

Deborah and God's Unlikely Heroes

Deborah was a female leader in a time of male-dominated leadership. Compared to other judges during her time, she did not command the military nor did she possess notable physical strength. She led the Israelites by settling disputes in the community. Yet Deborah's unlikely leadership was God's answer to Israel's cry for help. Dig into Deborah's story with *Groundwork* and discover how God can do great things with people who are committed and faithful to him, whether or not they fit the world's description of a hero.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- How do you define or identify a hero?
- Who do you consider to be a hero of faith? Why?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [Deborah and God's Unlikely Heroes](#)

READ [Judges 4-5](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- In the opening segment, host Scott Hoezee observes that we have a human tendency to present the best possible version of ourselves, noting “When we tell our own stories, we often conveniently leave out things where we don’t come off looking very good.” How and where do you recognize this tendency in your life? Why is it important for us to be real and honest when sharing our testimony?
- In his commentary, *Judges For You*, Timothy Keller writes, “As will often be the case in this book [Judges] (as well as among God’s people today) it is the unlikely and the outsider—a woman and the Kenites—who display real, radical faith” (19). Now read [Matthew 18:2-4](#). Compare Keller’s observation about Judges to Jesus’ teaching about the Kingdom of Heaven. Is Keller’s observation consistent with Jesus’ teaching? Why or why not? What conclusions can we draw from these observations to help us cultivate and strengthen our own faith?
- Who from this story do you think demonstrates the most faith in God? Why? In what way are Deborah, Barak, and Jael all unlikely heroes? What qualities did they all share that made it possible for God to use them in his plan to deliver Israel?
- In segment 3, host Dave Bast remarks that Deborah and Jael are both champions “from an unexpected place.” In what ways is Jesus Christ also a “champion from an unexpected place?” What do you think this story about Deborah, Barak, and Jael’s deliverance of the Israelites contributes to our understanding of God’s plan for salvation?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Deuteronomy 18:15-18](#), [1 Corinthians 1:26-29](#), [Hebrews 11:1, 32-33](#)

CONCLUSION

At the end of the episode Dave recalls a quote from Saint Teresa of Calcutta, “I am just a little pencil in God’s hand.” He responded to her reflection on her own life by declaring, “but God can write great stories with little pencils, and he can do it with us, too.”

How does this quote encourage you in your faith today? How does it challenge you?

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