

Deborah was the only judge recognized and accepted as a judge before winning any military victory or delivering God's people from their enemies. The Spirit of God continually gave her wisdom to exhort and comfort the people, and settle their differences.

When the Spirit indicated it was God's time to deliver Israel from the Canaanites who, then, oppressed them; she called a man to lead the army.

3. Who was that man? (Judges 4:6,7) _____
4. What was Barak's request to her before he would go to battle? (Judges 4:8) _____

He was not a coward, but he saw the enemy's strength, and he wanted to be sure he had someone with him who was in contact with God.

5. (a) What did Deborah, in Judges 4:9, say Barak would not receive in this battle? _____
(b) Why? (Judges 4:9) _____

(c) Who was Sisera? (Judges 4:2) _____

Barak's faith was not up to hers, and he insisted that Deborah come along.

6. How was Sisera killed? (Judges 4:18,21) _____

THIRD STUDY

BESTOWER OF CHARACTER

INSTRUCTION (Nehemiah 9:20a)

Nehemiah 9:20a - *Thou gavest also Thy good Spirit to instruct them...*

Instruction by God's Spirit is mentioned here and in Psalm 32:8 - *I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with Mine eye.*

This word, *instruct*, in the Hebrew, is *sakal*, which means to cause; to make or act intelligent; consider; expert; instruct; prosper; deal prudently; (give) skill; have good success; teach; make to understand wisdom; to behave wisely; make wise or be wise; guide wittingly (deliberately): all of which form character into man.

CHARACTER

The long and varied discipline in the earlier part of David's life prepared him for his duties of the throne. He wrote Psalm 51:11 - *Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me.*

God's favor and character had been upon David from the time the Holy Spirit was poured out upon him when Samuel anointed him to the kingly office (I Samuel 16:13). Later, his great sins had undoubtedly grieved the Holy Spirit and blemished his character. But David was able to pray, as he does in Psalm 51. He repents and is forgiven; but the sword never departed his house (see II Samuel 12:10).

After his death, David was succeeded by his son, Solomon. In his reign, Solomon kept the power, but lost the character.

There were other prophets, judges and kings who were anointed with the Spirit upon them for service; but many of them had no character at the end of their lives and throughout their office. One of such like men, was King Saul, God's first chosen king over Israel (I Samuel 9:1,2). Saul is anointed as king by Samuel in I Samuel 10:1-16, and we find in verse 10b, *... and the Spirit of God came upon him.*

We find his victories and family in I Samuel 14:47-52. He fights against the Philistines; becomes jealous of David (I Samuel 17:1-58; I Samuel 18:6-13); and seeks to slay him (I Samuel 19:1-24).

Because of Saul's disobedience, God rejected him from being king. *...the Lord repented that He had made Saul king over Israel* (I Samuel 15:35); and we find in I Samuel 16:14, *...But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him.* -- Saul pursues David relentlessly (I Samuel 23:1-28); David spares his life (I Samuel 26:1-25); and then we find in I Samuel 31:1-6, a defeated Saul, who commits suicide. His own rebellion caused the Spirit of God to leave him; and his jealousy and revenge, caused this man who was once the Lord's anointed, to end his own life (ref. John 10:10). Other sin is exposed in II Samuel 21:1-9.

What a tragedy! But daily, we see chosen ministers of God; turn to sin; and loose out with God and

His work. They trample on the blood of Jesus Christ; bring reproach on His Church; and have insulted the Spirit of grace (see Hebrews 10:29; ref. Hebrews 6:4-6).

DEBORAH (Judges 4:4-14) AND MIRIAM (Exodus 15:20; Numbers 12:1-16)

The greatest amount of space in the Book of Judges is given to Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson (who we studied earlier; p. 5). Out of these, Deborah is the most unusual in many ways.

1. What offices did she fill according to Judges 4:4?

Before her was Miriam, also a prophetess. Miriam had led, by the Spirit, the women of Israel with music, and dancing for joy, as they praised God, while beating their timbrels (Exodus 15:20).

Miriam's ministry was temporary, however. Jealousy of her younger brother, Moses, caused her to criticize him unfairly. God struck her with leprosy, and though she was healed after 7 days, her ministry was apparently at an end. She is not mentioned again until her death¹ (Numbers 20:1).

2. One of Miriam's two brothers was Moses. Name the other brother. (Numbers 26:59) _____

As a prophetess, Deborah was a speaker for God, speaking as she was moved (borne along, led along) by the spirit of God (II Peter 1:21). Her prophetic gift qualified her to lead, judge and rule the nation.¹

1- Book : What The Bible Says About The Holy Spirit, p. 36,37.