

## Judges, Sermon #16

Judges 5 & 6 – we left off last time with Deborah prodding Barak

Vs. 9 – reluctant servants lose their rewards

Vs. 10 – called on two tribes – 10,000 men

Deborah was not the last woman to be on a battlefield.

Molly Pitcher – how did she get a name like that?

1778 – Battle of Monmouth – N.J.

So, the

VI. Tribes were summoned –

Every believer is summoned to serve God in and through the local church.

### **Vs. 10**

The men of Naphtali responded, as did the men of Zebulun, Issachar, Benjamin,  
Ephraim

However, there were four tribes that didn't volunteer and do their share of fighting.

The tribe of Reuben pondered (let me think about it!) the call to arms but finally stayed  
at home.

Reuben had great thoughts of heart – 5:16

They were emotionally **stirred** but not **moved**.

“We should do this!” but their feet would not act.

They stayed at home, listened to the shepherds piping to the sheep, but rejected the  
blast of the war trumpets.

Since Manasseh east (Gilead) was safe on the other side of the Jordan, they also stayed home

These folks were comfortable – “This will interrupt our living” – selfishness

Dan and Asher on the coast also elected not to heed the call to battle.

Meroz means “built of cedars.” vs. 23

It was a city that lived in luxury, ease, and unconcern about their brethren.

They didn’t want to get involved – not concerned

What happened to the unconcerned tribes?

None of the unconcerned tribes ever made a significant contribution to the cause of God.

There are a lot of Christians that make no significant contribution to the cause of Christ.

They all got what they wanted, but lost what they had.

They lived for themselves, refused to risk what they had, and eventually lost what they had.

In contrast to these shirkers (shirked their duty), the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali are especially praised for risking their lives in the service of the Lord and their country – vs. 18

God’s call for service: some immediately volunteer and follow the Lord; some risk their lives; some give the call serious consideration but say no; and others keep to themselves as though the call had never been given.

Four tribes joined the 10,000 troops who had already been mobilized from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun (Jud. 4:6, 10; 5:14, 18).

About 40,000 men were mobilized for the battle (Jud. 5:8).

Vs. 11

Sheik Heber of the clan of Kenites

He had a wife whose name was Jael

Now, he had separated off from the south region of Israel and he found better camping grounds in the Jezreel Valley – “more comfortable”

Heber had allied himself to the power of the land

What is interesting is that the Kenites were previous friends of Israel – Judges 1:16

Jethro – Moses’ father-in-law was a Kenite

These Kenites were a wandering tribe – associated with Midianites

Now, in I Samuel 15:6 – King Saul was kind to the Kenites

Some people are like chameleons – Heber was one of these!

They change to whatever is the best for them at the moment.

Now, notice what an old friend did to Israel – vs. 12

Heber betrayed Israel and warned Sisera of the military buildup

Sisera was able then to call and gather his troops up and there would be no surprise attack – vs. 13

900 chariots – down on the plain next to the River Kishon

Two armies – one on Mt. Tabor – domed hill – with no weapons in hand

Looking down into the Valley at the buildup of Sisera’s army

As they lifted their eyes, they had a 360-degree panoramic view

To the north, they could see a corner of the Sea of Galilee and behind it stood the snowcapped Mt. Hermon

To the east, the Jordan Valley – ran north to south

To the west, tree-lined areas all the way to Mt. Carmel

To the southwest, but mostly south, was the military of King Jabin and his General Sisera

In just a few moments, Barak and his men would rush down the hill to engage a mighty army, well-armed, outnumbered with chariots

It was as if they were rushing into the jaws of destruction

With odds like this, what enables a man to take the step to leave the hill into battle?

Somewhere since last Wednesday, Barak had grown courageous

Most likely, it came from Deborah

Deborah, who pushed and pricked him

Deborah, who promised to go with him

Deborah says, "Go" – vs. 14

She had encouraged his faith.

The Lord has gone out before

So down the mountain the troops came, led by Barak – vs. 14e – who used to be reluctant

God routed Sisera and he used rain to do it

He flooded the valley plain – the advantage turned to disadvantage – swamp

Vs. 15-16

Sisera left his chariot and ran on foot and notice where he runs

4:17a

While Barak and his men were pursuing and killing, Sisera, was running for his life, probably heading toward Hazor and safety.

But weariness got the best of him, and providentially he was near the tents of Heber.

Since Sisera knew Heber, this settlement seemed a good place to stop and rest.

When Heber's wife, Jael, came out to meet Sisera and invited him into her tent, Sisera was sure that he was at last safe.

Any pursuer would hardly think to look in a woman's tent.

This would be a breach of etiquette.

In that culture, nobody would dare enter a wife's tent except her husband.

Jael gave him milk instead of water and then covered him with a blanket, and he was confident that he had found a dependable ally and could rest in peace.

Jael treated him kindly, and told him not to be afraid – vs. 18

What Sisera didn't know was that God had promised that a woman would take his life (Jud. 4:9).

Stealthily she approached her sleeping, unsuspecting guest and with a few swift blows drove the tent peg into his temple and through his head, completely transfixing him to the ground – vs. 19

So violent were her movements that the peg itself went through into the ground.

In the nomadic tribes, it was the women who put up and took down the tents; so Jael knew how to use a hammer.

So Israel's persecutor met a treacherous but swift death at the hands of a woman. It was a disgrace to be killed by a woman (9:54).

For a captain to flee from a battle was embarrassing; for him to be killed while fleeing was humiliating; but to be killed by a woman was the most disgraceful thing of all

Deborah started the fight and Jael finished it!

Because of Barak's hesitation, Deborah announced that a woman would get the credit for killing the captain of the enemy army

Judges 5:1-2

Deborah sang, "*Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be, blessed shall she be above women in the tent*" (5:24).

Let us stand.