

## Summary of Judges Chapter 4: 1-16

The people of God had a land of their very own. It was called the land of Canaan. God's people were called Israelites. Sometimes enemies would try to hurt God's people but God promised to take care of them. The Lord promised to take care of His people as long as they obeyed Him. If they did not obey Him then the Lord would allow Israel's enemies to hurt them and win their land.

Sometimes it seemed like the Israelites never learned a lesson. The same thing happened again and again. First, the Israelites would begin to leave God and disobey Him. Then, the Lord would let enemies win battles against them and treat them badly. When the people were suffering, they were sorry they had disobeyed God. They would pray to God to help them. Finally, the Lord would send someone to help the people and save them from their enemies. This person was called a JUDGE.

One famous Judge was a woman. Her name was Deborah. Deborah was so wise that everyone wanted to listen to what she said. She used to sit under a palm tree and let people come and ask her advice. The Lord knew that Deborah was a good woman. Deborah spoke the words that the Lord wanted her to. Sometimes she would help people by telling them what the Lord wanted them to do.

It was good that Deborah talked to the people because they were very unhappy. Many people had stopped following God. Israel's enemies were very mean. One enemy, Jabin, had a big army that used to hurt the Israelites. The people were sorry that they were not obeying the Lord. They wanted Him to help them. Deborah asked the leader of Israel's army to come to her. His name was Barak. She told him that the Lord wanted him to go into battle and fight Jabin's army. Deborah told Barak that the Lord would help him and that he would win the battle.

Barak did not want to go alone. He knew that the enemy had a very strong general in charge of their army. The general's name was Sisera. Barak told Deborah that he would not go to battle unless she went with him. Usually women did not go to battle but Deborah said she would help Barak. Deborah told Barak that because he needed a woman to help him then a woman would defeat Sisera.

Barak gathered an army of 10,000 men. Sisera had a huge army and 900 iron chariots. When Deborah told Barak to begin the fight, the army rushed down into a valley to fight against Sisera's army and all of the strong chariots. Then an amazing thing happened. Clouds gathered and rain started to fall. So much rain fell that the valley flooded. All of the iron chariots got stuck in the mud! Sisera's army began to run away.

