

Barak: Faith Over Fear

Ponder: Nine hundred iron chariots!

Scripture: “And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; As was Issachar, so was Barak; Into the valley they rushed at his heels” (Jud. 5:15, NASB)

For twenty years Israel, had endured the harsh oppression of the Canaanites. The Lord was chastening His wayward children for their stubborn and frequent rebellion. But when “the children of Israel cried out to the Lord,” He mercifully gave them deliverance at the hand of Barak.

The Hebrews writer briefly mentioned of Barak as he wrote of notable men and women whose faith we should emulate (Heb. 11:32). What qualifies Barak to be on that list?

Deborah, the prophetess and judge, delivered God’s commission to Barak: “Go and deploy troops at Mount Tabor; take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and 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” (Jud. 4:6-7).

At first Barak was anything but eager to obey. In fact, he told Deborah, “If you will go with me, then I will go. But if you will not go with me, I will not go” (4:8).

Now, before we slam Barak for being a wimp, let’s realize the enormity of the task. The Canaanites had no less than 900 chariots of iron to support a gigantic army (4:3). They had walked all over the Israelites for two decades. We might wish Barak had said, “Yeah, I’ll go! Let me at ‘em!” But instead, let’s commend him for being willing to go if Deborah went with him. He certainly didn’t expect her to engage the Canaanites in hand-to-hand combat; but he knew she was a prophetess of God and could rely on her counsel if needed.

Bottom line, God gave Barak and his troops a smashing victory over the Canaanites. But due to his imperfect faith, Barak couldn’t take credit for killing Sisera, the enemy commander. That honor went to a woman, Jael.

Your faith isn’t flawless, nor is mine. Let us exercise the faith we have, and seek to grow. Who knows what God will do through us?

Song: “The Battle Belongs To The Lord”

Prayer: Mighty God, please help us to grow in our faith. Work through us to accomplish your holy will. In Jesus’ name, Amen.