June 07, 2026

# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks Baptist Church**
**Grand Prairie, Texas**

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**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**
When God calls us to a task, He also gives us strength to accomplish it regardless of our limitations

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:**
Thank You for empowering me, my Savior and my strength! Please help me to follow You closely

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**
Then the Lord turned to him and said, "Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?"
**(Judges 6:14 NKJV)**

*(from "Our Daily Bread", July 25, 2020)*

**Series: The Testimony of Faithful Witnesses**

**UNIT 1: Faithful Witnesses Model God's Fidelity**

**NEXT WEEK**
**Hannah, the Faithful Supplicant**
**(1 Sam 1:9-20, 25)**

# Deborah, the Dutiful Judge
# Judges 4:4-10, 14, 21-22

## Lesson Background and Introduction

The book of Judges opens with the news that Joshua, Moses' successor, has died. His death signals a transition to what we now call "the period of the judges" (about 1373-1043 BC). The firm, centralized leadership that nomadic Israel knew under Moses and Joshua is gone. A theocracy remains in its place, a rule by God. Before the tribes of Israel went to their respective portions of land, they agreed to serve God (Joshua 24:14-28). But that didn't happen; the Israelites' commitment to God faded as the generation of the conquest died. The new generation worshiped fictitious Canaanite gods such as Baal and Ashtoreth (Judges 2:10-13) as "everyone did as they saw fit" (17:6; 21:25). Because of their idolatry, God handed his people over to their enemies. Oppression and hardship resulted (2:14-15). A cyclical pattern characterizes the book of Judges: (1) obedience to God brings peace and stability to Israel; (2) the people's resolve weakens, and faithfulness to God's covenant falters; (3) a disintegration of spiritual well-being breaks down the community, leaving God's people vulnerable to repression and attacks from external enemies; (4) oppression and suffering trigger repentance; and (5) God mercifully raises a leader to deliver them from their enemies. Typically, when we hear the noun judge, we think of a magistrate who renders legal decisions in a court of law. The Old Testament use of the term is much broader, however. The book of Judges uses the word judge to describe a leader who renders decisions for the nation. As such, the word is used to describe officials who make legal decisions in civil and criminal cases (example: Deuteronomy 25:1-2), prophets (Judges 4:4), military commanders (2:18), and even the Lord himself (11:27). In all instances, the "judge" was to lead in accordance with the will of God. Today's text takes us to approximately 1225 BC, where we consider the fourth of Israel's judges.

When a prophet's words demonstrate truth and accuracy, they confirm the prophet's calling and legitimacy. God proves Deborah's predictions and faithfulness throughout the narrative. Judge Deborah is an emboldened witness of God's fidelity and integrity. As prophetess, Deborah called Barak to her palm tree to relay God's commands. She boldly informed him he was to go into battle and that God would bring about victory. Her initiative set Barak into action. Deborah remained steadfast despite Barak's doubts and courageously followed him into the war, taking her place in military leadership for the sake of her people. She reminded Barak along the way that God planned their success, serving him through exhortation. She also assisted in discerning the correct timing and movement of the army (the role of both prophet and strategist). After their victory, Deborah led God's people in praise: "When the princes in Israel take the lead, when the people willingly offer themselves, praise the LORD!" (Judges 5:2). She proved herself a loyal and dutiful deliverer for Israel, continually giving all glory and honor to God. When the word of the Lord prompted Deborah, she responded with obedience. May her example inspire us all toward deferential submission to God's instructions. Like Deborah, may we encourage others to take God at his word.

(*Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary*)

# NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

**Deborah Introduced (Judges 4:4-5)**

*Prophetess (4)*

In Jesus there is no gender barrier (Gal 3:28-29)
Anna was a prophetess (Luke 2:36)
Philip's daughters were prophetesses (Acts 21:8-9)
Huldah was a prophetess (2 Kings 22:14)
God used a virgin prophetess to bear a son as a sign (Isa 7:10-15; Isa 8:3)

*Judge (5)*

Creation of the Judges (Exodus 18:13-19)
Reason for the Judges (Exodus 18:24-26)
Duties of the Judges (Deut 17:6-8)

**Deborah Plan (Judges 4:6-10, 14)**

*Strategy delivered (6-7)*

When God is with us, there should be no fear but courage (Josh 1:9)
When God gathers an army no nation can withstand it (Isa 13:3-4)
When God promises deliverance it will be remembered (Heb 11:32-34)

*Deborah's agreement to join battle (8-10)*

Agreement to join but with fear (Judg 7:7-11)
Agreement to join but only with a spiritual leader (2 Kings 6:2-4)
Agreement to join and support to save family (1 Sam 25:23-28)

*Deborah's faith in God's leadership (14)*

Faith in God's leadership because He leads in the path of righteousness (Ps 23:1-4)
Faith in God's leadership because Christians know His voice (John 10:1-5)
Faith in God's leadership because He leads in triumph (2 Cor 2:14)
Faith in God's leadership because of being children of God (Rom 8:12-15)
Faith in God's leadership because it leads to life and rest (Prov 19:23)

**Jael's Actions (Judges 4:21-22)**

*Violent response (21)*

Violence by Jael, wife of Heber (Judg 4:17-20)
Violence caused by hatred (Gen 27:41)
Threats of violence (Num 20:16-18)
Violence caused by conspiracy (Ps 83:5-8)
Violence caused by desiring vengeance (Ezek 25:12-13)
Violence makes one in danger of judgment (Matt 5:22)

*Prophetic fulfillment (22)*

Fulfillment through being ensnared by wickedness (Ps 9:16)
Fulfillment through being found out (Ps 37:10)
Fulfillment through the punishment of being destroyed (Ps 92:6-7)
Fulfillment through the cords of sin being their downfall (Prov 5:22)