

10/20/19 - Judges 4:1-24 - "Deborah, Obedience & Faith"

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[0 : 00] Let's pray that the Holy Spirit helps us in this journey to expose the meaning of his word to us today. Please join me in prayer. Father, this word that we hold before us within our hands is a gift.

Father, it is a revelation that is special of you revealing yourself to us. We are sinful human beings. We are needy. We are broken. And we need a Savior. Help us see the Savior in this text. Help us see the Savior that Israel longed for centuries ago in this text.

And Father, bring your word to life and speak to your church through your word just as the last song we sang. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Amen. All right. We're going to be continuing in the book of Judges this morning. And this time we are going to be in chapter 4.

[1 : 08] You'll probably notice there's a little section before this, a man named Shamgar. And we're going to save Shamgar for another time because within these judges, there's minor judges placed here and there.

But their role is very similar. So rather than saying the same message over and over again, we're going to come back and show you how that ties in. And so we're going to go back into, we're going to pause on Shamgar for a minute and we're going to go into Deborah and Barack this morning.

And so we're going to go back and see the next time. And so we're going to be in the third rotation of this spiritual merry-go-round, we'll say. And I like to call it the spiritual scrambler. You know, at the Campfield Fair, that ride that goes around and it has individual spinners.

The scrambler. Am I the only one? You guys know? Okay, maybe I'm crazy. I might have dreamt it. But the scrambler is pretty legit. But what is going on in the book of Judges is not necessarily a merry-go-round, but a spiritual scrambler.

And the center of that scrambler is kind of like, if you can imagine, like threaded. And each rotation that it goes around, it gets, the scrambler, the ride gets deeper and deeper and deeper.

[2 : 19] And so we're going through the third rotation of this. And today we're going to enter into the fourth chapter of Judges. And we're going to meet Deborah, the one and only female judge.

How about that? Woo! Girl power. And we're going to be separating this text. I'm shaking his head. We're going to be separating this text into various sections.

And the sections that we're separating it in is actually significant to the structure and emphasis of the text. So we're going to go into scenes. We're going to start with the introduction and go through a couple different scenes of Judges chapter 4.

And over the last few weeks, if you're just new, jumping into this series, we've been studying the judgeship of Israel. A nation who predictably forgets the Lord after so many years without a leader. And the Lord sovereignly disciplines them by the hands of the enemy. He strengthens the enemy, uses the enemy to discipline them through oppression. And the Lord graciously and compassionately stands by, waiting for them to turn back to him.

[3 : 32] So that's kind of the theme. It's been a spiritual scrambler, we'll call it. I'm going to stick that term from here on out. And just round and round they go, obedience, disobedience, obedience, disobedience.

And so let's dissect this account of Deborah's judgeship and identify what the Lord may be trying to communicate to us today. Let's start off. We're going to take this section by section.

We're going to start in the introduction of this account of Deborah. And it's going to start in Jabin's oppression. In verse 1, it says, Then the people of Israel again did what was evil in the sight of the

Lord after Ehud died.

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 Herosheth, Haigoyim. Then the people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help.

For he had 900 chariots of iron, and he oppressed the people of Israel cruelly for 20 years. As I mentioned, we're in this spiritual scrambler.

[4 : 44] Israel has again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. And not only that, they did the evil, that they were participating in the treacherous acts of the Canaanites at this time.

They were without a leader, and they have forgotten the past deliverance of the Lord. And Jabin, king of Canaan, oppressed them for 20 years. This is the third time, church.

You would think from a 21st perspective, sitting here today, looking at this story, it's like, Hello? Haven't you got the clue yet? Every time you get mixed up with those Canaanites, you end up oppressed by some foreign king.

But wait a minute. The strangest thing. When you turn back to the Lord, he delivers you. Hmm. We're on to something here.

You know, maybe we should just stick with the Lord. We could so easily say that from the 21st perspective. It's like watching scary movies and saying, Don't open that door. You know they're going to open that door.

[5 : 49] We're back in this cycle. But sin is so scary. It's almost like the taste of a dessert.

It tastes good. It feels good. It even looks good. Some dessert can be presented so well, and it is so scary. And I don't want to get off on a rabbit trail here so early in the message.

But the power that sin has over us and its desires is scary. Sin is often liberating.

It's self-serving. And it's really easy to sin. Remember John 8, 34. Everyone who sins is a slave to sin. You know, it's much harder to battle the demon of dying to your flesh every day.

It's so much harder to crucify your desires. But with God's help alone, He delivered Israel. And by God's help alone, He will also deliver us in the midst of our sin as well as we die to our flesh.

[6 : 54] So the problem with sin is still prevalent in Israel. Israel turns away, just like any of us would have been prone to do. Whether you're reading yourself into the text and saying, I would have made the difference back then.

And I wouldn't have stood for Jabin's oppression. Don't be silly. Any of us would have been prone to do what they did in that culture in that time period.

And so Israel cries out in oppression. And we meet this judge. In scene one, we meet Deborah and Barak.

In verse four, it continues. Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time.

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 to her for judgment. She sent and summoned Barak, the son of Obinoam, from Kedesh-Neptali, and said to him, Has not the Lord, the God of Israel, commanded you, Go, gather your men at Mount Tabor, taking ten thousand from the people of Neftali and the people of Zebulun?

[8 : 09] And I will draw out Sisra, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you by the river Kishon, with his chariots and his troops. I will give him into your hand. And she said, I will surely go with you.

Nevertheless, the road which you are going will not lead to your glory, for the Lord will sell Sisra into the hand of a woman. We meet in this section of passage a scene where we meet Deborah, the prophetess, prophetess, and Barak, the Lord's weapon that he uses.

Deborah, she is a female judge. In this account of her judgeship in Israel, it's very unlikely that she would ever be in this type of position. Because in that culture, women would never have that type of leadership role.

The author of the book actually goes out of his way to stress her gender. There's actually seven grammatical feminine Hebrew words in this text in a row leading up into introducing her.

So there's a tension that the author is trying to stress to its readers. However, there is limited detail about Deborah. Deborah. We know nothing about her family. We know nothing about her ancestry.

[9 : 33] We know nothing about her tribe. We just know her name, her husband, and her role. God established this woman to be the political and judicial center of the nation of Israel in this northern country in the hills.

Deborah was a behind-the-scenes mouthpiece of God who is known as a prophetess. One of three prophetesses in the Old Testament. Try to say that one three times fast.

Prophetesses. I think Word would probably check my spelling on that. But she was able to do this because she was specifically filled with the Holy Spirit through whom God revealed divine truth about future occurrences that affected the present occurrence.

God and only God can make a true prophet. Especially before the New Testament church came by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. And we learn something about Deborah, too.

In this passage, in this chunk of passage, we learn that she has an extreme dedication to the Lord. And we're going to get into that in more details next week because we're going to look and study the song of Deborah and Barack next week.

[10:49] And the whole song is filled with that. Of her dedication to the Lord. But for the sake of this text and what it's saying to us today in this passage, she's known as the mother of Israel.

She was dedicated to her call. And she was a fantastic leader. There's literally, the text actually sets this up. We can't find any real flaw in Deborah in this passage.

Church, Deborah had faith in her call. And her leadership. Do you see her faith in this passage in verse 6?

Do you see her faith? Has not the Lord, the God of Israel, commanded you? Fill in the blank. Do you see her faith? But one characteristic of a good leader is also knowing your limitations.

It doesn't matter how good of a leader that you are. You're always going to have limitations. You know, we're called the body of Christ for a reason. We're not all gifted and skilled in the same way.

[11:48] We come together, some complementing one another. So with so many things in good working order with Deborah, she's not able to bear arms against the enemy. So what does the Lord do?

He uses a weapon and she enlists Barak. Let's meet Barak for a moment. Barak's name literally means lightning.

And this is significant in this passage. And we'll get into that in a little bit. Because it's odd. Because when we first meet Barak, he's anything but a man of lightning.

Remember the problem of Israel during this time. They became oppressed and they forgot. And it wasn't that they just forgot. It's that they didn't care to remember.

That they went after the Baals. They bowed down to the other gods. They were apathetic in nature. They were just okay getting by.

[12:48] And so in this passage, just like the nationwide corruption of Israel being apathetic, we meet a very apathetic man here named Barak.

Can't you see it in this interaction? This man may have spent many glory days in the past of fighting battles and being a warrior. But after Jabin's oppression for 20 years, this man's probably just done and spent.

Just, I don't care. I don't know if I'm called to battle anymore. Now obviously, there has to be some fire left in this man.

If anybody knows this story, you know, we won't do a spoiler alert. But anybody who doesn't know this story, you know, there's got to be some fire left in this man. And God uses this judge, Deborah, as the instrument of his deliverance.

And the weapon of God's choice for this judge is not a sword of Ehud, but a weapon known as Barak. An apathetic man named Barak.

[13:54] And we see in verse 8, look with me, in verse 8, we see extreme doubt. Just significant doubt in this passage. After Deborah encourages him just before verse 8, she encourages him with a divine message from God of how this plan is going to pan out.

We get the impression that Barak is like, yeah, yeah, whatever you say. Well, if I go alone, they probably won't even listen to me anyway.

Like, oh, I have an idea, Deborah. This might be better. I know that you're a prophetess and everything, but think about this. Maybe this might actually be a better idea. How about you go with me, just in case they don't listen to me.

Because, you know, I haven't been in battle for all these years. I've gained a little weight from my cake in the back of church. You know, we have, you know, I've just been out of it for a while.

I don't know if these guys are going to take me serious. So you come with me. But, oh yeah, by the way, I'm not going unless you go with me. Boom. God has chosen and raised up a judge.

[15:08] The Lord has also found the weapon of judgment that he'll use. But this weapon exposes a punishable doubt. After the Lord has said, has not the Lord?

Like, that indicates that how many other times? We tell our kids growing up, how many times have I told you, don't touch the stove or something? My son just learned that not too long ago.

And, you know, how many times do I have to tell you? Deborah approaches Barak saying, has not the Lord, this is not the first time Barak has heard this.

That's important. And so he exposes a punishable doubt and a failure to act. And not a failure to act, but a failure to act in God's way, God's specific way, saying, I'm not going to do it this way that this prophetess is saying, I'm not even going to go unless you go with me.

A punishable doubt. And because of this, the Lord reveals that the victory and the honor is actually going to now go towards a woman, which is significant even in that passage too.

[16:15] And what is the plan? I know this text is kind of like, got crazy Hebrew locations and words, and we can get lost in how it's set up.

But the plan clearly is, it's a battle in Kishon. And this is a very unpromising area for any type of miracle. We saw Moses leading through the Red Sea.

You know, that's a place for a miracle. What you had at Kishon was a very shallow stream. And it was a very wide open landscape. We're going to get more into that next week in chapter 5.

But all we know here is that the Lord said, go there and I will give you the victory. But is there any gas left in Barak's engine?

Is there any gas? Will Barak's doubt be replaced by any great faith? Let's see as the text continues. As we go into scene 2, Barak and Sisera being called out.

[17:19] And just so you kind of can navigate this text very good, you know in our modern day of movies and various TV shows, often TV shows will reveal multiple things going on at one time.

They do like a picture in picture, like just a line. You got this guy making a phone call, this person over here doing something else. But that's basically what's going on in this passage.

There's a bunch of different pieces moving at the same exact time as God is back there just like, here we go. He is the mastermind of what is about to take place.

And so they're on the road to battle. So we see the first puzzle piece moving. In verse, the end of verse 9, it says, Then Deborah rose and went with Barak to Kedesh.

And Barak called out Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh. And 10,000 men went at his heels. And Deborah went with him.

[18:17] First puzzle piece. Next puzzle piece. Now, totally unrelated story. Now Heber the Kenite, who we haven't discussed up to this point yet. Heber the Kenite had separated from the Kenites and descendants of Hobab, the father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent as far away as the oak of Zaanannan, which is near Kedesh.

Second puzzle piece. Third puzzle piece now. When Sisera was told that Barak, the son of Obadiah, had gone out to Mount Tabor, Sisera called out all his chariots, 900 chariots of iron, and all the men who were with him from Harosheth Hagoim to the river Kishon.

Three puzzle pieces moving at one time, church, between these verses. The tribes are on the move to the battleground. Many moving parts, many shifting pieces.

Like I said, God is just, you got a chessboard, He's just like placing everything. Everything is on the move, just as He said He would through the prophetess Deborah. How in the world, church, did this pathetic man that we meet in this interaction with Barak, how in the world did he rouse 10,000 men?

10,000 men to Gades. This took faith. Do you see his faith? It's the faith that takes the steps out of this hill country where there was ample coverage in the woods and in the wilderness to take those very first steps out of that wilderness and seeing nothing but plain lands out there and seeing a little river stream like that's where the battle is going to be taken.

[20:02] What faith it takes to rise up, 10,000 men to do this journey. And for that reason, his name appears in Hebrews 11 as a man of faith.

Can you imagine what was going through their heads? I mean, just thinking about that journey, think about it. Israel was outmanned because we're only told about 900 iron chariots and then a whole bunch of other men that we don't have a number to.

They were outmanned. They were outgunned if there were guns, you know, whatever. But Sisera had 900 chariots of iron. That was his weapon. The Israelites didn't have anything. And actually

next week, it's going to have more in detail what they had, but I'll give you a spoiler alert. They did not have spears and shields. This army was not prepared for this. And thirdly, Israel was out positioned.

Like I mentioned, coming out of the wilderness and into this plain land, that's the battle for people against chariots. You could just imagine the chariots just swinging around, just attacking, coming back around, attacking.

[21 : 13] Israel was outmanned. They were outgunned and they were outpositioned. It took nerves of steel, a leader who would not falter and men who would follow him into the very jaws of death. But most of all, it took unwavering faith.

Do you see his faith, church? So where does the credit go to? Was it Barak's strategy to influence, to rouse up 10,000 men to this battle?

Was it Deborah's plan and her obedience to the Lord? Is that where the credit goes to? No. God wanted to teach his people that it was not about the chariots.

It was not about the troop sizes that make the difference. It was he. Deborah and Barak exercised faith and the results may vary at times.

The amount of faith varied at times. You saw an apathetic man. You saw a strong Deborah. But they both had faith. But there was faith nonetheless. Do you see their faith, church?

[22 : 17] That's very important in this passage. So as the day of deliverance arrives, as we go into scene three, for Israel, it is also he who fights the battle.

And we're going to see how this pans out in scene three. The Lord intervenes in verse 14 as it continues. Look with me. And Deborah said to Barak, Barak, up!

For this day, this is the day in which the Lord has given Sisera into your hand. Does not the Lord go out before you? Barak, what are you doing?

How many times do I have to remind you, Barak? I don't care that it's not ample weather to be fighting this battle in. It might be a little bit cold. It might be a little rainy, stormy.

But remember, have faith. Now is the time. And at this time, in this passage, there is not a moment of doubt in Barak.

[23 : 19] At all. As she reminded him of the promise of God. Lightning is back in this passage here. Deborah, the judge of Israel, advances her weapon towards the enemy.

And we see as verse 14 continues. So Barak went down. The weapon of the Lord went down from Mount Tabor with 10,000 men following him. And the Lord routed Sisera in all his chariots and all Sisera's army before Barak by the edge of the sword.

Without any record of hesitation, church, here, Barak strikes. And where is Barak's great faith? It is right here. And see in verse 14, it says, the Lord routed.

And this word, actually, in Hebrew, means to cause confusion. And it is the same word that was used to describe the intervention of the Lord for the Egyptians at the Red Sea. In Exodus 14, 24, 14, 24, the Lord looked down at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion.

The same word is used here. The Lord caused Sisera's army to go into mass confusion, but how? How did this happen? What exactly happened here? Well, I don't want to give you a spoiler alert too much, but next week's passage covers what exactly took place here.

[24 : 44] And we're going to talk about it in more depth, but what is going on here is that there was a very, very bad storm going on, which had to be the divine working of God as well in this specific time of year because this was a very dry season of this land.

There would be, the rain would, it would be so dry, it would be desert land here, and it was storming, and what a storm it was. Without this storm, the chariots would have had the advantage because chariots don't maneuver well in mud.

I don't know if that's news to you, but they didn't have mud tires back then to navigate the muddy land. So as you can imagine, the mass confusion probably looked like these chariots coming down, and they see the 10,000 men coming down.

Well, we've got no choice other than to take them out, but oh man, like these chariots are getting stuck left and right. Men are falling over. It's just mass confusion.

These 10,000 men are just, they just watch these men coming down. You can imagine the confusion. So who turned Sisera's major weapon into a major handicap?

[25 : 54] The chariots of iron? It was not Deborah. It was not Barak. But it was the Lord. The point is that God made good the promises he made to Barak when Barak obeyed at God's command.

God gave him an overwhelming victory just as he said he would. Do you see the object of faith in this passage, church? And in the last scene we see Barak and Sisera going down.

The text continues in verse 15. And Sisera got down from his chariot and fled away on foot. And Barak pursued the chariots and the army of Herosheth Hagoyim and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword.

Not a man was left. This led Sisera's army, this mass confusion led Sisera's army to break rank and retreat in panic, absolute panic and eventual death.

Oh no. But wait. Wait a minute. The biggest prize of the battle, the leader of the army has escaped into the woods.

[27 : 09] As you can imagine, Sisera's like, peace out. Guys, good luck with your chariots. I'll come back around later and see how you're doing. He knew that this was the end of the battle, the moment this storm was taken over.

In verse 17, we meet Jael, wife of Heber. In verse 17, it says, But Sisera fled away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenites.

For there was peace, there was shalom between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenites. 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 in her tent and she covered him with a rug. And he said to her, Please give me a little drink of water for I am thirsty.

So she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered him. 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?

[28 : 18] Verse 21 continues, But Jael, the wife of Heber, took a tent peg and took a hammer in her hands. Then she softly, she went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple until it went down into the ground while he was lying there fast asleep from his weariness.

So he died. And behold, as Barak was pursuing Sisera, Jael came to meet him and said to him, Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking.

So he went into her tent and there lay Sisera dead with a tent peg in his temple. Remember that little scene, the shifting of the stories, the three puzzle pieces moving at one time.

We met these keenites that were moving. Out of nowhere, it was just an odd story at that point in the passage. Well, now we know what the Lord was doing behind the scenes. We meet Jael.

Jael is actually a really pretty name. We were going to name one of our daughters Jael until we looked up the meaning of Jael. And so, I don't know if you have any family members, so I'm not bashing any family members, but it meant mountain goat.

[29 : 28] And it just didn't seem like appealing. Like, you know, you want to wish a good strong name for your children. And despite it being beautiful, we were like, yeah, pass.

But Jael, she was skilled in erecting tents specifically. This was common in that culture for women. They put up the tents, they pitched the tents for their families, and this was their job.

So she was very skilled with a tent peg and a hammer. And she was often quite hospitable as well in this passage. Look at the hospitality.

She gives him milk when he asks for a drink of water. She cuddles him up cozy in a bed with a rug. You know, she, like, she says, turn aside.

I mean, that sounds odd. You know, turn aside. Turn aside. You know, this reminds me of like an old woman, you know, in a little tent just with a lantern. Turn aside. You know, come on in. Come on, let your children in too.

[30 : 33] Like, ugh. You know, that might be a good greeting phrase to turn people away from joining our church. You know, come, turn aside. Welcome to Youngstown Metro. Turn aside. Have a cup of coffee.

Turn aside. Just, it's not common language, but it was a, a, a phrase of, of care, of gentleness. Turn aside, my Lord.

Let me help you. And there was peace between Jabin and the Kenites, which was significant. So Lord again, he does it.

Sovereignly, he intervenes and used a simple, skill to bring about his justice that was common to jail. Seemed ordinary to her, but it was significant use to the Lord.

That which the Lord had promised, that which the Lord has promised, the Lord is faithful to come through. For Barak, that not only meant that he would, he would have a victory, his army would

have a victory, however, that also meant that the honor of that victory would go to a woman.
[31 : 36] And just as the Lord embarrassed Ehud, remember Ehud talking about Ehud? He was embarrassed in that scene.

I mean, the dung came out. We had fun with that one last week. He was embarrassed. These servants were embarrassed. This is now a story circulating about the Moabites. Just as the Lord openly embarrassed King Eglon last week, and we talked about even Paul talking in Colossians that he triumphs over the enemy, bringing them to open shame, triumphing over them.

We have Jabin's leader of his army, leader of this nation, Sisera, killed by the hands of a woman. Another instance of embarrassment and open shame.

Because back in this culture, to be killed by a woman, it's better that you take your own life than ever let a woman take your life. You don't want that on your gravestone. So standing, Barak standing over Sisera's dead body, tent peg and all, as graphic and gory as that would seem, ultimately, Barak has received the battle victory, but not the glory.

[32 : 54] Which leads to the conclusion as we close, come to a close in verse 23. Jabin's defeat, Israel serves the Lord. And 23 continues and concludes, So on that day, God subdued Jabin, the king of Canaan, before the people of Israel, 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.

Just in case you were wondering, the author reinforced very important information about this victory. It says in verse 23, God subdued Jabin.

God subdued Jabin. It was he who brought the oppression in the first place to the Israel, to the Israelites. It was he who raised up the judge.

It was he who commissioned Barak through Deborah. It was he who caused confusion to the enemy. It was he who brought the victory and it was he who brought the rest, ultimately.

In this third account of Judges, we find literally no single hero at all. In fact, at this point in the book, we should actually see a pattern because if we go back, we see Othniel.

[34 : 12] The spirit of the Lord came upon Othniel, a single hero. In Ehud, the Lord aided through providential events through Ehud's crafting holiness.

But now in this action of Deborah, we see no single hero whatsoever. God's role in the first three cycles is emphasized increasingly more as we continue this study in Judges.

And our human roles are actually involved significantly less. Because as we remember, that spiritual scrambler is just going deeper and deeper and God has to intervene on their behalf. So contrasting Barak with previous leaders and various weapons, he is no Othniel and he is surely no Ehud. This principle is still true today.

Because in all things, church, God gets the glory in everything. God's people often play a unique role in positions and God's game plan.

[35 : 22] That's true. We see that in this account. And the goal must not be to win as individual heroes, but to give God the glory in all things. Remember, Paul had this mentality on him.

In 1 Corinthians 3, 6-7, I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

However, there is an interesting component of faith in that game plan. When we're given unique roles and positions in God's ultimate game plan, this is where this demands us to respond in faith, church.

Barak's faith is certainly present. You know, the levels varied at times. He was very apathetic, and then all of a sudden, boom, he's leading 10,000 men. I don't know how he did it, but he had faith, church.

And Deborah, we, I mean, the text says it clearly, she had great faith. There's not a flaw in her. I've heard often some Bible teachers bash, you know, Barak, like, oh, you know, those men, you know, we can't get them moving, you know, we can't even get them moving to do the chores around the house, and, you know, ah, those men, ugh.

[36 : 45] You know, some people even often give, I've heard teachers say, you know, I think Deborah belongs in the book of Hebrews, not Barak, because of how he responded in this. But when we do this, church, when we make it a competition between something as subtle as, you know, Deborah versus Barak, we're missing the point completely.

See that in this passage. It's not women being against Barak, all those men, and then men getting to the story of Jezebel and being like, oh, you see those women, they're dirty liars, you know, they're all out to twist everything, those women.

Soon enough, we get into this episode of battle of the sexes that was never intended to be. We're missing the point completely. It's not about Deborah, it's not about Barak, it's not even about Jael, a foreigner.

The problem with Barak was not the object of faith, but it was the amount of faith. This had significant effects upon the plans that could have been, but it ultimately didn't disqualify Barak from his calling.

Likewise, the extent to us today that we can enjoy God's unlimited gifts may be related to our measure of faith as well. James 1, 6 through 8 says, But let him ask in faith with no doubting.

[38 : 04] For the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.

For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord. He's a double-minded man and stable in his ways.

Do you see the faith in this passage, church? The faith of Deborah, the faith of Barak, the faith of Jael? To use a lowly gift, like put and tense up, the Lord used.

The main point is not about men versus women, but the object of faith. Do you see it? Furthermore, by the existence of faith, this is also expressed and it's manifested in our obedience when we act in faith, in our participation in God's plan.

Church, how is God calling you into his plan today? How is God calling you with your gifts, with your various skills, with your various levels of knowledge and experience, how is God calling you to act in faith, in his plan?

But in relation to the main point of this account, you know, God gets the glory. It's not about the river, it's not about Brock, it's not about Jael. there is a reminder from last week.

[39 : 31] Any participation in God's plan, there's a reminder from last week. The success must never be looked at as an achievement, but rather a gift. God gave the victory to the Israelites.

God subdued. It was because God intervened. It's an achievement, not a gift. This account of Deborah's leadership should not place focus on them, but it should actually focus on, no matter how perfect Deborah was, when we've seen scripture unravel, the storyline of this narrative unravel, we see a man who had perfect obedience, who had perfect faith, who died perfectly on a cross, who sacrificed himself, perfect sacrifice.

If he got murdered, it would be a perfect sacrifice. If he had anger, it would be perfect anger. If he had sorrow, it would be perfect sorrow.

Deborah, this man, regardless of how great Deborah was, she was a great leader, no matter how apathetic Barack was, this should point to Jesus Christ.

That Jesus Christ is the perfect obedience, he's the perfect savior, he's the perfect sacrifice. All of this, Deborah was a foreshadow of Jesus to come, Barack was a foreshadow of the remedy to come for our apathetic tendencies.

[40 : 51] Deborah beautifully expresses her dedication to giving God the glory, and we're going to get into that next week in her song, and Pastor Rick is going to actually be preaching that.

But we often, when we're acting in obedience, church, and I just want to be real for a minute, is that there's a problem of taking glory from God when we're acting in obedience sometimes.

And there's two spectrums, there's two sides of the spectrum. On the one side of the spectrum, sometimes we take God's glory selfishly. That, you know, the people who are doing things in God's name, but ultimately they're in it for themselves, they're in it for whatever they get for it.

So that's kind of like blatant taking the glory. But also on the other side are these group of people who fearfully take the glory from God.

Because they don't want to be like these people who are willfully taking the glory. So they, in fear, they're like, well, I'm just not going to do anything just because I don't want to take the glory.

[42 : 02] So, and in so doing, their fear leads them to ultimately what? Taking the glory. In both spectrums, God has robbed of the glory. Through one, it was self-centered tendencies.

The second is a failure to act. So the problem, church, must be deeper than our obedience. It must be deeper than our faith. It could be a matter of our hearts, church.

Underneath the external manifestations of our obedience to the Lord, of faith, of faith of Deborah, faith of Barak, faith of Jael, is a heart that drives the level of faith, which is manifested then, in

twofold, of obedience to Him.

The condition of our hearts will determine who gets the glory in our obedience when we act in God's plan, act in faith in God's plan. So think about this.

If our obedience is dependent on faith, and our faith is dependent on obedience, how much greater, church, is our hearts, the condition of our hearts, solely dependent upon the Spirit of God to change in order to bring us to obedience, and to drive our faith to obedience, it's a matter of the heart.

[43 : 23] Whether you fall through in faith or fail to act, it is a matter of the heart. Whether you steal God's glory willfully or you withhold God's glory fearfully, it is a matter of the heart.

Church, we need to be people of faith, and that is a heart matter. So how is God calling you to respond today?

For anybody who doesn't know Jesus specifically, how is God calling you to respond today? Well, I got news for you.

There is faith that is so divine, it is so unique, and it is so transforming, and it has been purchased for you. If you do not know Jesus, if you have not sacrificed, surrendered your life to Jesus, and you know that, man, I don't even know, I don't even have the faith to drive my obedience, I don't even care about that.

If that is you today, there is a gift for you if you place your trust in Jesus Christ and surrender your entire life to him today. This is a gift known as saving faith, and it is a faith.

[44 : 32] Without saving faith from Christ, no amount of human merit, no matter how good of a person you are, will not add up enough to the work that Christ has accomplished for you upon the cross.

He had perfect obedience, perfect sacrifice. There is a remedy for you, and this is something that you have to believe in. There is no fine line. Spurgeon said, I would recommend you either believe God up to the hilt, or else not to believe at all.

Believe this book of God, every letter in it, or reject it. faith. This is no logical standing. There is no logical standing between the two. Be satisfied with nothing less than a faith that swims in the depths of divine revelation.

A faith that paddles about the edge of the water is poor faith at best. It is little better than dry land faith. And it's not good for much.

God has worked out for you a great victory as well, and that comes through saving faith. If you turn your life to Jesus, if you come to Him and you surrender, if you've been working, trying to be a good person and trying to get right, and you feel like this oppression that He's trying to communicate something through your circumstances in this life, wake up!

[45 : 53] Jesus is calling out to you, and He is here now, and you can accept Him by simply putting your faith in Jesus Christ. Come to Him today. But if you are in Christ this morning, if this is resounding very loudly where you're at in life, if you know, man, you're, you know, we're dissecting this, okay, I'm lacking obedience, well, let me dissect that a little bit more, okay, well, that means I'm lacking faith.

Well, I'm also lacking faith, well, let's dissect that a little bit. Oh, I'm lacking, my heart is just not right. Do you have the heart committed to not only getting in this fight with me as a pastor, with the other fellow pastors in this fight today, but when you do, assuming that you do, because the Lord will work on your heart, assuming that you do act in faith and be drawn to obedience, when you do, you give God glory, all glory, honor, and praise, and don't think that anything amounts to any achievement of our own, but everything that is accomplished through our church and our efforts and our obedience is God's glory.

Do you have the heart committed to go forward in faith against overwhelming odds with nothing but the promise of God to rely on? This promise may be revealed through his words today to you, that you're failing to act.

Maybe certain skills, using the skills of jail, just ordinary skills that you know that God has given to you, that are just being wasted every day that you just sit on the couch and just say, I just, I don't, I don't feel like getting involved with the church.

My last church was kind of screwy. They abused me and they, you know, it just, it was a bad situation. I'm not going to get taken advantage of. Is God revealing this to you through his word, through certain skills to get in this game?

[47 : 53] Or unique circumstances of opportunities for you? Wherever you are today, it is not the amount of faith that matters. It is the object of faith.

And there are great things that God can do with just a tiny bit of faith. You know the parable of the mustard seed. For Brock, Deborah did this for him.

She reminded him. And there is a, there is a faith that will increase if you are apathetic, if you are stuck without using your gifts and not getting, getting involved in this game plan.

John White in his book, *The Fight*, says there are several scripture commands having to do with increased faith. You can increase faith by thinking back on your toughest experiences as a Christian.

So, look at it from Barak's perspective. What's going to drive Barak to his next victory? Even though he knows how, why it panned out, he can look back at one of the toughest circumstances of the time that he doubted God clearly calling him to do something and he tried to do it his own way.

[49 : 05] For Barak, this is looking back on the most difficult circumstance. That is a very difficult circumstance. So, the next time it comes, he knows that he's not supposed to doubt anymore.

He must rise to that faith in action that we saw God develop and use within him. Are you committed to the mission of your lives, church? Every one of you. The mission of your lives.

God has given you, each and every soul in this room, a mission, specifically for his kingdom. It really changes things. When you walk into work, when you walk into Kohl's, when you walk onto YSU's campus, when you walk into the rescue mission, when you walk into your job at Firefoe, when you're doing these things, it changes things when you walk in and see it as a mission field. It's not just an ordinary work day. This is a day for the kingdom. This is a day of salvation. This is a day of obedience. Are you committed also to this mission in our church, within this church?

The Great Commission is a commission of a church on the move. And it's far more, there's a lot more movement than just moving from home to church on Sunday mornings.

[50 : 22] It's not just a drive in the car. Remember, the gates of hell shall not prevail. Why would the gates have anything to prevail against unless something's not coming and attacking those gates?

Church, are you committed to the mission of this church? And not just this organization, but this collective body known as the church. You are His church. Are you committed?

Because God is preparing this church for something big. Are you in with this mission? So my prayer, as I come to a close here, worship team, you can get saddled back up here.

But my prayer for you is that may our faith, whether it be faltering at first, may it be matured under the testing and constant evaluation of how we're doing.

For that faith to be the kind of people of faith whose hearts long to honor God on this earth through obedience of following Him. And that is a heart matter.

[51 : 34] May our faith, whether it be faltering at first, be matured under testing and evaluation to become the kind of people of faith whose hearts long to honor God on this earth by obedience, falling right after Him.

And that is a heart matter, church. Let us be concerned about the condition of our hearts this morning and evaluate. If you want to know Jesus more intimately, if you know that you want to come to Jesus today, please come forward, sit in one of these chairs up here and we will pray with you.

Don't miss this. Don't waste your life in your sin. Come to Jesus today. And church, don't waste your life in disobedience. Come to Jesus today. That is a heart matter.

Please join me in prayer.