



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1848 ~ Deborah and Barak.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

Following the death of Israel's leader, Joshua, the next generation of Israelites weren't faithful to God in worshipping Him and remembering all God's goodness to them, after promising that they would. Instead, they joined in with the Canaanite people still living in the land to worship the pagan gods of the Canaanites. In doing this, the people broke their covenant with their own God and He wasn't pleased at all about it. To bring them back to Himself, God let enemies from outside of Canaan to raid the Israelites and carry off their wealth, property and food.

When the Israelites came to their senses and called out to God for help, God raised up a judge to lead them and to defeat their oppressive enemies. For the rest of that judge's life, the Israelites again worshipped God their Creator. But when the judge died, the Israelites fell back into their old cycle of worshipping other pagan gods and then being punished for it by their own living God. This pattern of unbelief, poverty, calling out to God and His giving them success over their enemies lasted for around 300 years, between the 14th and the 11th centuries BC, as listed in the Bible book of Judges.

In today's *Bible Adventure*, we have a prophetess named Deborah, who's the leader of Israel. She calls on Barak to lead the army of Israel into battle against King Jabin and his army commander, Sisera, from the northern region of Canaan.

DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound](#).

In the book of Judges, Chapter 4, it seems likely that Deborah was chosen as the leader of Israel because there were no men available who were faithful to their God or courageous enough to do so.

For 20 years, King Jabin and Sisera had oppressed the Israelites. So Deborah gave orders to Barak who lived in northern Israel to lead 10,000 men from the northern tribes to war against King Jabin. However, Barak was unwilling to fight unless Deborah went with him. Maybe Barak's faith in God was weak and he felt the presence of a prophetess would guarantee Israel a needed victory?

Barak had faith that God would act through Deborah, however, he didn't have faith that God would act through him, even though Deborah said God would. Barak needed to trust in God alone. As a result of his lack of faith, Barak didn't receive any honour for Israel's resulting victory over Sisera's army; as Deborah had prophesied, the honour went to a woman.

God had already revealed His battle plan to Deborah. He would lure Sisera to fight in the valley of the Kishon River. Normally this would have been a good place for Sisera's 900 chariots, but God caused a flood to sweep down the valley. This meant that the chariots became stuck in the mud and the lightly armed Israelites could defeat and destroy Sisera's trapped troops. It was really the Lord who won the victory by sending the heavy flooding rain, just as He had won a similar victory in Joshua's time by sending hailstones.

King Jabin was on friendly terms with a local Kenite man named Heber. The Kenite tribe was originally from Midian. Heber's ancestors were related by marriage to Moses because he had married a Kenite woman after he had fled from Egypt. Moses' wife's brother later accompanied the Israelites to the Promised Land and his descendants eventually settled in Judah. However, Heber moved away to settle in north Canaan and he became friendly with King Jabin.

When Sisera saw that the battle was lost, he escaped on foot and found refuge in the tent of Heber's wife, Jael. Since no man was allowed to enter a woman's tent except for her immediate family, Sisera assumed that no one would look for him there. But, just in case, he asked Jael to guard the doorway. Jael's husband may have been on friendly terms with Jabin and Sisera, but she clearly wasn't.

While Sisera was asleep, Jael took a hammer and a tent peg and killed Sisera with them. In ancient Israel times, it was the women who set up the tents and Jael had experience using these things. With Sisera and his army destroyed, Jabin was no longer a threat to Israel and in time, the Israelites grew stronger and destroyed Jabin too.

In Bible times, great national victories were commonly celebrated in song. In Judges, Chapter 5, Deborah and Barak recalled the events that were described in the previous chapter in a poetic form. The words were likely written by Deborah herself, as the song is full of thanksgiving and praise to the Lord. She praised the willing volunteers in the army and yet listed some of the tribes who didn't send troops to the battle. God still gave Israel the victory, but those who didn't step forward to volunteer their services to God missed the blessings God wishes to give those who serve Him with all their heart, mind and soul. As a result of this victory, Israel had peace in the land for 40 years.

Looking back, what caused Barak to falter in his belief in God's ability that God could bring victory for the Israelites through himself?

God's chief goal for His Christian people living here on earth today is to grow our character. Most of us would prefer to live a life of happiness. But for our character to grow, God places us in situations where our character can be perfected. These situations that we face must be sufficiently hard to sharpen our souls in. If God didn't do this, we wouldn't have any challenges to overcome and as a result, become dull, lacking in initiative and faithless. When physical problems arise, some people strive to overcome the circumstances; and while doing so, they also improve the world around them while succeeding to improve themselves as well.

Some people have relationship difficulties either with their family, neighbours or work situations to overcome. This can be part of God's plan and purpose to develop our character. Do our circumstances make us bitter or better? Some people become bitter and they carry around a load of anger and scorn against the irritating or difficult people in their lives. A woman was married to a man who did everything he could to make her life miserable. However, she learnt what she could from the Scriptures and thus could say: "My circumstances are helping me to grow more like Jesus every day."

Did this lady's character develop in spite of her environment? No, but she made her environment shape her character.

Being angry at certain circumstances or being unwilling to meet the challenge before us is no solution. We have to learn to forgive in the same way that Jesus forgave the worst sinners on earth. As we try to overcome the adversities that are thrown at us in life, our character grows and often too, our ministry for the Lord, which pleases Him.

Barak was unwilling to meet the challenge of leading the Israelite army against a far greater army in number. He didn't reckon on God's strong power though. Barak wanted Deborah to be alongside him in the battle to give directions if something happened unexpectedly. She could enquire of the Lord on his behalf. But Barak should have asked God himself what he should do, even if he had a weak faith. A weak faith like this often prevents Christians from going forward in their spiritual life. So how can we strengthen our faith?

Faith is a gift of God, but during times of doubt, we often feel that it's difficult to have faith in Him, especially when we can't see any proof for it. Faith in God is to be fully convinced that He cares for us so greatly that we can always rely and trust in Him, no matter what the circumstances.

This type of faith is based on Someone we can't see in our physical eyes but in our hearts, we can be sure that He exists and He is real.

True Christians are actually saved by faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. But before Christ came to earth to die and become the substitute Redeemer for us, Abraham was justified by faith. In Hebrews, Chapter 11, it says, "By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going." Abraham was not the only one who was saved by faith before Christ's atoning death on Calvary. There were many men and women in the Old Testament who were saved by their faith in God. A few of these are listed in Hebrews, Chapter 11. The Scriptures are clear that without faith, it is impossible to please God.

There are a few ways that people try to produce a faith that aren't true faith: faith isn't the power of positive thinking or positive reinforcement. Faith isn't found by human willpower or human effort, except by learning the Word of God, the Bible. Jesus tells us to "have faith in God." We also need to pray that God will strengthen our faith. He will surely answer that prayer, but as James, Chapter 1, says, "But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind."

In Matthew, Chapter 7, it shows us how to pray in faith for what we desperately need: "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened." Faith is most certainly a good thing to ask the Father for, so why not pray to Him to strengthen it?

However, God doesn't give us gifts that we have no intention of using. As James, Chapter 2 says: "Faith by itself, if it doesn't have works, is dead." Faith without works is a dead faith, because the lack of works reveals an unchanged life or a spiritually dead heart. There are many verses that say that true saving faith will result in a transformed life, and that faith is demonstrated by the good works that we do. How we live reveals what we believe and whether or not the faith we say that we have is a living faith in Jesus.

Dear listener, if you trust in Jesus, then you already possess faith. As Galatians, Chapter 3, states, "So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith." If you are a believer in Christ, then you are in Christ and they've been given the gift of faith by God Himself. If we believe that Jesus has been raised from the dead, as born-again-into-God's-family believers do, then our "faith is not in vain."

The good news is that faith comes by learning what the Bible says. We need to ask God to strengthen our faith in prayer when doubts come into our minds. God has given us the gift of faith when we choose to believe in Jesus Christ. Have you chosen the Lord Jesus to be your Lord and Saviour, or are you continuing to follow in the soul-destroying pathways of Satan's world system and selfish ambition?

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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