most sensitive nerve endings of his entire body, his hands and feet.
 5. (asphyxiating) **Then lifting him up, the cross slammed into a hole in the ground**—and there he hung naked for hours in excruciating pain, asphyxiating (suffocating).
- (more than physical) **And yet, the physical pain that we can scarcely imagine pales in comparison** with the spiritual pain he experienced there.
 - **Q. What do I mean?**
 - 6. On the cross, Jesus did not only experience the physical destruction we deserve for our sin, **he paid for the spiritual destruction we earned as well.**
 - 7. **A curse!** He was made for us.
 - 8. **The unmitigated force of God's eternal wrath** for sin he bore on his shoulders.
 - 9. **The cup of the anger of the wrath of the LORD** he drank to his terror and demise.
 - **He gave himself up to the humiliation and punishment we deserve for our sin.**
 - **Q. Why? A.** So that he could pay our penalty; so he could pay our sin debt to God; so that all who come to faith in Him and Him alone would be saved.
 - “Jesus [was] delivered up according to the definite plan...of God.” Acts 2:23
 - **It was the will of the LORD to crush Him so that we would not get the darkness we deserve.**
 - **It was the will of the LORD to humiliate Him in our place**, so that we could be honored and called friends and “be like the sun who rises in his might.”
 - **Q.** Do you know what he said to his disciples right before this path of humiliation started?
 - **A.** “Do you not think I could call 10,000 angels to deliver me?”
 - **And wonder of wonder, he said NO to His own rescue and YES to our rescue every step of the way.** He did it all willingly.
 - **When you get that—when you get Jesus and trust Him, you will willingly offer yourself to Him!**