

Judges 4:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.

Analysis

And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose, and went with Barak to Kedesh.

This passage relates to Deborah and Barak's victory over Sisera, demonstrating God's sovereign choice and empowerment of deliverers. The judges themselves display varying degrees of faith and character flaws, yet God works through these imperfect human instruments to accomplish His purposes. This illustrates the biblical pattern that God's power is made perfect in human weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Theologically, these early judges establish the pattern of divine deliverance through unlikely means. God chooses the weak, marginalized, and flawed to demonstrate that victory comes from His power, not human strength. This anticipates Paul's teaching that "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1 Corinthians 1:27).

The military victories recorded here serve spiritual purposes—they deliver Israel from physical oppression but more importantly provide opportunity for spiritual

renewal. Each deliverance creates space for Israel to return to covenant faithfulness. However, the repeated cycles show these deliverances provided only temporary relief, pointing to the need for the ultimate Deliverer who would provide permanent victory over sin and spiritual oppression through His death and resurrection.

Historical Context

Historical Setting: The Book of Judges spans approximately 350-400 years (c. 1375-1050 BCE) during the Late Bronze Age collapse and early Iron Age. This period saw the disintegration of major empires (Hittites, Mycenaeans) and weakening of Egyptian control over Canaan, creating a power vacuum filled by emerging peoples including Philistines (Sea Peoples), Aramaeans, and regional kingdoms. The decentralized tribal structure left Israel vulnerable to external oppression and internal chaos.

Cultural Context: This passage relates to Deborah and Barak's victory over Sisera. Canaanite religion dominated the region, centered on Baal (storm/fertility god), Asherah (mother goddess), and Anat (war goddess). Archaeological discoveries at Ugarit (Ras Shamra) have provided extensive information about Canaanite mythology and religious practices. Baal worship involved ritual prostitution, child sacrifice, and fertility rites tied to agricultural seasons. Israel's persistent attraction to these gods demonstrates the strong cultural pressure to conform to surrounding nations' religious practices.

The material culture of this period shows gradual Israelite settlement in the Canaanite hill country, with simpler pottery and architecture than coastal Canaanite cities. Iron technology was beginning to spread, giving military advantage to peoples who mastered it (note the Philistines' iron monopoly, 1 Samuel 13:19-22). The absence of centralized government during the judges period stands in stark contrast to the bureaucratic city-states of Canaan and the imperial administration of Egypt and Mesopotamia. This political structure reflected Israel's theocratic ideal—God as king—yet the repeated cycles of apostasy showed this ideal required more than political structures; it demanded heart transformation.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does this passage about Deborah and Barak's victory over Sisera reveal God's character in dealing with persistent human rebellion and incomplete obedience?
2. What patterns of spiritual compromise or incomplete obedience in your own life mirror Israel's failures during the judges period?
3. How does understanding the cyclical nature of sin and deliverance in Judges help you appreciate Christ's perfect and final deliverance from sin's power?

Interlinear Text

אָתָּה	אָשֶׁר	פָּדָאָתָּה	עַל	אָתָּה	אָפָּא	כִּי
And she said	I will surely	I will surely	H5973	with thee notwithstanding	H3588	
H559	H1980	H1980		H657		
תְּהִלֵּה	תְּהִלֵּה	תְּפִאָרְתָּה	עַל	פָּדָאָתָּה	אָתָּה	
H3808	H1961	H8597	H5921	H834	H859	
לֹא	תְּהִלֵּה	תְּפִאָרְתָּה	עַל	פָּדָאָתָּה	אָתָּה	
	shall not be for thine honour			the journey		
	H8597		H1870			
אָתָּה	אָשֶׁר	בְּ יָד	אָשֶׁר	יְמַכֵּר	אָתָּה	
I will surely	H3588	into the hand	H802	shall sell	H3068	
H1980		H3027		H4376		
לֹא	אָתָּה	אָשֶׁר	אָשֶׁר	לְרֹא	אָתָּה	
וְתַּחֲזִקְתָּה	בְּ קֶדֶשׁ	בְּ קֶדֶשׁ	וְתַּחֲזִקְתָּה	בְּ קֶדֶשׁ	בְּ קֶדֶשׁ	
Sisera	arose	And Deborah	I will surely	H5973	with Barak	
H5516	H6965	H1683	H1980		H1301	

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 2:30 (References Lord): Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

Judges 2:14 (References Lord): And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

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