

APRIL 25

Judges 4-5

One of the hardest things is to get a sense for the passage of time. I like knowing when things happened. According to the Bible Knowledge Commentary-OT, p. 388 (BKC-OT), about 200 years have gone by since the Exodus. I guess if you take the 40 years of wandering + 7 years of war + 10 years of settling into the land up until Joshua's death + 8 years of oppression + 40 years of peace with Othniel + 18 years of oppression under Eglon + 80 years of peace with Ehud, you get about 203 years. Isn't this amazing how time is ticking away?

Judges 4

Vs. 1-3 So now we add another 20 years of oppression under King Jabin and his general, Sisera. It is interesting that these chariots kept Israel at bay. It shows that God wasn't helping them, because when He did help, He made those chariots a liability.

Vs. 4-10 It is interesting that during these 20 years, Deborah (means "honey-bee") was a prophetess. She was a judge, in that people came to her to hear a word from the Lord or to get a decision. I wonder what the Levites were up to during this time.

V. 6 Apparently the cries of Israel reached a certain level of intensity and God sent Deborah a command. Notice that God not only promised victory, but He said He would lure Sisera to come out with his chariots.

V. 9 I don't think it was wrong for Barak to want Deborah to go with him, but it is cast in a negative light. We will see other men who hear the Word of God from a prophet and simply obey. Barak didn't do that, but he is still honored in Hebrews 11 as a man of faith. Gideon will also ask for a sign of confirmation.

V. 11 This little note is a piece of the puzzle God is putting in place.

Vs. 12-16 We don't understand what happened here until we read the song in the next chapter. According to the song in 5:19-21, there must have been a supernaturally inspired torrent of rain that made the chariots ineffective. Sisera wouldn't have brought his "toys" out on a rainy day. Apparently there was no warning.

Vs. 17-22 Jael must have been there without her husband, who was probably a shepherd and out with the sheep. According to the BKC-OT, p. 389, it was usually the women who pitched the tents.

Vs. 23-24 Apparently, it was a huge battle and King Jabin was also wiped out.

Judges 5

Vs. 1-3 This is the introduction to the song calling the nations to see and hear what God had done. Verse 2 has always seemed like the miracle to me: The leaders led. You realize in any war, if it goes bad, the leaders are the ones who are targeted. Here, the leaders came forward and were willing to take responsibility.

Vs. 4-5 She mentioned that God showed His dominance and greatness at Mt. Sinai.

Vs. 6-9 Apparently the problems began after Shamgar and in the days that Jael and her husband left the south part of Israel and went north. Because of King Jabin, using the normal roads had to be abandoned. This continued until Deborah came. Verse 8 tells the root of the problem. Israel chose new gods and therefore couldn't fight the oppression. Verse 9 again celebrates the faith and courage of the men who were willing to lead the people. This looks like the real miracle.

Vs. 10-11 This is saying the word should get out to everyone, from the rich on their donkeys down to the people at the watering places. The people would be talking about the victory the Lord provided.

Vs. 12-18 You notice in this description of who helped that not everyone who was called responded.

Vs. 19-22 This is the description of the battle. If the people had followed the Lord, He would have given Israel more victories like this that would have strengthened their faith. They themselves would have regularly experienced the acts that God would have done for them to show His glory and to defeat their enemies.

Vs. 23-27 Verse 23 is apparently a town that didn't respond to the call to war. On the other hand, one woman was more courageous than they were. Jael's actions are described in slow motion. Apparently this was meant to be funny or ironic.

Vs. 28-30 Still expressing irony, those waiting for Sisera to return as he usually did, with the booty of those he conquered, waited and were disappointed.

V. 31 Amen, and there was peace for forty years.

Luke 22:35-53

To understand some of what Jesus is saying here, you need to look at v. 53, *But this is your hour, and the power of darkness*. That hour was a bad hour.

Vs. 35-38 Jesus tells the disciples to expect the worst, to care for themselves and to be prepared to defend themselves in the immediate aftermath (hour) of His arrest. When He sent out the Twelve, Jesus told them they could depend on God moving in people's hearts to provide for them. Now Jesus tells them the opposite. I believe it is because of this special hour on the earth. Except for the fall of man, this would probably be the second worst hour on earth and there probably won't be another like it until during the Tribulation.

Vs. 39-46 Jesus tells the disciples twice what they should be praying for. Even here, Jesus is interested in His disciples. Notice that Luke mentions the appearance of the angel and that the angel came sometime before Jesus had finished praying. I always thought it was at the end of His praying.

Jesus was on the edge, humanly speaking, during this prayer. *Being in an agony* describes the depth of the human and emotional weight He was under. Submission and prayer, humanly speaking, got Him through. What a great model He is, and to think, nothing we can face will even come close to what He endured.

Vs. 47-53 Good old Dr. Luke tells us it was the right ear, and that Jesus healed it. I get the feeling reading this, that the words of Jesus were a distraction of sorts to get the mob focused on Him and to give the disciples a chance to run.

Psalms 94

There is no note as to the author of this psalm. Since v. 16 mentions persecution, I could imagine this was written by David as he was still waiting on the Lord to deliver him from Saul, observing how Israel was falling into more and more disorder.

Vs. 1-7 This is the psalmist's lament over the growing lawlessness in Israel.

Vs. 8-11 This is a warning to the people who are taking advantage of the lack of justice. Justice would come and God was keeping track of who was doing what.

Vs. 12-15 The writer is affirming that the discipline of the Lord makes you seek Him, waiting for God's sure and faithful justice.

Vs. 16-19 This sounds like David.

Vs. 20-23 Since it is impossible for God to tolerate the wicked, their judgment is simply a matter of time. On the other hand, v. 22 says, and as David has often said, the Lord is the writer's stronghold and rock.

I think as disciples, it gives us security to know and remember that God has all things under control, even if it doesn't seem that way. As we work in the harvest we are not responsible for judgment. We are to work in the harvest, praying for leaders and authorities so that the Lord would give us the freedom to reach those who are ready to hear.

Proverbs 14:3-4

So, why did they put both of these verses together? I'll hazard a guess.

Foolishness hurts and destroys itself. Keeping your manger clean by not having an ox is foolish. A man should be willing to do the work of upkeep. Sitting and avoiding the toil that will bring others closer to the Lord gives you more time to enjoy life. But if you do the work, you'll enjoy life more, and you'll have the blessing of God, along with an abundance of hope, having seen God work. The wise man welcomes the mess.