

=UNUSUAL BIBLE STORIES=

Lesson 3

Sisera and Jael

SCRIPTURE: Judges 4

AIM: to teach my pupils the importance of a woman serving God

INTRODUCTION: Here is one of the most unusual stories in the Bible. Because the children of Israel had drifted from God, the Lord had sold them into the hand of Jabin, the king of Canaan. The captain of his army was a man named Sisera. Sisera had persecuted and oppressed the children of Israel for about 20 years. The judge at that time in Israel was Deborah. This does not mean that Deborah was the leader of Israel; it simply means that she was the one who had wisdom to judge between right and wrong for those who came for trial. Barak was perhaps the leader of Israel at the time, and Deborah was his encouragement, his counselor, his wisdom, etc. The Lord had revealed to Deborah that He was going to use a woman through whom He would deliver Israel from Sisera. The two women involved here were Deborah and Jael. Deborah was the woman who stood beside Barak and gave him wisdom. She prophesied the coming victory. Jael was the one God used to kill Sisera.

When the battle came, Barak, encouraged by Deborah, was given the victory when suddenly Sisera fled by foot. He came to the house of Heber, whose wife was Jael, where he thought he could find safety. Sisera was served refreshments by Jael, and he asked her if he could sleep. He told her to stand in the door of the tent, and if anyone came asking if there were a man there, she was to say there was not. When he went off to sleep, she took a tent peg and a hammer and drove the tent peg through his temple, fastening him to the floor of the tent. Hence, the captain of the host, who had afflicted and oppressed Israel for 20 years, was killed; and the victory was won through the work and power of two ladies—Deborah, the judge, and Jael, the one who delivered Israel from Sisera.

POINT OF CONTACT: Ask the pupils to list how many great ladies they can think of from the Bible. A small award could be given to the one naming the most.

- I. A LADY HAD THE GIFT OF DISCERNMENT. See Judges 4:4, 5. It is very plain in the Bible that a lady is not to be the leader. It is not Scriptural for a lady to run for president, governor or mayor, or to pastor a church. However, God can give ladies discernment by which they can help, counsel or advise in the affairs of others, oftentimes even the affairs of great men. This was the case of Deborah. She was not the leader, but she was given unusual discernment.
- II. LADIES CAN SUPPORT AND STAND BY THE MAN OF GOD. Notice Judges 4:8, 9. This is very interesting. Barak was the man of God; yet when the battle came, he said he would not go unless Deborah went with him. This is not to say that Deborah was the leader; it was to say that she was the type of lady who stood by the man of God and helped him in the battle. Hence, the battle came. Barak led, but Deborah was with him. Think of the many ladies who stand by the men of God. Think of the Pacific Baptist Church and the wonderful work that the ladies do. Think of the many jobs a lady can do in supporting the man of God. (Teacher, ask the class to list the work that ladies do in our church that helps the church to be what it is.)
- III. LADIES CAN HAVE WISDOM IN THE WORK OF GOD. Read Judges 4:14. There was a certain wisdom that Deborah gave to Barak that Barak did not have. Now, Barak was the leader. He was the one to make the decision, but there was a wisdom given by Deborah in this case that supplemented Barak and made him the leader that he needed to be.
- IV. A LADY CAN HAVE COURAGE. Both Deborah and Jael exemplify this. Deborah was willing to go to battle, and Jael was willing, as it were, to risk her life in order for the Lord to deliver her people.
- V. A LADY CAN FIGHT IN THE BATTLE. A lady should not be the leader of the battle, but she can fight in the battle and stand for what is right.

- VI. A LADY CAN USE ALL THAT SHE HAS FOR THE GLORY OF CHRIST. Think of the fact that all Jael had to offer was a drink of milk. Judges 4:19 says that “she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink.” In Judges 5:25, it is called, “butter in a lordly dish.” It would be much like our clabber, buttermilk or yogurt. She put it in a beautiful dish and offered it to Sisera. She offered him a place to rest. She used every device she had to the glory of Christ. A lady does not have to be beautiful to serve God, but her beauty can be used to serve God. A lady does not have to be talented to serve God, but her talent can be used for God. Such was the case in this story.
- VII. THERE ARE SEVERAL THINGS ABOUT SISERA THAT SHOULD BE NOTICED IN THIS STORY.
1. The person who is not serving God has poor discernment. Sisera thought he was in a place where he could be protected. This was far from the truth. His discernment was bad. A person not serving God has poor discernment.
 2. A person who is not serving God can be fooled into believing. He had what looked like butter in a lordly dish. What he did not know was that he would not wake up after his nap! He was easily deceived.
 3. A person outside the will of God is not able to trust others. Those in the world cannot trust each other. There is no trust a person can have unless he is in the will of God.

CONCLUSION: It would be wise in concluding the lesson to discuss all the things that ladies have done for God in the Bible and the things that ladies can do for God now. This is not simply a lesson dealing with housekeeping, the rearing of children, being a wife, etc., though those things are certainly not to be discounted. This is a lesson dealing with the things a lady can do for God over and above her household work and outside the home—such things as working in the nursery, doing secretarial work and other work on the church staff, being a departmental superintendent, teaching Sunday school, etc. Lead the girls to realize they should serve God in their church. Have them set a goal to be Sunday school teachers, musicians, departmental superintendents, etc. Any girl should train to do special work for God in the church. How vital this is!

In teaching boys, train them to appreciate the work that ladies do for God. Men should be asked to encourage their wives in such service.