

God Uses Women

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of following God personally, using wisdom and faith to overcome spiritual battles, and being committed to God's cause.

Duration: 54:24

Scripture: Judges 5:1

Topics: "Women In Ministry", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

This sermon delves into the story of Deborah and Jael in the book of Judges, highlighting the importance of true faith and leadership. It emphasizes the consequences of forsaking God when leaders pass away, urging listeners to examine whether their faith is rooted in God or in others. The narrative underscores the spiritual battle against sin and the need to rely on God for victory, drawing parallels between the Israelites' struggles and modern-day challenges. It concludes with a call to emulate Jael's courage and faithfulness in fighting for God's cause.

Transcript

In the book of Judges, Chapter 4, in that chapter we read a lot about Deborah and Jael. And then in Chapter 5, we read a lot about the history around that time in Israel. And that was at the time when the children of Israel were entering Canaan.

And led by Joshua as their leader. After Joshua's death, it did not go well in Israel. Because there was no longer a leader.

They just fell into sin, one sin after the other. Each person just did what he or she felt like. It is sad to see something like that.

They had Moses, they had Joshua, who lived for God, who taught the people God's ways. But when they died, they no longer followed God. So there is such a thing that someone follows God as long as there is someone that they take the lead from.

But when that person passes away, they just forsake God and go into sin. It is a destruction. It is a disgrace when someone follows the Lord just because of somebody else.

And I want to ask you today, are you following God because of someone else, or is it because God is living in you? And that that is the reason why you follow him. Are you a person that when somebody dies,

then your faith also dies with that person? That is a disgrace. It is a disgrace.

Something disgusting. And some prophets and prophetesses. You women should be listening carefully now because you easily make the excuse and say, well, I am not a man.

But are you also a woman who is just following the Lord because of your husband? You should have God living in you so that you live for him because he is within you. It is like school children who should not just live as Christians when their teachers are around or because of them. Such a person needs a shambock.

So Deborah was one of twelve prophets of God. In chapter four and five, we see her faith and the power that was within her and also her leadership. She was a woman who was faithful to God.

God had instructed, commanded the Israelites that when they enter Canaan, they should destroy all the nations. All the nations living there. But they did not obey God.

Now that is symbolic because it does not mean that we must go and kill people. No, it is symbolic meaning that we should destroy all sin. We do not fight flesh and blood.

Our fight and battle is against powers and principality, evil spirits, demons, against the devil who manifests himself in many different ways. These spirits and demons have different names. It would be terrible if you are a preacher of the gospel and yet you still have to do with the occult, with spiritism, with evil spirits.

Your life on earth will be like hell even though you are still on earth and your end will be terrible. The Israelites, each one just did what he felt like doing for there was no king in their midst. However, there were prophets and judges.

And there were a few that were on God's way following him but the majority were not. And when the Israelites sinned, God would get the enemies to attack them and that they would come back. They would come back from the evil ways.

Don't ever say that if you sin it doesn't mean anything. Sin will result in God raising up your enemies against you. And so it was during Deborah's time in Israel, she being a judge in Israel.

The king and Canaan realised that this was the opportune time for him to attack them. And the king at that time, his name was Jehoboam. So Jehoboam got his army prepared and they went with their chariots to attack Israel.

So this was a mighty army and they ruled over the nations. And then they were worshipping other idols. Worshipping idols and even going into spiritism and occultism.

Worshipping ancestral spirits. And also the fallen angels. But fortunately the children of Israel woke up out of their sleep and they cried out to the Lord.

And they confessed their sins. Making right their lives. With their parents.

And their employers. And their teachers. That they should respect them.

Honour them. But when they didn't do it, God raised up their enemies. Strong, mighty armies to fight against them.

Yet God had warned them to destroy their enemies. They didn't do it. And it's the same if God warns you against sin.

If you don't destroy that sin, that sin will grow and grow and eventually be your destruction. And it didn't just end up with one person doing it. The whole nation was influenced by it.

It's like a bag of potatoes. If one potato goes rotten, eventually the whole bag is rotten. So when Jabin, king of Canaan, attacked them with his army that was so strong, they realised that they were no match against this army.

So when the Israelites realised that they had no strength, they had no means to face this army, they consulted with one another. Eventually they came to the conclusion that they can do only one thing and that was to go to the prophetess, Deborah. The prophetess said to her, They said, we're facing certain death.

There's only one hope for us and that is that we go to the prophetess, Deborah, and ask her for advice. There are problems that we will face up with in this life that we will never solve with our own understanding or intellect. We will never solve those problems in our own strength.

So they did something good, they turned to God. We Christians must take note of that. So when they got to Deborah, the prophetess, A true prophet will only tell you one thing and that is what God says.

He will not give you wrong advice. At that time they didn't have the Bible as we have it today, so they went to the prophets. So when they got to Deborah, she was a very well-known prophetess, A judge who was highly respected, And her life was an example to everyone, male and female.

When they got to her, she was sitting beneath a palm tree. That's where she sat to help the people with their problems. And I don't doubt that they came to her and spoke about the enemy attacking them.

But they realised they had to do something. And Deborah gave them advice. That doesn't mean that all women will give you good advice.

In fact, most will probably give you the wrong advice. Remember Jezebel. She didn't obey and bow to God's will.

She just did her own thing. But the prophetess Deborah, She sent for someone who was very well-known in Israel, Barak. And she told him what God had said.

Deborah didn't add her thoughts to this instruction. Or her own way of seeing things. She just conveyed God's message to them.

Deborah honoured God's word. And she just made sure she passed on to everyone. To the men, to the women, to the children, what God had said.

And for that reason, everyone honoured her. And when she spoke, the people took it as being something that comes from a judge. And they took it as the law then.

But she didn't lord it over the people. All she did, she passed on to the people what God had said to her. And if you're at home, you can continue reading up to the eighth chapter.

Remember when the people said to Gideon, you be our ruler, our leader. Like our king. And he said, no, I will not rule over you.

Nor will my son rule over you. But the Lord shall rule over you. The Lord shall rule over you.

Who rules your life? Your wife, your husband, your children, your parents? Who rules your life and runs your life? And neither did Deborah say, well, I'm your judge, I'm your leader, I'll go ahead of you. She didn't say, I'm going to lead you into battle. No, she instructed Beric to do it and to take those thousands of soldiers and lead them into battle.

But Beric... But Beric said to her, if you don't go with us, then I'm not going to go. It reminds us of when Moses said, Lord, if you don't go with us, even if you'd send an angel, we can't go without you. And so Deborah followed them, accompanied them.

As the Lord had said. And then she also said, she said, look, I don't want any glory and honor for myself. Neither shall you take any glory if you overcome in this battle.

And neither did she say, well, okay, well, then I'm going to take the lead. I will lead all of you. I'm in charge and all the women will be in charge.

But Beric said, if you go with us, then I will also go. The king of Canaan had taken his great general, Caesarea, and sent him into battle. And then Deborah said, God will go with you.

He will give you the victory. But never dare say that you were victorious and that it was your own strength that made you overcome. And surely it was so that God gave them victory.

And you remember that the Canaanites had the best weapons, these chariots of iron. They had the strongest army of any army. Yet when Deborah and that army faced them, they overcame them.

They were victorious. And the enemy was destroyed. And that's a picture of a Christian who faces sin.

You cannot face and overcome and be victorious over sin yourself, but with God you are victorious. Sin you can only overcome, be victorious over, through Jesus Christ, because He overcame it on Golgotha. That you believe in Him and that He is in you.

Remember Jesus fought that battle of your sin on the cross. It was your sin He was battling with. Just as the Israelites had to fight with the Canaanites.

You cannot overcome your sin in your own strength. You are a slave of your sin. But if God goes with you, because God went with them, they were victorious.

And this great army with those iron chariots was destroyed. No one escaped, except Caesarea. So no man escaped, except for this one man, Caesarea.

And he escaped on foot. And then he escaped, he fled until he got to the home of Jael. Now Jael, we don't know of her history and what position she had.

We don't know of any position she had. She just lived there in her home. And all she had was a tent peg and a hammer.

And she saw this man fleeing and going past. This was Jael. She was just an ordinary woman, but she became a hero who overcame Caesarea.

Now he fled to that place because there was peace among them. And the husband of this woman was a Canaanite. So when she saw Caesarea escaping or fleeing, she invited him in to come into her tent or their tent.

And she said to him, don't fear. Turn aside, my lord, she said. Don't fear.

You'll be safe here. Remember, he was exhausted at this point. His whole army had been destroyed.

And he had been fleeing and running for a long time. And so he must have been relieved to think, well, at last I can be in safety here. Jael said, turn aside.

Come into my tent. Come and have a rest here. And she took a blanket, covered him with a blanket.

And Caesarea said to her, go and stand at the door of the tent. If any man comes past and inquires of you and says, is there any man here? You shall say no. Now he was so exhausted, he fell asleep.

Then Jael took this tent peg and a hammer. She went softly to him so as not to wake him. And then she placed the tent peg here on his temple.

And she took the hammer and drove it through his head right into the ground. And just after she had killed him, Beric came past, that man of God. And he got to the tent of Jael.

He was pursuing this man, Caesarea. And so Jael came out to meet him. And Beric asked whether she had seen Caesarea.

And she said to him, come into my tent. And she said to him, come into my tent. And he said to her, go and stand at the door of the tent.

And there lay Caesarea with the tent peg right through his temple. And she had killed him, even though there had been peace among them and they were related. So on that day God subdued Jabin king of Canaan.

That was a great day in Israel and Deborah together with Beric sang a song. And they sang, saying God has given us the victory. They sang an amazing song.

Praising God for the victory he had given them. Jael did not know. And Jael did not even have pity on this person that they were actually friendly with.

But she fought for God's cause. And then they sang and in the song the words were, most blessed among women is Jael. Now that's amazing because these words were spoken of no one else other than Mary the mother of Jesus.

The angel Gabriel spoke to Mary. When he said to her, most blessed are you among women, all women. But it's amazing that these words were spoken of Jael, this ordinary woman who became a hero and it was said of her as well.

Now I've just made the story very short. Now I say to you, you also be a hero, a heavenly hero. If Jael would have hidden this man, this enemy of Israel, she would have died together with the enemy.

But to this day this woman is known, it's recorded in history and she's even known as being the most blessed among women. You see she used wisdom and some people don't know the difference between that and telling a lie. Some people just say no that's a lie if you don't.

Many whites will condemn this woman who was blessed, who told a lie and told him come into my tent, you'll be safe here. And then she killed him. The whites, they don't know wise wisdom from above.

They just call it a blatant lie. Jesus is the truth and even if it's the truth then Jesus is not in it, it is a lie. Just to make it easy for you whites to understand it.

So learn from Jael and follow in her footsteps. She was just an ordinary woman but she became a hero because of what she did. Hear these two women.

Don't say I'm just a woman because even Deborah, she led this whole nation through God's truth. And Jael was just an ordinary woman but she fought God's battle, that good battle and she did more than a man could do. So what kind of a woman are you? Don't be a woman that lives like a pig or a dog but be a woman of God that can fight God's battles.

Don't be an immoral, compromising woman. Learn from Jael, learn from her. Her friend, her relation was there.

But what did she do? She drove that pen through his head into the ground and she saved her life. And it was said you are blessed amongst all the women like Mary. What kind of a woman are you? And what kind of a man are you? Answer my question in your heart before God and I ask God to write it down in his book that on judgement day he will write your name.

And then his blessing or his curse upon your life. Shall we pray?

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