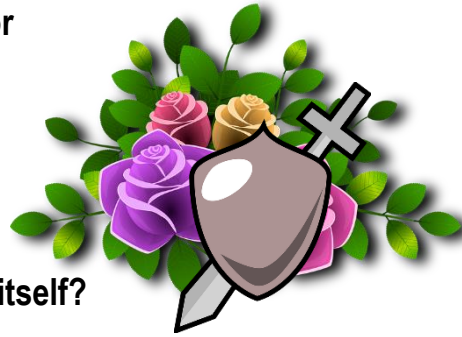


Nurturing Warrior



Judges 4:1-5:31 – Questions to ponder

Why is Deborah's story told twice in the Word?

What is the focus of this account?

Is the emphasis on Deborah being a woman? On the war itself?

What is significant about being a woman, a wife, a mother in Israel and a prophetess?

What is significant about the 40 years of peace afterward?

➤ Story told twice, once as a song

- Same structure as the escape through the Red Sea. A telling of the journey and then a song of praise telling what happened a second time.
- Usually read with Beshalach (When he sent) which is the story of the crossing of the Red Sea.
- In both stories women play important roles. Jochebed and Miriam saved the infant Moses. Then Miriam and the women sang their own song of praise after the Egyptians drowned.
- Significant emphasis missed in English Bibles – that this deliverance by G-d is seen as being on the same level of intervention as the deliverance from Egypt.

➤ The emphasis is on

- G-d's deliverance through all who are willing and available.
- An illustration of the faith and holiness of Jewish women.
- Deborah has no doubt that G-d will deliver them from oppression. She does not doubt that there will be a miracle and that G-d is speaking to her and Israel right then.

➤ The story

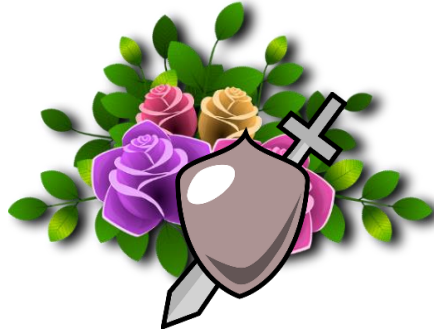
- Israel had sinned and G-d had punished them by giving them over to oppression for a time. When they repented and called out to God HE sent them a deliverer. (This is a repeated pattern in the history of HIS people and in us).
- We also are in a war, whether we recognize it or not. A battle on many fronts - Marriage, family, freedoms, cultural, work, colleges, schools etc. We also have gone astray at times.
- Deborah is already a recognized leader, prophet and judge in Israel and she calls for Barak, the son of Abinoam to come and lead the fight against their enemy. "G-d will give them over into your hands" (Judges 4:7).
- Barak, the son of Abinoam, will not go up to battle without Deborah with him (Judges 4:8; 5:12). Do we also hold back in the battle for the ground G-d has given us to tend?

- She agrees to go but says he will not get the honor for the defeat of Sisera, the commander of the enemy army. That honor will go to a woman (Judges 4:9).
- The Lord does what HE promises and delivers Israel with the help of a Kenite woman by the name of Jael who kills Sisera the commander of the enemy army. She gets the honor.

➤ Deborah – What can we learn from her?

- Judges 4:4-5 – a woman of many roles.
- One of two judges and prophets.
- She is described 1st as a Prophetess (One of 7 whose prophecies are recorded in the Bible). Suddenly one day she calls on Barak to gather an army and go up against the enemy. She rises one morning to tell Barak that this is the day (Judges 4:14). She is aware of G-d's timing.
- This would indicate a true relationship with HIM. In order to hear HIM we need to spend time in Torah and with HIM.
- Eshet Lappidoth - She is the wife of Lappidoth who's name means torches or flames. Scholars see her as a person who spread the light of Torah in Israel. Eshet lappidoth can also be translated woman of torches or fiery woman. She needed to be that for war.
- Do we hold the flame of the Word? Do we shine with HIS presence and truth where ever we go?
- She judges Israel at that time. Most judges become leaders when they lead in battle, but she is shown as already having influence before the battle. "Under the tree of Deborah, the sons of Israel came up to her for judgment." (Judges 4:5).
- What do we make judgments by? The Word, Torah? Or do we make judgments from our own limited understanding and culture's norms?
- In Judges 5:7 she is described as arising as a mother in Israel. A mother is seen as being a nurturing element of the home. She cares for and guides her family and children when they are young. Deborah cared for and guided a young Israel.
- Who are we given to nurture? Nurture is defined as to care for and encourage the growth or development of someone or something.
- Peace was in Israel for 40 years
 - 40 represents transition or change – a concept of renewal or a new beginning.
 - Are you a piece of the puzzle which will bring change for the good for your family? For your workplace? For strangers? Church? Neighborhood? City? Country?
- Warrior – Listened for the Lord's battle plan and followed it. People came to her as warriors (Judges 5:13). Survivors came down to the nobles for war. There was a resolve of heart.

- What is your heart resolved to do with the Word you receive every week? Every day?
- They took no plunder in silver. Do we have any hidden agendas? Why do we study and worship?
- She let G-d do the battle. She knew when to rise and when to go. Knew it was G-d's work to destroy the enemy. Cooperated with HIM.
- Are we willing to do battle in the LORD for those HE has given us to care for and watch over?



Discussion points:

- What are your roles? How can G-d use you as a nurturing warrior?
- Who are we given to nurture? Are you a piece of the puzzle which will bring change for the good of your family? For your workplace? For strangers? Church? Neighborhood? City? Country?
- What is your heart resolved to do with the Word you receive every week? Every day?
- Are we willing to do battle in the LORD for those HE has given us to care for and watch over?