

MOOREBANK-HAMMONDVILLE ANGLICAN CHURCHES
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION
Judges 4-5 – Deborah and Barak

1. Read verses 1-3. What is the problem from God's perspective? What is the problem from Israel's perspective? (ie. in addition to crying out to the Lord, what should Israel have done about their lives?) – There is always a temptation to be more concerned with real external troubles in your life than the sin/evil in your own life.
2. How might this affect what you pray about, what you lose sleep over and what you try to fix? What will help us see things from God's perspective as well as ours?
3. Read the following verses and note some of the patterns in Judges:

Pattern 1: 3:7, 3:12, 4:1

Pattern 2: 3:8, 3:12-14, 4:2

Pattern 3: 3:9, 3:15, 4:3

What then do you expect in verse 4? What is surprising about verse 4? Is Deborah a judge? Deborah doesn't seem to have needed a special invitation to do her judging – do you feel like you need permission to serve God's people in our church? Why/why not?

4. Compared to Othniel (3:9), Ehud (3:15) and Shamgar (3:31), what does Deborah NOT do for Israel? Do you think there's a reason that 1 Samuel 12:11 and Hebrews 11 mention Barak and not Deborah?
5. Read verses 6-9. What is expected of Barak? How do you feel about Barak's response? Why do you think Barak responds the way he does? How does the message from God change in light of Barak's response (cf verse 7 and verse 9)?

Can you think of examples where a Christian might put conditions on being obedient to God's word? What is the relationship between trust in God and obedience? Would you describe yourself as one who trusts God? Would you describe yourself as obedient to God?

6. Read verses 12-24. God does exactly as he promised in giving Sisera's army over to Barak's army, but Sisera is not handed over to Barak. How does God show his power in the actions of the foreign domestic tent-wife Jael?
7. Read 5:24-31 – how are Jael's brutal actions put into context by the mention of Sisera's army's approach to the spoils of war (esp 5:30)?
8. Chapter 5 is a victory song to God. Notice that in 5:1 both Deborah and Barak join in. Can we learn anything about Barak's trust in God from this? Although Barak seemed conditionally obedient at the start, he still carried out his role. Furthermore, can we learn anything about God from this?
9. Hebrews 11 mentions Barak as commended for his trust. What can Barak teach us about the nature of trusting God?