

{un}faithful - 4
Week of February 26, 2017
Bay Park Life Groups – Participant’s Guide

Deborah’s story is a fascinating one. Consider this:

- Deborah was a well-rounded leader, not just a commander. The people came to her and trusted her discernment as she wisely directed them in everyday matters of life.
- Deborah restored social, community and village life at a time when the people were fractured and afraid.
- Deborah was a poet-musician. Her song is considered by many scholars as one of the great artistic works of the ancient world. Up to this point in Israel’s history only Moses had the honour of having a song he wrote recorded in God’s Word (Deuteronomy 32).

This is just the tip of the iceberg - there’s so much more for you to discover!

Read Judges 4:1-16

1. How is Deborah like Ehud? How is she different?

2. The Israelites were forced into the hill country to avoid Sisera’s chariots. 10 000 men against 900 steel chariots is like 10 000 blades of grass against a lawn mower. Look over the different translations of Judges 4:9 below. Was Barak’s request to have Deborah go with him rooted in fear or faith? Put another way; was Deborah’s prophecy of Jael’s victory a punishment for Barak’s cowardice or a heads up given his courage?

“Very well,” she replied, “I will go with you. But you will receive no honor in this venture, for the Lord’s victory over Sisera will be at the hands of a woman.” NLT

“Certainly I will go with you,” said Deborah. “But because of the course you are taking, the honor will not be yours, for the LORD will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman.” NIV

And she said, “I will surely go with you. Nevertheless, the road on which you are going will not lead to your glory, for the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.” ESV

Read 4:17-23

3. God used a prophetess, a general and a foreign bystander to bring about deliverance. How has teamwork grown your faith and what can you do to help others in God’s mission?

4. Read Judges 5:24-31. What insight does Deborah’s song give into Jael’s possible motives for killing Sisera? How does this match up with her methods?

Read 5:1-23

5. Deborah’s song is more than just poetic interlude. List the ways in which her song adds to the lessons learned from this episode of Israel’s history.

6. What insights does 5:15b-17 give us into the reasons some chose to opt out of God's mission? What were the consequences of their choices?

7. Consider what it must have been like for everyday farmers and merchants to leave their families to join Barak and fight for freedom. For 20 years, Sisera's superior army and technology had oppressed them. Think of the fears and excuses they had to overcome. Think of the glory that was theirs. What does their example inspire you to be reaching for in your life these days?