

LIFE IN THE SIN CYCLE

(A Study in the Book of Judges)

Pembroke Bible Chapel

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Judges Message #5

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DEBORAH & BARAK

(Judges 4)

THE FOURTH JUDGE (Deborah; 1-5)

- when Ehud died, Israel returned to their sinful ways (1).
- this resulted in 20 years of harsh Canaanite oppression (2-3).
- at that time, God spoke through Deborah to provide leadership to His people (4-5).

THE FIFTH JUDGE (Barak; 6-11)

- through Deborah, God told Barak to lead Israel in battle (6-7).
- Barak insisted on Deborah's support (8).
- together, they assemble 10,000 men to battle Sisera (9-10).

STRANGE VICTORY (12-24)

- God gives Israel victory (12-15; 23-24).
- Sisera flees and takes refuge in Jael's tent (15-20).
- She drives a tent peg through Sisera's head while he is sleeping (21-22).

A PATTERN DEVELOPS

- In Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah, Barak and Jael, God used things that the world considers foolish, weak and lowly to put to shame things esteemed as wise, strong and regal.
- this pattern exists throughout the Bible and is best demonstrated in Christ (*Heb 11:32-34; 1 Cor 1:18-25*).
- this principle also works in those who trust in Christ (*1 Cor 1:26-31; 2 Cor 12:9-10*).

APPLICATION

We naturally look to human strength and wisdom to overcome our struggles. In doing so, we don't exercise faith in God's ability to lead us through life's challenges. We spend great effort trying to improve our understanding, behaviour, culture and health, but ultimately fail to triumph over our greatest foes – sin and death. No one can overcome these except God – He has done so in His Son, Jesus Christ. Despised by his contemporaries and considered only worthy of death, Christ was crucified. God brought triumph to mankind in the strangest way – a man nailed to a cross. The proof of His victory? Christ's resurrection. Do you believe it? You would be wise in God's eyes to, and in doing so, avail yourself of God's limitless power.

As Christians, we often make excuses not to serve God and do His bidding. This may be because we think we lack the ability to do the job (intellect, physical strength, etc.). What has God called you to do? In what ways are you insufficient for the task? It doesn't take worldly wisdom or power to do God's will. In fact, those things just get in the way. Throughout human history, God has demonstrated His power and wisdom in human frailty and in ways the world despises and considers foolish. Victory doesn't depend on human ability. It comes by faith in Christ – the power and wisdom of God (*1 Cor 1:24; 1 Jn 5:4*).

What is keeping you from living victoriously in Jesus Christ? Only your unwillingness to trust in His power and wisdom.

“...out of weakness they were made strong...that no flesh should glory in His presence.” (Hebrews 11:34; 1 Corinthians 1:29)