

**Second Baptist Church of Doylestown**  
**Bible Study Notes**  
**2-7-24**

**Judges 5**

**The Joy And Blessing In Being A Willing Instrument Of God – Verses 1-2**

**<sup>1</sup>On that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang this song: <sup>2</sup>“When the princes in Israel take the lead, when the people willingly offer themselves—praise the LORD!**

**5:1** Music and singing were a cherished part of Israel’s culture. Chapter 5 is a song, possibly composed and sung by Deborah and Barak. It sets to music the story of Israel’s great victory recounted in chapter 4. This victory song was accompanied by joyous celebration. It proclaimed God’s greatness by giving him credit for the victory. It was an excellent way to preserve and retell this wonderful story from generation to generation. (Other songs in the Bible are listed in the chart on page 000.)

**5:1** In victory, Barak and Deborah sang praises to God. Songs of praise focus our attention on God, give us an outlet for spiritual celebration, and remind us of God’s faithfulness and character. Whether you are experiencing a great victory or a major dilemma, singing praises to God can have a positive effect on your attitude.

**Remembering God’s Preservation Of Israel In The Past – Verses 3-5**

**<sup>3</sup>“Hear this, you kings! Listen, you rulers! I, even I, will sing to<sup>l</sup> the LORD; I will praise the LORD, the God of Israel, in song. <sup>4</sup>“When you, LORD, went out from Seir, when you marched from the land of Edom, the earth shook, the heavens poured, the clouds poured down water. <sup>5</sup>The mountains quaked before the LORD, the One of Sinai, before the LORD, the God of Israel.**

**5:3-4** LORD, when You went out from Seir: God won the victory for Israel over Sisera by sending a great rain (the heavens poured). In this song Deborah recalled a time when God did the same thing on behalf of Israel in the days of the Exodus (Deuteronomy 33:2).

**5:4-5** When You marched from the field of Edom: It is good for us to remember that God’s goodness to us didn’t just start today. He has been good to us for a long, long, time. “Seir and Edom are the same place; and these two expressions note the same thing, even God’s marching in the head of his people from Seir or Edom towards the land of Canaan.”

**Describing Life Under Canaanite Oppression – Verses 6-9**

**<sup>6</sup>“In the days of Shamgar son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were abandoned; travelers took to winding paths. <sup>7</sup>Villagers in Israel would not fight; they held back until I, Deborah, arose, until I arose, a mother in Israel. <sup>8</sup>God chose new leaders when war came to the city gates, but not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel. <sup>9</sup>My heart is with Israel’s princes, with the willing volunteers among the people. Praise the LORD!**

**5:6** Village life ceased, it ceased in Israel: Not only was life hard under Israel’s oppressors, but they also confiscated all weapons, so the Israelites could not fight (Not a shield or spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel). By spiritual analogy, we can say that Satan doesn’t only want to oppress the Christian; he also wants to disarm the believer. He wants the believer to lay down the full armor of God that belongs to you in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 6:12-18).

**5:7** Until I, Deborah, arose: This wasn't necessarily pride on Deborah's part. She understood that God works through willing individuals, and she was the willing one in this crisis.

**5:8** War was the inevitable result when Israel chose to follow false gods. Although God had given Israel clear directions, the people failed to put his words into practice. Without God at the center of their national life, pressure from the outside soon became greater than power from within, and they were an easy prey for their enemies. If you are letting a desire for recognition, craving for power, or love of money rule your life, you may find yourself besieged by enemies— stress, anxiety, illness, fatigue. Keep God at the center of your life, and you will have the power you need to fight these destroyers.

**5:9** My heart is with the rulers of Israel: Deborah didn't only care for her job of leadership. She also had a heart for other leaders and their work. Her vision was bigger than just getting "her job" done. She wanted to see the Kingdom of God advanced.

### **A Call To Recount The Great Victory – Verses 10-12**

**10** "You who ride on white donkeys, sitting on your saddle blankets, and you who walk along the road, consider **11** the voice of the singer<sup>1</sup> at the watering places. They recite the victories of the LORD, the victories of his villagers in Israel. "Then the people of the LORD went down to the city gates. **12** 'Wake up, wake up, Deborah! Wake up, wake up, break out in song! Arise, Barak! Take captive your captives, son of Abinoam.'

**5:10-12** Speak, you who ride on white donkeys: The song asked the civic leaders along with Deborah and Barak to tell the villagers in Israel the great things God did. We should never hide our light under a bushel ([Matthew 5:15-16](#)) but tell others of the great things God has done and is doing. Many need to wake up and sing a song of praise to the LORD. The common people needed to hear of God's great works, and it was the job of leaders to tell them.

### **The Tribes That Helped And The Tribes That Didn't Help – Verses 13-18**

**13** "The remnant of the nobles came down; the people of the LORD came down to me against the mighty. **14** Some came from Ephraim, whose roots were in Amalek; Benjamin was with the people who followed you. From Makir captains came down, from Zebulun those who bear a commander's staff. **15** The princes of Issachar were with Deborah; yes, Issachar was with Barak, sent under his command into the valley. In the districts of Reuben there was much searching of heart. **16** Why did you stay among the sheep pens to hear the whistling for the flocks? In the districts of Reuben there was much searching of heart. **17** Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan. And Dan, why did he linger by the ships? Asher remained on the coast and stayed in his coves. **18** The people of Zebulun risked their very lives; so did Naphtali on the terraced fields.

**5:15-17** Four tribes— Reuben, Gilead (either Gad or Manasseh), Dan, and Asher— were accused of not lending a helping hand in the battle. No reasons are given for their refusal to help their fellow Israelites, but they may be the same ones that stopped them from driving out the Canaanites in the first place: (1) lack of reliance on God for help, (2) lack of effort, (3) fear of the enemy, and (4) fear of antagonizing those with whom they did business and thus from whom they prospered. This disobedience showed both a lack of commitment to God's plan and a weak faith in God's power.

### **The Battle Described And A Curse On A Unhelpful City – Verses 19-23**

**19** "Kings came, they fought, the kings of Canaan fought. At Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo, they took no plunder of silver. **20** From the heavens the stars fought, from their courses they fought against Sisera. **21** The river Kishon swept them away, the age-old river, the river Kishon. March on, my soul; be strong! **22** Then thundered the horses' hooves—galloping,

**galloping go his mighty steeds. <sup>23</sup> ‘Curse Meroz,’ said the angel of the LORD. ‘Curse its people bitterly, because they did not come to help the LORD, to help the LORD against the mighty.’**

**5:19-20** They fought from the heavens: The battle was fought from the heavens in the sense that God sent rain that made the Canaanite chariots of no use (the torrent of Kishon swept them away).

**5:23** “Curse Meroz,” said the angel of the LORD: Apparently the city of Meroz was of no help. God still accomplished His work, but the city of Meroz was cursed because they had no part in it.

#### **Praise For Jael For Her Killing Of Sisera – 24-27**

<sup>24</sup> **“Most blessed of women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, most blessed of tent-dwelling women. <sup>25</sup> He asked for water, and she gave him milk; in a bowl fit for nobles she brought him curdled milk. <sup>26</sup> Her hand reached for the tent peg, her right hand for the workman’s hammer. She struck Sisera, she crushed his head, she shattered and pierced his temple. <sup>27</sup> At her feet he sank, he fell; there he lay. At her feet he sank, he fell; where he sank, there he fell—dead.**

**5:24-27** Most blessed among women is Jael: What Jael did would be condemned by many in the days of the Judges. The responsibility to protect and bless a guest was an almost absolute command, and Jael killed a guest. Yet she was blessed here because her obedience to the cause of God was greater than her obedience to tradition and custom. Deborah wanted to increase Sisera’s shame by pointing out that it was a woman who ended his life.

#### **Reflection On The Soon Disappointment Of Sisera’s Survivors – Verses 28-30**

<sup>28</sup> **“Through the window peered Sisera’s mother; behind the lattice she cried out, ‘Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why is the clatter of his chariots delayed?’ <sup>29</sup> The wisest of her ladies answer her; indeed, she keeps saying to herself, <sup>30</sup> ‘Are they not finding and dividing the spoils: a woman or two for each man, colorful garments as plunder for Sisera, colorful garments embroidered, highly embroidered garments for my neck—all this as plunder?’**

**5:28-30** The mother of Sisera looked through the window: Every death has consequences and Deborah thought of and celebrated the consequences of Sisera’s death. We deceive ourselves with great expectations and confident hopes of honor, and pleasure, and wealth in this world, by which we prepare for ourselves the shame and grief of a disappointment. And thus does God often bring ruin on his enemies when they are most elevated.

#### **Final Praise To God And The Long-Term Effect Of The Victory – Verse 31**

<sup>31</sup> **“So may all your enemies perish, LORD! But may all who love you be like the sun when it rises in its strength.” Then the land had peace forty years.**

**5:31** Thus let all Your enemies perish: To love God is to hate His enemies. A man or woman is defined as much by who their enemies are as by who their friends are. How much better it is to be one of those who love Him than to be one of God’s enemies. Deborah was a prophetess, and this prayer was a prediction that in due time all God's enemies shall perish.