

# Faith Wins through Fearless Women

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Sunday Plan

SCRIPTURE

Judges 4–5

MEMORY VERSE

Hebrews 11:32–33

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*Victory is assured by the Lord and not human strength. God is able to show Himself strong on behalf of the most unlikely people, who's hearts are loyal to Him.*

# Welcome & Introduction

## Opening Questions:

Imagine your school's basketball team is in the playoffs. The star players are out — one is sick, one got injured, and another is academically ineligible. Everyone is panicking. The coach looks around the locker room and says:

“Alright... Jordan, you're captain tonight.”

Jordan isn't the best shooter. Not the fastest. Not the loudest. Honestly, Jordan is the kind of player most people forget is even on the team. But the coach sees something the others don't — steady confidence, calm thinking, and a willingness to step up when things get tough.

The team walks onto the court nervous. The other school has their full lineup, their student section is roaring, and everyone expects your team to get crushed.

But something surprising happens.

Jordan leads with courage. Jordan calls plays with confidence. Jordan encourages the team when they start to fall behind.

And then — late in the game — another unexpected hero steps up. A quiet freshman who barely gets playing time steals the ball, drives the court, and scores the winning layup at the buzzer.

The gym explodes. The team celebrates. And everyone realizes something important:

Sometimes the people you least expect become the leaders God uses the most.

### TRANSITION

Judges 4–5 is exactly this kind of story:

- Deborah isn't a warrior — she's a prophetess and judge — but God uses her to lead a nation.
- Barak is hesitant, but God strengthens him to fight.
- Jael isn't a soldier — she's a woman in a tent — but she becomes the surprising hero who ends the battle.
- And God is the true power behind every victory.

Judges 4–5 shows that God doesn't wait for perfect people, loud people, or “obvious leaders.” He uses faithful people — sometimes the ones everyone else overlooks.

# Same Old Cycle of Sin

## Judges 4:1–5

## Teaching Points

- Israel repeats the cycle of rebellion, and God allows oppression under Jabin. This shows that spiritual drift doesn't happen overnight — it's the result of forgetting God's ways.
- Deborah models spiritual leadership rooted in wisdom and presence. She leads from a place where people come to her for judgment, showing that godly leadership begins with character, discernment, and consistency long before any battle begins.
- God prepares deliverance before the crisis peaks. Before Barak is called, before Sisera is confronted, God already has His leader in place. Deborah's leadership shows that God is never caught off guard — He equips His people ahead of time.

**DISCUSSION**

1. Why do you think Israel kept falling back into the same patterns, even after God rescued them?
2. Deborah wasn't the "expected" leader — what does her role teach us about how God sees people differently than we do?
3. Deborah led with wisdom and presence before she ever led in battle — what does that say about the kind of leadership God values?

**KEY TRUTH**

The real hero of Judges 4–5 is Yahweh the Warrior. Deborah says, "The Lord has gone ahead of you" (4:14). The song says, "From heaven the stars fought" (5:20). God brought the rain that swelled the Kishon and disabled the chariots. The women's courage matters, but it matters because God empowered it. His power is not limited by gender, position, or expectations. He uses whoever is willing to trust Him.

## Hesitant Hero

Judges 4:6–10

### Teaching Points

- God's calling often comes through trusted spiritual voices. Deborah delivers God's command to Barak, showing that God frequently uses wise, faithful leaders to speak direction into our lives.
- God calls His people to step into battles they cannot win alone. Barak is told to face Sisera's superior army, but God promises, "I will give him into your hands." The calling is risky, but the outcome rests on God.
- Barak's hesitation reveals a relatable struggle with fear. Barak wants Deborah to go with him — not because he doubts God, but because he feels inadequate. His response shows that even faithful people wrestle with insecurity.

**DISCUSSION**

1. Why do you think Barak wanted Deborah to go with him, even after God promised victory?
2. Have you ever felt God nudging you to do something that scared you or felt too big?
3. What does this passage teach us about how God uses teamwork and shared leadership?

**KEY TRUTH**

Deborah agrees to go, but tells Barak the honor will go to a woman. Still, Barak obeys and gathers the troops. Despite his hesitation, Barak is listed in Hebrews 11:32–33 among those who "through faith conquered kingdoms." His faith was imperfect, but it was real. If you feel like your faith isn't strong enough, Barak's story says that God uses imperfect faith. He works through partnership, not perfection.

## Fight the Good Fight of Faith

Judges 4:11–16; 5:20–21

## Teaching Points

- God is already arranging the details long before the battle begins (v.11). The seemingly random note about Heber the Kenite sets up his wife, Jael's role later. What looks like a side detail is actually God positioning people for His purposes.
- Deborah's command — "Go! This is the day the Lord has given Sisera into your hands" — reminds Barak that obedience is his job; deliverance is God's.
- The author of Judges wants us to connect this battle to the Red Sea crossing in Exodus 14–15. In both accounts, God defeats a chariot army with water. In both, He goes out before His people and throws the enemy into confusion. Both accounts begin with a narrative and end with a song (Moses and Miriam at the sea, Deborah and Barak here). God saves the same way every time: with power that belongs to Him, not to human armies.
- God fights for His people in ways they cannot see. Judges 5:20–21 reveals that God sent a storm that disabled Sisera's iron chariots, and perhaps His heavenly hosts contributed to the battle as well. What looked like a hopeless battle turned because God moved in the background.

### DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think the Bible includes "small details" like Heber's tent in verse 11 — what does that teach us about how God works? Was Heber and Jael's relocation just a coincidence or a part of God's providential work well in advance of this battle?
2. Is it possible that some seemingly trivial events in our lives could be used by God for greater purposes today?
3. Deborah tells Barak to move because "the Lord has gone ahead of you." How would your decisions change if you believed God was already working ahead of you?
4. In 5:20–21 it appears that God aided Barak supernaturally, (The stars fought from the heavens. Angels are referred to as stars in Job 38:7) as well as naturally bringing flooding on the Kishon river that stalled Jabin's chariots in the wet terrain. What if Barak had lacked the faith to initiate the battle?

### KEY TRUTH

Courage grows when we step into what God has already prepared. Barak's army gains confidence as they see God turning the tide. Their courage didn't come from themselves — it came from witnessing God at work.

## Soldier in Deep Camouflage

Judges 4:17–24

## Teaching Points

- Sisera flees to Jael's tent because he assumes safety, but God has positioned an ordinary woman — outside the battlefield — to play a decisive role. God's deliverers don't always look like warriors.
- Barak arrives expecting to finish the battle, but Jael has already done what he could not. This reinforces Deborah's prophecy (4:9) and shows that God's plans unfold exactly as He intends.
- Deliverance leads to long-term peace when God's people trust His leadership. The chapter ends with God subduing Jabin and Israel growing stronger. The victory wasn't just a moment — it reshaped

the nation's future because God's people followed His lead.

#### DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think God chose Jael — someone outside the army and outside the spotlight — to play such a huge role in the victory?
2. Barak expected to finish the battle, but God used someone else. How do you respond when God works in ways that surprise you or don't match your expectations?
3. Does this episode cause you to think again about people you have previously underestimated?

#### KEY TRUTH

Jael steps into a dangerous moment with clarity and conviction. Her bravery demonstrates that faith isn't passive — it often requires stepping into risk for the sake of what is right.

## Song of Deborah

Judges 5:1–15

### Teaching Points

- Songs were written to commemorate events like the victory in Judges 4–5 because songs helped God's people remember. In a world without books, playlists, or screens, a song was the most powerful way to preserve a story, pass it to the next generation, and keep God's faithfulness alive in the community's memory.
- According to 4:6–10, Barak's force of 10,000 warriors came from the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali who are praised in 5:18. This passage implies that the tribes of Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Issachar joined them while Reuben, Gad, Dan, and Asher did not. The tribes of Judah and Simeon are not mentioned.
- Deborah praises the "willing volunteers" and the leaders who offered themselves. God values availability more than ability, and He celebrates those who step up when others hesitate.

#### DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think Deborah and Barak chose to worship through a song right after the battle?
2. Deborah praises the "willing volunteers. What kind of faith is it if one can't be counted on when it counts?
3. Some tribes joined the fight while others stayed back. What keeps people today from stepping into what God is calling them to do?

#### KEY TRUTH

The song exposes the difference between those who acted and those who stayed comfortable (v.15). The contrast begins here and continues later in the chapter. The song highlights that faith is revealed in action, not just a said belief. Courage is choosing to move when God calls.

## Memory Verses & Closing

## Memory Verses

- Hebrews 11:32–33

Challenge for the Week: Choose one moment this week to step up when you normally might stay quiet, stay comfortable, or stay in the background. It could be encouraging someone, volunteering first, standing with someone who feels alone, or doing the right thing when it's unpopular.

Just like Deborah, Barak, and Jael, let your faith move you from watching to acting — even in one small moment.

Close in prayer.