Judges: Straight Lines – **wk 3 Deborah – Unlikely Heroes**

**Weird stories and strange twists. Judges relays the dark ages of Israel. A Ripley believe it or not records – a museum of mistakes and victory.**

**Background: Moses 40 yrs- Joshua 25 yrs- Judges 400+ yrs to Samuel. They didn’t drive out the inhabitants, so troubled followed them - and they fall into a cycle of sin.**

**The Cycle of Sin: A cycle that repeats itself in the book of Judges**

**Sin – Suffering – Supplication – Savior**

**Each judge teaches us a slightly diff lesson in overcoming sin. God used neighbors to judge them, and God used Israel to judge them. (Now about 40,000 Israelites – Jud 5:8)**

**Savior 3 - *Shamgar***

**Judges 3:31 After him was Shamgar the son of Anath, who killed 600 of the Philistines with an oxgoad, (long club with iron point or hook – cattle prod) and he also saved Israel.**

**During late Ehud’s 80 yrs of peace or during the life of Deborah. (Mentioned int the Song of Deborah 5:6)**

**Shamgar is not a Hebrew name (means “the stranger”) and Anath = name of a Canaanite deity of war (“son of war”). Some scholars suggest he was part of a mercenary clan paid by Israel or Egypt.**

**Not necessarily a judge but is mentioned as a savior.**

* **The Lord will fight our battles in unexpected ways!**

**Which is the theme of this next judge and savior.**

**Savior 4 – *Deborah* *(and Barak with Jael)***

**Judges 4:1 And the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord after Ehud died. 2 And the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-hagoyim. (Slaves in their own land) 3 Then the people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help, for he had 900 chariots of iron (like ancient tanks) and he oppressed the people of Israel cruelly for twenty years.**

**Bricklayers, farmers, and shepherds – not fighters. They did not have a military army at this time. Ever feel like you’re enslaved in a situation - surrounded by 900 chariots?**

**THE PROBLEMS**

**4:1 After Ehud died, the Israelites once again did evil in the eyes of the Lord… the Lord sold them into the hands of Jabin… (3 issues here)**

**\*They once again ignored God’s word – “oops they did it again”**

**God gave them promises (the Word) - provision (the land) and His presence (I will be with you). But yet it was not enough.**

**There is a fake freedom in doing what you want to do. Have you been there? Let’s face it - SIN is Fun**

**(Heb 11:25) Sin does bring pleasure for a season – but it’s fleeting.**

**It ends in a rotting cycle of pain and slavery**

**\*They were following people and programs (After Ehud died…)**

**If your relationship is based on a person, program, or church you’re in trouble. Is your faith based on a person?**

**\*They were resting on a past experience**

**Ehud’s great moment did not mean they never had to fight again.**

**Following God is not only about great experiences but about a daily walk of becoming more like Christ…**

**Is your faith based on an experience or event?**

**I wish I had a God Gauge that could tell me how I am doing - I think we are misled by our experiences.**

**THE SOLUTION:**

**Judges 4:4 Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. 5 She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the people of Israel came up to her for judgment. 6 She sent and summoned Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-naphtali… (She’s in central area - Barak from far no. of sea of Galilee)**

**4:6 She sent and summoned Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-naphtali and said to him, “Has not the Lord, the God of Israel, commanded you, (she confirmed what Barak was already told by God) ‘Go, gather your men at Mount Tabor, taking 10,000 from the people of Naphtali and the people of Zebulun. 7 And I will draw out Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the river Kishon with his chariots and his troops, and I will give him into your hand’?”**

**Go down to the plains w/ your shovels & pitch forks - I will lure out the commander (w/ his 900 chariots - tanks) and you fight them. God says you will win. Are you in?!**

**8 Barak said to her, “If you will go with me, I will go, but if you will not go with me, I will not go.”**

**Are you sure you heard God? He’s insecure and unsure. He trusted Deb’s relationship with God more than his own. Leaned on a person. He lacked faith.**

**9 And she said, “I will surely go with you. Nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, *(KJV - there will be no glory for you)* for the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.” Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. 10 And Barak called out Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh. And 10,000 men went up at his heels, and Deborah went up with him.**

**Ten thousand men (farmers, brick layers, shepherds) and one woman ride out to face 900 chariots & thousands of warriors on an open plain in Kedesh – a rumble.**

**(Odd mention) 11 Now Heber the Kenite had separated from the Kenites, (neutral metalsmiths) the descendants of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses and had pitched his tent as far away as the oak in Zaanannim, which is near Kedesh.**

**Heber (not from 12 tribes of Israel - distant family tribe of Moses thru Jethro) moved to the back woods with his family into a trailer under a tree w/ 3 broken down cars in the yard.**

**(Back to Deb and Barak) 12 When Sisera was told that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, 13 Sisera called out all his chariots, 900 chariots of iron, and all the men who were with him, from Harosheth-hagoyim to the river Kishon. 14 And Deborah said to Barak, “Up! For this is the day in which the Lord has given Sisera into your hand. Does not the Lord go out before you?” So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with 10,000 men following him.**

**15 And the Lord routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army before Barak by the edge of the sword. And Sisera got down from his chariot and fled away on foot. 16 And Barak pursued the chariots and the army to Harosheth-hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not a man was left.**

**Chapter 5 – The victory song of Deborah tells us more..**

**Judges 5:4 "O LORD, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the land of Edom, the earth shook, the heavens poured, the clouds poured down water. From the heavens the stars fought, from their courses they fought against Sisera. (The commanding general)**

**Imagine fighting during a massive torrential storm.**

**20 From heaven the stars fought, from their courses (orbits) they fought against Sisera. (The storm thrashed) 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' hoofs - galloping, galloping go his mighty steeds.**

**A flash flood came and swept the chariots away – causing the men to leave their chariots and horses and fight by hand. That is a miracle!**

**4:17 But Sisera fled away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, (wife of the trailer dude in v.11) 18 for there was peace (neutral) between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. And Jael came out to meet Sisera and said to him, “Turn aside, my lord; turn aside to me; do not be afraid.” So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. 19 And he said to her, “Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty.” So she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered him. (a blanket) 20 And he said to her, “Stand at the opening of the tent, and if any man comes and asks you, ‘Is anyone here?’ say, ‘No.’”**

**21 But Jael the wife of Heber took a tent peg, and took a hammer in her hand. (spike & hammer) Then she went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple until it went down into the ground while he was lying fast asleep from weariness. So he died. (You think?) She walks outside and says – “Nailed it!”**

**Surprise twist - Deborah said a women would receive the honor of the victory - we thought it would be Deborah, but it was a distant 3rd cousin hillbilly woman living out in the woods.**

**Deborah’s song gives more detail - Judges 5:24-31 (After serving him milk and curds) 26 She sent her hand to the tent peg and her right hand to the workmen's mallet; she struck Sisera; she crushed his head; she shattered and pierced his temple. 27 Between her feet - he sank, he fell, he lay still; between her feet he sank, he fell; where he sank, there he fell - dead. (song)**

**Sisera spent his life oppressing and abusing women, but in the end, he was brought down by a woman. Ancient Kill Bill.**

**4:22 And behold, as Barak was pursuing Sisera, Jael went out to meet him and said to him, “Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking.” So he went in to her tent, and there lay Sisera dead, with the tent peg in his temple.**

**Barak chasing Sisera, “have you seen him” She says, “yeah in here” He pull his sword, walks in the tent, “Ooo, nice job lady”**

**23 So on that day God subdued Jabin the king of Canaan before the people of Israel. 24 And the hand of the people of Israel pressed harder and harder against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they destroyed Jabin king of Canaan. (They kept on moving and took down the king)**

**Judges 5:31 “So may all your enemies perish, O Lord! But your friends (may all who love you – no matter the nationality) be like the sun as he rises in his might.” And the land had rest for forty years.**

**Believe it, or not. So many twists & turns. Did you see that ending coming?**

**\*\*This is not allowance for violence (God never instructed her to drive a spike in his head). Example of the crazy ways God provides victory!**

**3 Unlikely heroes & 3 Unlikely Lessons**

**Deborah:**

* **Prophet – a Messenger of God – God’s voice (1 of 2 prophet judges)**
* **Musician / Poet - Ch 5 – a song written by Deborah about the victory.**

**She writes of herself - Judges 5:7 The villagers ceased in Israel; they ceased to be until I arose; I, Deborah, arose as a mother in Israel.**

**#1 God uses women to accomplish his divine purposes**

* **A few things to think about: Deborah did not lead by default**

**4 Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. (She was judge before and after this event)**

* + **Deborah was under the headship of her husband**

**4 Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. (She was married and the mention of her husband references headship)**

* + **Deborah was a woman leader encouraging a man to lead**

**I find there are women leading in church and home are looking for men to step up.**

**Views of women in leadership: (chart where we are)**

**Egalitarian, Complementarian, Hierarchical**

**Has nothing to do with superiority, Jesus was in submission to the Father w/out being inferior in any way (John 5:9, 1:1, 10:30).**

**But In light of creation (1 Cor 11:8-10)**

**And in God’s ordained order (1 Cor 11:3, 1 Tim 2:14)**

**In both the OT and NT we see women leading, speaking, preaching, witnessing, and as prophets. We are created equal with equal access to God, however, we are created with different qualities and roles.**

**Example: women were not to be priest in OT and women were not to be elders in the NT (1 Tim 2:12–3:1) Deb is mentioned w/ husband, not done for the men. This identifies who leads the home, even in her role as a prophet, her home was led by her husband.**

**Check out my series on 1Cor (ch 11) & 1Tim (ch 2) for more.**

**#1 God uses women to accomplish his divine purposes.**

**Barak**

* **Man of influence – He was to use his influence to rally 10,000 soldiers**
* **Reluctant - Ju 4:6 “Has the Lord not told you?” / 4:8 I’ll only go if you go.**

**He lost the honor due to not taking the lead.**

**#2 Sometimes the greatest temptation is not to do evil, but to do nothing**

**Barak was not a bad guy; he was not involved in the sinful choices of his culture – his issue was he was not doing what God told him to do. Stand up and lead!**

**I want to talk to dads for a minute (next week is your Sunday) listen - every sociological study ever done points to the relationship of a child to their father as the greatest determining factor of how a person turns how emotionally, psychologically, and spiritually.**

**If a child is the first to become a believer in Jesus, there is a 3.5% chance the rest of the family will become Christian. \*\* If the mother is first, rises to 17%. \*\* But the father is first, it jumps to 93%!** (House. “What Your Church to Grow? Then Bring in Men,” www.bpnews.net, 2003. (Stats from Focus on the Family)

**Whoever you are – in Christ you are to lead in this world. Barak knew what to do but lacked the faith to trust God to do it through him.**

**He eventually did lead the army to a great victory**

**Jael**

* **Country girl – v. 11 Small town girl from the back wood of - Zaanannim**
* **Nobody – a nobody from nowhere.**

**She is the surprising hero of the story – the real star**

**\*\* God was orchestrating the entire story.**

**#3 God accomplished his purposes through our availability not ability**

**A housewife with a frying pan (and spike) says here I am, send me.**

**She was not part of an elite tribe or family - she was not wealthy or influential - but she was humble and available.**

**The small guy – the person people forget – reminds us of the surprising ways God draws straight lines with crooked sticks.**

**Maybe you are facing 900 iron chariots: Addiction, depression, anxiety, personal attacks, financial trouble, relationship struggles – God shows up in our weaknesses (the repeat story of the Bible).**

**Key verse - Judges 4:14 - Then Deborah said to Barak, "Go! This is the day the Lord has given Sisera into your hands. Has not the Lord gone ahead of you?"**

**We see it again and again, God with his power and might, greater than our insecurities and weaknesses – goes ahead!**

**Jesus says trust in me and I will surprise you.**

**I might just use a flash flood, a strong woman, a reluctant man, an unbeliever, a distant cousin, or even a stranger.**

**God uses unexpected means to deliver and save us. Nothing was more unexpected than a small-town man from a low income family that said he was God – Jesus.**

**Sisera is a picture of sin, and his master Jabin is a picture of Satan.**

**Sin that tries to control you and make a home & shelter in our tents.**

**But here comes the savior with a nail and hammer and pierces sin thru. Sin has no place to hide, the savior killed it once for all - on the cross.**

**I no longer need to carry a tent peg looking for justice, sin has already been defeated by nail pierced hands in his own body.**

**It was that piercing and defeat of Jabin that restored justice.**

**This story reminds Jesus our savior who will restore justice.**