

**BIBLE WOMEN - LESSON 7**  
**The Five Daughters of Zelophehad**  
**Rahab-Deborah-Jael**  
**by Beverly McKey**

**I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND FOR "DAUGHTERS OF ZELOPHEHAD"**

A. **Numbers 20** – In the first month of the fortieth year of traveling in the wilderness, the Israelites were camped at Kadesh (east of Edom and the southern tip of Canaan) **Numbers 20:1**

1. Miriam died there and was buried.
2. The people complained and argued with Moses because there was no water.

**Numbers 20:3-4** – *"If only we had died when our brethren died before the Lord! Why have you brought up the congregation of the Lord to this wilderness that we and our animals should die here!"*

3. We learned last week that Moses and Aaron were instructed by God to go to the rock and "speak to it".
  - a. Moses gathered the people together at the rock and said, **Numbers 20:10**, *"Must WE bring water for you out of this rock?"*
  - b. Then Moses struck the rock twice and water poured out – enough for all of the people and their animals. That is a lot of water.
4. Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, **Numbers 20:12**:  
*"Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."*
5. In his anger against the grumbling congregation, Moses allowed his emotions to take control instead of faithfully obeying God.
  - a. Moses failed to give credit to God for the miracle of bringing forth enough water for over two million people and hundreds of thousands of animals.
  - b. Because Moses allowed the people to think that he and Aaron were the source of the miracle, God punished them by forbidding them to enter the promised land after forty years of guiding the people there.
6. What can Christians learn from this event to help us strive to live the Christian life?
  - a. Sin is always an attitude problem; one that places our own wants and needs above the will of God.
  - b. God is responsible for everything we have and are. Paul described God to the idolaters in Athens like this: **Acts 17:24-28** – *"God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men's hands as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation*

*of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, "For we are also His offspring."*

- c. We must learn to live in a way that glorifies God continually. David understood that, which is why He was a "man after God's own heart." He wrote in **Psalm 34:1-3** – *"I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; The humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.*
  - d. Please believe that I do not say this because I know how to do it right all the time. I do not! I simply tell you what God has revealed to us on this subject, and it really must be our highest goal to improve on it every day we live on this earth.
- B. After providing the water, Moses sent a message to the king of Edom (Esau's descendants) asking permission to cross their land to go into Canaan.
1. Moses promised that they would not go through their fields or vineyards and would not drink water from their wells – they would stay on the King's Highway.
  2. The King of Edom's answer was: *"You shall NOT pass through my land, lest I come out against you with the sword."*
  3. Again Moses sent a message saying that they promised to stay on the King's Highway and if any of their livestock drinks any of their water then Moses would pay for it, only please let them pass through on foot, nothing more.
  4. The King of Edom repeated, *"You shall NOT pass through."*, and many men came out to prevent Israel from crossing their land.
  5. Israel left Kadesh and went to Mount Hor, where Aaron died and his son, Eleazar, became the High Priest. **Numbers 20:29**
- C. After mourning thirty days for Aaron, they left Mount Hor and went around Edom, where the people became very discouraged.
1. Again, the people spoke against God and against Moses saying: **Numbers 21:5** – *"Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread."*
  2. So, the Lord sent fiery (venomous) serpents among the people and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. Obviously, these people did not learn by experience.

3. The people came to Moses and confessed that they had sinned by speaking before the Lord against Moses. They asked Moses to pray for the people.
  4. After Moses prayed for the people, the Lord instructed Moses to create a serpent on a pole so that everyone who looked at the serpent would be healed.
  5. Moses made the serpent of bronze and put it on a pole and all that looked at it were healed. The opposite is assumed: those who did not look at it were not healed.
  6. This also provides an important lesson to us today. We must "do the will of God" in order to receive the blessings He has promised. **James 1:22** – "But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."
    - a. We have to remember that the nature of God always remains the same.
    - b. The covenant is different in our time, but God's nature is not. **Malachi 3:6** – "For I am the Lord. I do not change."
    - c. Obedience was of primary importance to God then, and that has not changed for us today.
    - d. These examples that show us the unchanging nature of God serve to help us understand the importance of obedience under the New Covenant as well.
    - e. We can compare the commandment to "look at the bronze serpent" in order to save their lives to the commandments we are given in order to save our souls:
      - 1.) Jesus said in **Mark 16:16** – "<sup>16</sup> He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."
      - 2.) Why then do people argue that baptism is NOT necessary for salvation? Can't they read!
      - 3.) Just as surely as those who failed to look at the serpent died, those who are not baptized in the authorized manner (immersion) and for the authorized reason (the forgiveness of sins) will NOT be saved.
      - 4.) I didn't originate that claim, Jesus did.
      - 5.) And just in case someone claims that Jesus did NOT say, "those who are NOT baptized will be condemned" – that is really grasping at straws. Those who do not believe will certainly be condemned AND baptism without faith is worthless and cannot save anyone.
- D. The Israelites moved on toward Canaan, on the east side of the Jordan River.
1. God warned Moses not to bother the Moabites or the Ammonites because he had given them their land as an inheritance for Lot's descendants.
  2. God told Moses to take a census of all of the men over twenty years old and there was found 601,730 men of fighting age who would have to

drive out the heathen nations from the land of Canaan when they were ready to cross the Jordan River at Jericho.

## II. THE DAUGHTERS OF ZELOPHEHAD – Numbers 27

- A. Moses made preparations to divide the land so that each tribe would receive a section of land according to the number of people in their tribe. The larger tribes received more land and the smaller tribes received smaller portions of land.
1. Caleb and Joshua were the only men over twenty years old from the first generation to survive the forty years in the wilderness because of their great courage and faith in God when God sent them to spy out the land of Canaan at the beginning of the second year after leaving Egypt.
  2. During this time, the five daughters of a man named Zelophehad, the son of Gilead and the grandson of Manasseh (**I Chronicles 7:14-15**) came and stood before Moses and Eleazar, the high priest, and presented their complaint regarding the division of the land. **Numbers 27:1-11**
    - a. Their names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah.
    - b. They said their father had died in the wilderness, but he was not among those who died in the rebellion of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, Levites who spoke against Moses and Aaron. They and their families were swallowed up in the earth and 250 other men supporting them were also struck with fire from God. **Numbers 16**
    - c. They asked Moses, *"Why should the name of our father be removed from among his family because he had no son? Therefore give us a possession among the brothers of our father."* **Numbers 27:4**
  3. Moses took their case before the Lord.
    - a. The Lord said to Moses, *"The daughters of Zelophehad speak what is right; you shall surely give them a possession of inheritance among their father's brothers, and cause the inheritance of their father to pass to them."* **Vs 6**
    - b. Then God instructed Moses to make it a new law:
      - 1.) If any man dies and has no sons, then his inheritance will pass to his daughters,
      - 2.) If he has no daughters it would go to his brothers within his tribe.
      - 3.) If he has no brothers, it would go to his father's brothers.
      - 4.) If his father has no brothers, it would go to his nearest kinsman.
      - 5.) This was to assure that each tribe would keep all of the land within its borders and none of it would be given to any other tribe.
- B. When the chief fathers of the families of the children of Gilead, of the tribe of Manasseh heard of the new law, they went to Moses and said: **Numbers 36:2-4** – *"<sup>3</sup>...my lord (Moses) was commanded by the Lord to give the inheritance of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters. Now if they are married to any of the sons of the other tribes of the children of Israel, then*

*their inheritance will be taken from the inheritance of our fathers, and it will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry, so it will be taken from the lot of our inheritance. <sup>4</sup>And when the Jubilee of the children of Israel comes, then their inheritance will be added to the inheritance of the tribe into which they marry; so their inheritance will be taken away from the inheritance of the tribe of our fathers.*

1. These men were worried about losing part of the land assigned to their tribe by the marriage of any of the daughter's of Zelophehad who married outside their tribe. With the marriage, their land would then belong to their husband's tribe (at least tentatively).
2. If the marriage should last until the "Year of Jubilee" for the children of Israel, which was every fifty years, then the land would transfer to the husband (and his tribe) permanently,
3. The laws regarding the "**Year of Jubilee**" are found in **Leviticus 25**.
  - a. The Israelites were to celebrate a "Sabbath Year" every seven years in which they would allow the land to rest. **Leviticus 25t :1-**
    - 1.) They neither sowed their fields nor prune the vineyards.
    - 2.) They were not to even harvest what grew of its own accord, except to eat it in the field.
  - b. After seven "Sabbath Years" passed, the Israelites were to celebrate the Year of Jubilee, which made it occur every fifty years. **Leviticus 25:8**
  - c. The fiftieth year was to be consecrated and liberty was to be proclaimed throughout all of the land that Israel possessed. (vs. 10)
  - d. There was to be no sowing or reaping what grows of its own accord for that year. They could eat its produce, but only while they were actually in the field.
  - e. If anyone had sold the land of their inheritance, it would be returned to the one who sold it during the Year of Jubilee. No land could be sold permanently so no family could lose their inheritance forever.
  - f. If someone became so poor that they sold themselves as a bond servant, he must not be treated as a slave but as a hired servant. He must be set free, along with his whole family, during the Year of Jubilee.
  - g. If one of their brethren falls into poverty among them, they must help him and allow him to live with them. They were forbidden to charge interest for loaning money or to lend food at a profit during the Year of Jubilee.
  - h. It would be that during this Year of Jubilee, the land belonging to the daughters of Zelophehad would then become the permanent property of their husbands.
4. After hearing their concerns, Moses amended the law regarding the inheritance of women.

- a. The daughters of Zelophehad could marry anyone they chose, only it must be someone from the tribe of Manasseh.
- b. This rule would also apply to other daughters who inherited their father's land.
- c. This would prevent any inherited land from changing hands from one tribe to another.
- d. The daughters of Zelophehad were obedient to the restrictions in their marriages and they all married men from the tribe of Manasseh.

**Numbers 36:11**

- C. The daughters of Zelophehad were responsible for winning the "right of inheritance" for a multitude of women in the future.
1. In today's society this accomplishment would be on equal footing with gaining voting rights for women in America.
  2. The daughters of Zelophehad might be considered the first "feminists" in the best possible sense. They truly made a change that would be beneficial to women for centuries to come.
  3. It took great courage for them to go to Moses to present their case.
  4. They didn't plead their case based on sympathetic reasons, like impending poverty with no father or husband to support them, they simply made their case about the unfairness of losing their father's land just because they were daughters instead of sons.
  5. Moses realized the value of their claim and he took their case before the Lord who also recognized the value of their claim.
  6. This is one of many examples in the Bible that reinforce the fact that God looks upon women as equal in value to men.
    - a. Many today argue that Christianity is unfair to women because they were placed in a submissive role and are denied leadership roles for which they may be abundantly qualified to handle otherwise.
    - b. They haven't taken the time to understand the nature of God and that He created women equal in value to men.
    - c. Jesus proved that He too honored women, even those who were rejected by society like:
      - 1.) the woman caught in adultery (**John 8:3-11**)
      - 2.) the Samaritan woman at the well (**John 4:3-29**)
      - 3.) the poor woman who gave two mites which was all she had (**Mark 12:41-44**)
      - 4.) the woman who washed his feet with her tears and dried them with her hair (**Luke 7:36-48**)
    - d. The world cannot comprehend the freedom and the equality that women enjoy through Christ because it cannot be measured in dollars or rank among the powerful on earth.

- e. Consider the false religions of the world (especially Islam) and you will really see how women are severely abused in the name of religion.
- f. How blessed we are as women to be the daughters of a God who loves us and created us in His likeness to be valuable in this life as well as in His sight.

### III. RAHAB

- A. For forty years the Israelites had been traveling through the wilderness. Many amazing miracles were done by God during this time.
  1. Crossing the Red Sea on dry land. **Exodus 14:21-23**
  2. God provided manna every day for forty years. **Exodus 16:35**
  3. God brought water from a rock in the first year. **Exodus 17:6**
  4. The defeat of the Amalekites in the first year. **Exodus 17:8-13**
  5. Giving of the Ten Commandments on stone tablets. **Exodus 20:1-17**
  6. God sends quail that stacked up three feet deep in the camp including an area one days journey on every side of the camp for a whole month. (**Numbers 11**)
  7. God provided water from a rock in the fortieth year. **Numbers 20:10-11**
  8. Defeat of the King of Arad in southern Canaan. **Numbers 21:1-3**
  9. Defeat of King Sihon of the Amorites. **Numbers 21:23-24**
  10. Defeat of King Og of Bashan. **Numbers 21:33-35**
  11. The Brass Serpent used to heal those bitten by venomous serpents. **Numbers 21**
  12. The utter destruction of the Midianites and their five kings. **Numbers 31**
  13. Moses, Aaron Miriam and all of the men of the first generation died in the wilderness before going into Canaan.
- B. Joshua was appointed by God to replace Moses as leader of the Israelites. **Joshua 1**
  1. The people were camped east of the Jordan River across from Jericho.
  2. The tribes of Reuben and Gad along with the half tribe of Manasseh were given their allotted territory on the east side of the Jordan after agreeing that they would join the other tribes in driving out the Canaanites on the west side of the Jordan.
  3. Joshua sent two men into Jericho to check out the conditions in the city.
    - a. The men went to the house of a harlot named Rahab and lodged there. **Joshua 2:1**
    - b. The King of Jericho heard that men had come from the countryside from among the children of Israel and he sent men to demand that Rahab send out the men. **Vs. 3**
    - c. Rahab said, *"Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from. And as it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them."* **Joshua 2:4-5**

- d. In fact, Rahab had hidden the two spies on her roof among the stalks of flax.
  - e. Rahab told the spies that she knew that the Lord had given them the land and that the city of Jericho was in terror and were fainthearted because of them. **Vs. 9**
  - f. The people of Jericho had heard how the Lord had dried up the water of the Red Sea and what they had done to the King of the Amorites on the east side of the Jordan. **Vs. 10**
  - g. Rahab admitted that after hearing these things their hearts melted and no more courage was found in anyone because of the God of Israel.
  - h. Rahab said, **Joshua 2:12-13** – *"Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the LORD, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father's house, and give me a true token,<sup>13</sup> and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death."*
  - i. The men agreed and gave her a scarlet cord to hang from her window to identify her house and they told her to gather all of her family inside her house, which was located on the wall of the city.
  - j. Rahab agreed to their terms and she sent let them down the wall by a rope from her window, since her house was on the wall of the city.  
**Vs. 15**
  - k. The men went to the mountain and stayed for three days until the men of Jericho gave up pursuing them.
  - l. The men returned to Joshua and reported all that happened. They said: **Vs. 24** - *"Truly the LORD has delivered all the land into our hands, for indeed all the inhabitants of the country are fainthearted because of us."*
- C. When the people of Israel had marched around the city of Jericho six days in a row and seven times on the seventh day, the priests blew the trumpets and Joshua said, *"Shout, for the Lord has given you the city!"*
1. Joshua also ordered the destruction of everyone in Jericho except for Rahab and her family. **Joshua 6:17**
  2. Joshua sent the two spies into Jericho to rescue Rahab and her family.
  3. The city was burned and only the silver, gold, iron and bronze items were plundered from the city and put into the treasury of the Lord. **Vs 24**
- D. While there is little information in the book of Joshua about Rahab, this is not the end of the story of Rahab.
1. We see another example of God's providence when the two spies went to the house of a harlot for help.
  2. While Rahab was not a stellar citizen of Jericho, she was obviously believed that the God of the Israelites would bring them victory over the fortified city of Jericho.



3. The very miracles performed by God on behalf of the Israelites caused Rahab to believe in the power of God to conquer Jericho.
4. It was this very faith that made her the perfect person to hide the spies and to keep their secret of the impending invasion of Jericho.
5. Apparently Rahab became a proselyte among the Israelites. A proselyte is a foreigner or stranger who converts to Judaism.
6. **Joshua 6:25** – confirms that *"Joshua spared Rahab the harlot, her father's household, and all that she had. So she dwells in Israel to this day, because she hid the messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho."*
7. Rahab is another example of "foreign" women who have been used by God to continue the lineage that will eventually produce the Savior of the world.
8. Perhaps this is a clue or a foreshadow of the "mystery" to be revealed in the New Covenant, which is that Gentiles will be able to partake of the grace made available by the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross.
9. **Ephesians 3:3-6** – *"by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, <sup>4</sup> by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), <sup>5</sup> which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: <sup>6</sup> that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel."*
10. Tamar, Zipporah and Rahab are all examples of foreign (Gentile) women who can be listed in the lineage of Jesus Christ.

#### IV. DEBORAH AND Jael

- A. After the Israelites settled in Canaan, Joshua died at the age of 110.
  1. Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua's life and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua who had known all that God had done for Israel. **Joshua 24:31**
  2. The bones of Joseph were buried at Shechem, in a plot of ground which Jacob had previously purchased from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem, which was part of the inheritance of the children of Joseph. **Joshua 24:32**
  3. After this, the Lord appointed Judah to be the tribe to lead Israel in driving out the heathen people in Canaan as they began to settle their allotted plots of land.
  4. Unfortunately, seven of the tribes did not all drive out every group of the heathen inhabitants, so God refused to drive them out for them and pronounced that these heathen people would be a snare and a thorn in their sides.

5. When all of the generation who knew and served God had died, another generation grew up who neither knew the Lord nor what He had done for Israel and they followed other gods from among the heathen people around them. **Judges 2:12**
  6. Because of their disobedience, God delivered the Israelites into the hands of their enemies all around, so that they could no longer stand against their enemies. The hand of the Lord was against them and they were greatly distressed. **Judges 2:14-15**
  7. Then the Lord raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of those who plundered them and oppressed them.
  8. For a time after each judge delivered them from bondage, they served the Lord, but when the judge died, the people reverted and behaved more corruptly than their father by following other gods. **Judges 2:19**
- B. It was in these circumstances that Deborah became the fourth Judge in Israel. – **Judges 4**
1. Deborah was one of the most talented women of all time.
  2. She was married to a man named Lapidoth, who is never mentioned in the Bible anywhere else.
  3. She was a wife, mother, prophetess, judge, poetess, singer and leader in war.
  4. Her entire life was dedicated to the Lord.
- C. For twenty years King Jabin of the Canaanites had oppressed the children of Israel. He had 900 iron chariots that kept the Israelites in fear, so they finally cried out to the Lord for help.
1. Their oppression was so great that Deborah said in her song in Judges chapter five that travelers were afraid to walk on the highways and they kept to the back roads or "byways". She also said that "village life had ceased in Israel". **Judges 5:6-7**
  2. Deborah was a prophetess in Israel during this time. She held court under the Palm tree in the hill country of Ephraim.
  3. All of the Israelites came to her to have their disputes decided.
  4. God chose Deborah to be the Judge of Israel during this difficult time in their history.
- D. God spoke to Deborah with his commands and Deborah sent for Barak, from the tribe of Naphtali and said,  
**(Judges 4:6)** – *"Has not the LORD God of Israel commanded, 'Go and deploy troops at Mount Tabor; take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun; and against you I will deploy Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude at the River Kishon; and I will deliver him into your hand?'?"*

1. Barak said to Deborah, "I will go there ONLY if you go with me. If you will not go, then I will not go." **Judges 4:8**
2. Deborah agreed to go to the battle with Barak, but she chastised him for his lack of faith in God saying,  
**Judges 4:9** – "I will go with you. But because of the way you are going about this, the honor will not be yours. The Lord will hand Sisera, the commander of King Jabin's army, over to a woman."
3. Even though the army of King Jabin was much larger than the army of Israel, Deborah's courage spread to Barak and then to the 10,000 men with them.
4. When the two armies met, God gave the victory to Israel just as He had promised.
  - a. King Jabin's entire army was destroyed except for the commander, Sisera, who fled on foot.
  - b. He went to the tent of a woman named Jael, who lived in a friendly area. **Judges 4:17**
    - 1) Jael's husband was a Kenite, descendants of Hobab (Jethro), the father-in-law of Moses. **Judges 4:11**
    - 2) The name "Kenite" was meant "metal workers" which was likely their occupation.
    - 3) The Kenites were not part of the Israelites but they are closely associated with them and were allowed to settle in Israel because of their kinship to Moses through his wife and father-in-law.
    - 4) At this time, Heber had made peace with King Jabin. In fact, he reported to Jabin's commander, Sisera, that the Israelites were gathering forces at Mount Tabor against King Jabin. **Judges 4:12**
    - 5) Perhaps it was financially advantageous to make peace with King Jabin because he had 900 iron chariots. Heber may have worked for Jabin in making or sharpening weapons for his army.
  - c. Jael heard the news and she actually went out to meet Sisera and invited him into her tent offering him a hiding place. **Judges 4:18**
  - d. Sisera assumed that Jael was loyal to King Jabin, since her husband had made peace with King Jabin, so he did not hesitate to enter her tent.
  - e. Sisera asked Jael for water to drink. Instead she brought him milk in a "lordly bowl" to encourage him to trust her. When she offered to hide him, he asked her not to tell anyone that he was there. **Judgs 4:19**

- f. When Sisera was asleep, Jael crept into the tent, picked up a tent spike and a hammer and she drove the tent spike through his temple into the ground. **Judges 4:21**
  - g. Jael was NOT loyal to King Jabin because of his cruel treatment to the people of God, with whom she sympathized.
  - h. When Barak arrived in search of Sisera, Jael went out to meet him and said, *"Come, I will show you the man whom you seek."* Barak went inside and saw Sisera dead on the floor with the tent peg in his head. **Judges 4:22**
  - i. The Israelites grew stronger until they finally destroyed King Jabin and they were free again. Peace then reigned in Israel for 40 years with Deborah as their judge.
- E. Deborah was wise and courageous. But she was also a great encourager.
- 1. Judges chapter five is a song written by Deborah after the victory over King Jabin, the Canaanite
  - 2. It is a song of praise to God for giving them the victory over an army that clearly was stronger than Israel's.
  - 3. Deborah praised the rulers of Israel who "offered themselves willingly with the people" to fight against this enemy. (**Judges 5:9**)
  - 4. She acknowledged individually the brave contribution the tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, Zebulun, Naphtali, Issachar and Machir (Manasseh), whose kings even joined the fight. (**Judges 5:14-15a**)
  - 5. Zebulun and Naphtali were commended especially because they jeopardized their lives to the point of death on the battlefield. (**vs. 18**)
  - 6. Deborah also chastised the tribes who did not contribute to the fight but remained in their territory attending to their own lives. These tribes were:
    - a. Reuben, for sitting among the sheepfolds, (**vs. 16**)
    - b. Gad (or Gilead), who remained safely beyond the Jordan River, (**vs. 17**)
    - c. Dan, who remained on ships (**vs. 17**)
    - d. Asher, who stayed by his inlets at the seashore. (**vs. 17**)
  - 7. Deborah also pronounced a "curse" upon the city of Meroz (as instructed by an Angel of the Lord) because no one in the city contributed to the fight, even though they were near the battle. **Judges 5:23**
  - 8. Deborah saved her praise of Jael for last. **Judges 5:24** – *"Most blessed among women is Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; blessed is she among women in tents."*

- a. Deborah was generous in her praise of Jael. **Judges 5:24** – *"Most blessed among women is Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; Blessed is she among women in tents."*
  - b. Deborah recognized the cunning of Jael when she mentioned how she treated Sisera with great respect by offering him milk in a "lordly bowl" to gain his confidence and then when he felt so safe he could sleep, Jael stretched out her hand to drive a tent peg through his temple into the ground.
  - c. Imagine the courage it took for Jael to do such a thing, knowing that her husband was friendly with King Jabin.
  - d. Deborah emphasized the grisly details how Jael killed Sisera:  
**Judges 5:26-27** – <sup>26</sup>*She stretched her hand to the tent peg, her right hand to the workmen's hammer; she pounded Sisera, she pierced his head, she split and struck through his temple. <sup>27</sup>At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still; at her feet he sank, he fell; where he sank, there he fell dead.*" This is poetic language because Sisera was already laying down so he didn't physically sink or fall down.
  - c. Deborah praised Jael by saying that the mother of Sisera was looking through her window crying, "Why is his chariot so long in coming?"
    - 1) Deborah speculated that her wisest ladies comforted Sisera's mother by saying, *"They are delayed in dividing the spoils of war among the soldiers."*
    - 2) But in the end she would face grief and shame. Grief that her son was dead, and shame that he was killed by a woman.
  - d. Deborah ended her song of praise by praying that the enemies of God would all perish in the same way, while those who love God would shine like the sun in its full strength of day.
9. Deborah was a judge in Israel for 40 years and Israel enjoyed peace during her term as judge.
- F. Deborah is an unusual example of a Godly woman because she was totally competent to command a war effort and wise enough to dispense justice to all who came to her for help.
1. Her courage inspired Barak and the fighting men of Israel to perform above the level they thought possible. We never know how our example may affect others for good or bad, so every day we must be the best Christian example we possibly can be.
  2. Her faith that God would keep His promise to give them victory kept her passionate about the fight and it spread to all under her command.

3. Deborah was wise because she did not elevate herself in the eyes of the army of Israel, but prodded and encouraged Barak to step up to the challenge.
4. Anyone who claims that godly women are kept from honorable positions and are disrespected by men might want to consider Deborah's life.
5. Deborah was chosen by God because of her great faith and her ability to lead others to courageous actions.
6. Indeed, our God does NOT discriminate against women in His service, instead women who serve Jehovah God are elevated far above women in any other religion in the world.



