

**“Deborah & Barak”**  
**Judges 4**  
***SERMON OUTLINE***

*When will victory come against the enemy (4:1-3)?*

*We do not overcome when...*

A. We doubt God (4:6-7)

B. We pursue our own glory (4:8-9)

➤ **Wait for God to lead the charge (4:14-15)**

*We overcome as we follow God's lead...*

B'. We play our small part in God's big story (4:14b-16)

A'. We trust in the mystery of his divine providence (4:11, 17-22)

*\* Let's press hard against our enemies – the world, the flesh and the devil (4:23-24; Eph 2:1-3) –*  
**for the Dragon-Slayer has overcome!** (Gen 3:15; Jn 1:5; 16:33; Col 2:14-15; Rom 8:37; 2 Cor 2:14;  
Rev 3:21; 5:5; 17:14)

*Next week: Judges 5 “The Song of Deborah & Barak”*

## **Community Group Study Questions**

### **Introduction: For reflection**

*Think back on the 20th century. Oppressors abounded on the global scene. What was real victimhood at the hand of a cruel, crushing, strong arm like?*

*Think about your own life. Who would you count as “enemies”? Paul describes enemies as the world, the flesh and the devil in Ephesians 2. He says we are engaged in a spiritual war in Ephesians 6. How would you describe the experience of being in a spiritual war, against sin, people, the devil?*

### **Context**

*1. Judges 4 mentions several characters. Recall what Scripture tells us about them:*

- (1) Ehud (see Judg 3:12-30)*
- (2) Canaanites (Genesis 9:20-27; 10:15-20; 13:7; 15:18-21; Exod 3:8, 17; Deut 7:1-11; 12:3; 20:17; Leviticus 18)*
- (3) The tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun*
- (4) Kenites (Gen 15:19; Num 24:21; Judg 4:11, 17; 5:24; 1 Sam 15:6; 27:10; 30:29; 1 Ch 2:55)*

*2. There are many geographical references in Judges 4. Get the lay of the land. See the battle and movement of parties unfold before you. Look online at a map of biblical Israel. Hazor was north of the Sea of Galilee. Harosheth-Haggoyim was probably west of Mount Tabor, the high point on the NE corner of the Jezreel Valley. The Kishon River flows into the valley. Though the exact location is unknown today, Kedesh-Naphtali and Kedesh were near these other locations. Then you have Bethel (think Ark of the Covenant and priests) and Ramah down south in Ephraim, though Deborah sits outside the city by a tree.*

### **Observation**

- 1. Consider the narrative structure: How does the author plot the history of this battle?*
- 2. What words or ideas are repeated in this story?*
- 3. What are the key words or phrases in the passage?*
- 4. What theological terms are used in this passage?*
- 5. What do the names of characters contribute to the meaning of this passage? Sisera has something to do with being a mercenary. Deborah means “bee”. Barak means “lightning”. Jael means “mountain goat”.*

### **Meaning**

*1. The author of Judges wrote this for Israelites, maybe in the early days of the kings (think David or Solomon). What was the main point for the original author and audience? What would it have meant for Israelites during exile in Babylon?*

*2. What themes in this passage connect to Jesus Christ? What do you learn about Jesus, the Conqueror; the Overcomer, the Snake-Slayer in Genesis 3:15; John 1:5; 16:33; Colossians 2:14-15; Romans 8:37; 2 Corinthians 2:14; Revelation 3:21; 5:5; 17:14?*

*3. What do you learn about God in this passage?*

*4. What do you learn about mankind in this passage?*

### **Application**

*1. Deborah “summons you” to hear “good news” of God’s salvation – what promises of “good news” do you need to believe? In what areas of your life do you need to trust God?*

*2. Where in your life have you seen the Snake Crusher deal a crushing blow to sin, the world and the devil?*

*2. Who around you needs to experience the victory of the Snake Crusher at the cross (Col 1), and in what ways?*

*4. Where have you failed to “press harder and harder” against sin, the world and the devil? Take your*