

Deborah

(Questions by Barbara Hull)

Court is in Session

Ladies and gentlemen of the study... Before your imagination's vivid eye sits Barak – captain of the Lord's army and in fact heralded for his faith in Hebrews. On the day in question he begs out of a duty unless a damsel by the name of Deborah accompany him. The court's decision is this: Is Barak's quid pro quo (of sorts) a legitimate request? Let us now establish the facts of Judges 4-5.

1. What is the relationship between Ehud's death and the Israelites' return to sin? (You may peek back at 2:10-23.)
2. Who was Deborah? Is there a special significance in her title as prophetess?
3. What is the primary responsibility of a judge? (It was more than just settling disputes)
4. What is specifically requested of Barak and by whom?
5. If it please the court may I now ask you the jury to recall other characters of the Bible who were politely pusillanimous (speaking now on behalf of the accused) in following God's command?
"Objection! Irrelevant."
"Your Honor I am merely setting the stage by showing the court that my client isn't the only one to have balked at a command of the Lord's – he is in fact in excellent company. I am here attempting to uphold his character."
"Objection overruled."
6. How did God "discomfit" (to use my favorite KJV word) Sisera and his chariots? (Check out the poetic version for other clues.)
7. What is Jael's motivation in killing Sisera?
8. What are certain tribes (mentioned in 5:13-18) rebuked? Is Deborah just being cranky?
9. Who is the woman Sisera is handed over to? This is prophesied in 4:9.
10. And now for the evening's denouement – Was Barak justified in his hesitation to proceed alone? Was he perhaps trying to gain moral support for his men? You be the judge.

Application: How many times do we either

- (a) forget God's previous deliverances in the light of a new foe?
- (b) balk when God calls us to do something unexpected?