

Judges 4-5 Bloody Spikes and Crushed Skulls

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Date: 02 November 2025

Preacher: Dan Morley

[0 : 00] Now, in the book of Judges, we've been looking at how the shape of the gospel is in the book of the Judges, or the shadow and promise of Christ and his kingdom, or a redemptive historical look at the book of Judges.

And today, we find ourselves in chapter 4, in the current cycle. Now, we're going to be reading all of chapter 4. Chapter 4 is a narrative of the next cycle, and then chapter 5 is a celebration song. So, we'll read all four, but we will also reference chapter 5. So, keep it in front of you, and keep your finger here, because we'll continue to work through it and refer to it.

But Judges, chapter 4. Now, Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Napadoth, was judging Israel at that time.

And she would sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the mountains of Ephraim. And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.

[1 : 43] Then she sent and called for Barak, the son of Abinom, from Kadesh in Naphtali, and said to him, Has not the Lord God of Israel commanded, Go and deploy troops at Mount Tabor?

Take with you ten thousand men of the sons of Naphtali and of the sons of Zebulun. And against you I will deploy Sisera, the commander of Joban's army, with his chariots and his multitude at the river Kishon.

And I will deliver him into your hand. And Barak said to her, If you will go with me, then I will go. But if you will not go with me, I will not go.

So she said, I will surely go with you. Nevertheless, there will be no glory for you in the journey you are taking. For the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman.

Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kadesh. And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kadesh. He went up with ten thousand men under his command.

[2 : 49] And Deborah went up with him. Now Heber, the Kenite of the children of Hobab, the father-in-law of Moses, had separated himself from the Kenites and pitched his tent near the terebinth tree at Zanim, which is beside Kadesh.

And they reported to Sisera that Barak, the son of Abinom, had gone up to Mount Tabor. So Sisera gathered together all his chariots, nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people who were with him.

From Herosheth Hagoyim to the river Kishon. Then Deborah said to Barak, Up, for this is the day in which the Lord has delivered Sisera into your hand.

Has not the Lord gone out before you? So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him. And the Lord rooted Sisera and all his chariots and all his army with the edge of the sword before Barak.

And Sisera alighted from his chariot and fled away on foot. But Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Herosheth Hagoyim.

[4 : 00] And all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword. Not a man was left. However, Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite.

For there was peace between Jabin king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. And Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, Turn aside, my lord.

Turn aside to me. Do not fear. And when he had turned aside with her into the tent, she covered him with a blanket. Then he said to her, Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty.

So she opened a jug of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him. And he said to her, Stand at the door of the tent, and if any man comes and inquires of you and says, Is there any man here?

You shall say no. Then Jael, Heber's wife, took a tent peg and took a hammer in her hand and went softly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it went down into the ground, for he was fast

asleep and weary.

[5 : 12] So he died. And then as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him and said to him, Come, I will show you the man whom you seek.

And when he went into her tent, there lay Sisera dead with the peg in his temple. So on that day, God subdued Jabin, king of Canaan, in the presence of the children of Israel.

And the hand of the children of Israel grew stronger and stronger against Jabin, king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin, king of Canaan. Lord, we again thank you for your word.

We thank you for the time we have this morning to sit under your word. We pray that you would illuminate your word to us, that you would lead us into all truth. I pray that you would use even me in the preaching of your word.

We pray that you would make it effectual to all the hearers. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Now, in Judges chapter 4, what's going on, what we see in this chapter, in chapter 4 and chapter 5, is that the Lord delivers his people from oppression, and he paints a picture, a shadowy picture, with an echo, a bloodied spike, and a crushed skull.

[6 : 28] So again, the Lord delivers his people from oppression, and paints a shadowy picture, with an echo, a bloodied spike, and a crushed skull. So we are going to examine, we're going to look at the Canaanite cycle, as it continues yet again.

We will spend some time on the agent of deliverance, and then we are going to focus some of our time on the woman and the skull crushing.

Or the woman and skull crushing. So, first of all, the Canaanization cycle. Here we find ourselves, yet again, in another cycle. So far, we have seen God deliver his people, and redeem them from the house of bondage, from slavery in Egypt, led them through the wilderness, and into the conquest, and through the leadership of Joshua, settled into the promised land.

And they compromised, and they allowed evil to continue in the land. That evil being a false religion and immoral practices, which began to characterize their behavior and their religion.

And so, because of covenant sanctions, because of covenant threats, because they did not serve the Lord, instead, they served other gods, and they forsake the Lord. So, these covenant threats kicked in, and God raises up oppression, and under the oppression, the people cry out for deliverance.

[7 : 57] So, first, we saw that the Lord raised up a deliverer, and that was Othniel, whose name meant a lion of God, and he was from the tribe of Judah. And he delivered the people from the oppression of Cushon Rishathayim, whose name means double evil.

So, in that account, we saw that the Lion of Judah defeated the double evil, oppressive king, and delivered the people from oppression.

And yet, this cycle continued. The people, again, did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and he raised up an oppressive enemy, and this was Eglon. So, the people cried out from under oppression, and the Lord raised up a deliverer, and that was Ehud.

And Ehud was the one who had a special message from God, and that special message from this left-handed deliverer was one of defeat, a decisive blow of defeat to the enemy, and liberation for captives.

And then, the third cycle that we see occurring, and there's Shamgar and the ox goad. And Shamgar's name meant sword, where God uses this sword in defeating the enemy, with a tool, the weapon of the ox goad.

[9 : 21] And the function of the ox goad was that it was to prick the beast under burden, to send it in the way in which it is to go. And now, we find ourselves here again, in another cycle.

And where we find ourselves today, is that there is a need for salvation. It starts off by saying, Israel did evil again.

When Ehud was dead, the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord. So, the Lord sold them into the hand of Jobban, king of Canaan. So, Israel again does what is evil in the sight of the Lord, and there is judgment.

There is judgment from God against sin. Why is there judgment against sin? Because God is holy, God is righteous, and God is just, and God doesn't change.

God's immutable holiness does not change to overlook sin. God's judgment stands against sin. And so, God sold them into the hand of an oppressive enemy.

[10 : 31] And it tells us who this oppressive enemy is. The oppressive enemy is Jobban, a Canaanite king who reigned in Hazor. Now, it doesn't tell us a whole lot in this direct text, but scripture does tell us more about Jobban, this Canaanite king who reigns in Hazor.

Now, Jobban is believed is not a name, but more so a title, such as you would read of Pharaoh, Pharaoh being a title for the ruler of Egypt or a Caesar. So, it's more a title of the ruler, the king, of a Canaanite king.

And this Jobban, this king of Canaan, is in Hazor. And we know from scripture, although the text doesn't tell us this, that this oppressive, evil enemy is an enemy with a grudge.

Back in Joshua, in Joshua chapter 1, under the leadership of Joshua, during the conquest, they come to Hazor. And there, remember the title of Jobban, we see there, Jobban, the king of Canaan, and the people of Israel, under the leadership of Joshua, took the city of Hazor, destroyed it, and took Jobban by the sword and destroyed the city.

Now, this was a while ago, so clearly, this isn't the same Jobban because he was killed by the sword. But, the people were permitted to reestablish themselves, reestablish their ways, re-fortify, and there's a resurgence of this enemy.

[12 : 09] Not only are they a resurgence, but they are also under the king, who is Jobban, king of Canaan. And not only that, but they've also fortified themselves with the advancements of technology and warfare, which we'll see shortly.

So, this oppressive enemy is an enemy with a grudge. And it tells us the commander of the army was Sisera, and Sisera was a ruthless persecutor.

We'll see a lot more of that as we look into chapter 5. But the commander of this enemy with a grudge is Sisera. And he has, it tells us, 900 chariots of iron.

Now, at this time, these were advancements in military warfare technology. These were advancements that would have given them a significantly upper hand.

And advancements, which, if you recall, in Judges 1, were such that the people said, we can't defeat them, they've got chariots of iron. So, Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, harshly oppressed the people of Israel.

[13 : 16] And how long did this harsh oppression occur? Was it a month? Was it two months? Was it six months? Was it a whole year? It tells us this occurred for 20 years.

20 years of harsh oppression. And these were very hard times. And it goes into detail in chapter 5 to tell us the extent of the hard times of this oppression.

In 5, 6, it says, in the time of Jael, the highways were deserted and the travelers walked along the byways. Village life ceased. It ceased in Israel.

Now, quite a few years ago, I was in Mali, Africa, and while I was there, there was a coup that took place where the military overthrew the government and the military over, in overthrowing the government, they left their posts in all of the country and there were jihadist, Tuareg, nomad rebels who then moved into the northern part of the country and took over with the absence of the military and the absence of proper rulership.

And they were forcefully enforcing their Sharia law which included mutilation, it included decapitation, rape, murder, and burnings and it was a time where people avoided the highways.

[14 : 38] If you wanted to go somewhere, you would take the back roads. There was much danger, there was much to be fearful of. But yet, these harsh times for Israel was to such an extent that it tells us not only the highways were deserted, not only the travelers walked along the byways, but village life ceased.

it ceased in Israel. And so, the children of Israel cried out to the Lord. Which brings us to our second point.

The people are prone to wander, they have sinned again, and cry out for deliverance. So our second point is the agent of deliverance.

the big question with Judges 4 and 5 is who is today's Old Testament deliverer?

So we are going to examine three people that are mentioned in them, what their role and function is, and which one is the deliverer. So, you'll notice the first one that's mentioned is Deborah.

[15 : 47] Deborah, it tells us, is a prophetess who is judging in Israel. not in the sense of a military leader, not a deliverer, but in an administrative sense.

Deborah was judging Israel, she was a prophetess, and this speaks to the negligence of the Levites and to the failure of the Levites that they were not doing, which is already obvious to begin with

because they were not protecting from evil, they were not protecting from false teaching. So this actually speaks to the failure of the Levites and Deborah's role here, Deborah's function is that of a prophetess and egalitarians will try to use this text as a springboard, which, taking an Old Testament passage out of context doesn't void New Testament clear didactic teaching. Scripture teaches of male headship in the church and in the home, which is really, the purpose of it is because it paints a picture of Christ in the church and it truly is a wonderful thing where the husband is self-sacrificially leading and cherishing and nourishing and the wife is respectfully coming under her husband and this paints a picture of Christ in the church. So to take Judges 4 and 5 out of context, it's actually, when you realize the greater context of it, it doesn't help their cause at all because there is no king in Israel and everyone does what is right in their own eyes and we see they are in sin.

[17:28] These people are not following after God and as the book of Judges progresses and the canonization affects the people of Israel, we see that their view of women becomes that of objectifying them, treating them because it's the ways of the religion around them and the temple prostitution, they treat women then an increasing view of them as personal property and just an object for carnal gratification.

So really, we don't want to look at Judges as normative for how to treat women unless you're looking at the beginning where it's speaking of Caleb and his daughter and the propriety and the dignity towards women as made in the image of God.

All that to say, what this text is speaking of, Deborah's role and function here is that of a prophetess. She's not the deliverer. But God has not abandoned his people completely. He's not completely given them over to be completely destroyed. Because he is a covenant faithful God and he is at work. So Deborah is not the deliverer. The text does not say that she is the one whom the Lord raised up.

She is not the one whom the Spirit of the Lord was upon. She is not the one who delivers Israel. But, she does serve a function. And that is that God speaks through her to announce coming deliverance.

[19:01] Okay? Keep that in your back pocket. God speaks through her to announce the coming deliverance. So she sends and calls for Barak, Barak who is the deliverer, and promised that the Lord will deliver the enemy into his hand.

Deborah, as a prophetess, promises from the Lord that the Lord will deliver the oppressive enemy into Barak's hand. And Hebrews 11.32 recounts Barak, not Deborah.

So what is Deborah's function here? Well, in chapter 5, verse 7, she says that she is as a mother. She is as a mother in Israel.

Now, we may start to hear her, hear, hear, an echo starting to take shape. So let's move on to Barak.

Barak is the deliverer. He is not a co-deliverer. He is the one whom the Lord sells the enemy into his hand. So in 4, in chapter 4, verse 8, why does Barak want Deborah to go with him?

[20:14] He wants Deborah to go with him because the Lord promised deliverance through Deborah. So Barak, out of faith, wants the Lord on his side.

So he wants the assurance that the Lord will deliver the enemy to his hand. 4, 14 says, Then Deborah said to Barak, up, for this is the day in which the Lord has delivered Sisera into your hand. And further, it says, Has not the Lord gone out before you? And then in 5, 12, remembering 5, 12 is the celebration song. It says, looking, we're counting back, it says, Arise, Barak, and lead your captives away.

And back to chapter 4 again of verse 16, as it further progresses in the narrative, it says, Barak pursued all the army of Sisera, fell by the edge of the sword.

Barak is the military leader. Barak is the deliverer. Barak is the one who destroys the evil, oppressive enemy. Next, we have somebody else in the narrative, and that is Jael.

[21:21] We read the narrative in chapter 4, but I want to draw your attention in chapter 5 in the celebration song as it recounts the, if we will, the art of skull crushing at the hand of Jael.

So turn in chapter 5 to verse 24, and we'll read 24 to 27. Most blessed among women is Jael. So she is commended for what she has done. The wife of Heber, the Kenite, blessed is she among women in tents.

He asked for water, she gave milk, she brought out cream in a lordly bowl. Now pause there for a moment. I'm sure there's a lot of details that occurred that we don't hear of.

We don't hear of the color of the rug, we don't hear of the garden mints were being worn or any of these things, but the details that are given, there's a reason why they're given.

[22 : 21] So why do you think the details would be given of the fact that he asked for water but she gave him milk, that she brought out cream in a lordly bowl. Now don't read this as though this occurred today.

It's not like she went to the fridge and brought out a jug of nice cold refreshing milk. What she brought him was not the water that would be refreshing, but that which would be rich, this milk. Now remember what's happening here. So Sisera, his enemy was just destroyed. He ditched his chariot and he ran for his life and he's being pursued.

Imagine the adrenaline that would be coursing through your body while you're being pursued, running for your life. I'm sure his eyes were twice the size, his nostrils were probably flared, he was breathing heavy.

you would not exactly be in the mood for a siesta. And he's parched because he's been running, so he's thirsty and he wants water. She doesn't give him water, she gives him milk.

[23 : 23] This is clever. She knows exactly what she's doing. When you have something that's rich, what occurs? Your body switches into digestion mode. And that's why we have lunch after the sermon and not before the sermon.

What she's doing is she's inducing a food coma. He comes, he's fleeing for his life, and she puts him into a food coma.

He asked for water, she gave milk, she brought out cream in a lordly bowl, she stretched her hand to the tent peg, her right hand to the workman's hammer, she pounded Sisera, she pierced his head, she split and struck through his temple.

At her feet, he sank, he fell, he lay still. At her feet, he sank, he fell. Where he sank there, he fell dead. Now I remember reading a meme once, and I don't formulate my theology based on memes, but it said something along the lines of, it was written by a woman and it said, if you can't handle me as a judge is for JL, then you don't deserve me as a Proverbs 31 woman.

Anyways, JL, she was a non-Israelite, she has a non-Israelite background. In chapter 4, flip back to 4, verse 11, you see, now Heber, the Kenite, of the children of Hobab, here it is, the father-in-law of Moses, had separated himself from the Kenites, and so there's distant relations here, distant relations, and then they kind of branch off and do their own thing, and then Heber, the Kenite, he branches off and does his own thing.

[25 : 07] There's distant relations, but not Israelite. Separated himself from the Kenites and pitched his tent near the terebinth tree at Zanim, which is beside Kadesh.

Now, what's the significance of Heber and this distant relation? Well, look over at 17 and the relation between Heber and JL. However, Sisera had fled away on foot to the tent of JL, the wife of Heber, the Kenite.

So, JL is not Israelite background, but there is far distant relations. The Kenites were independent nomads of southern Palestine living in tents.

Flip back to Judges 1, 16 to 19, to demonstrate some of the context and what these names mean. verse 16, Now, the children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up from the city of Palms with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which lies in the south near Arad.

And they went and dwelt among the people. And Judah went with his brother Simeon, and they attacked the Canaanites who inhabited Jephtheth, and utterly destroyed it.

[26 : 25] So, the name of the city was called Hormah. Also, Judah took Gaza with its territory, Ashkelon with its territory, and Ekron with its territory. So, the Lord was with Judah, and they drove out the mountaineers, but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the lowland because they had chariots of iron.

Now, if you recall, the Lord said that he will deliver the enemies into their hand. It was a matter of faith, but yet, they did not trust God as the Almighty God, as though something in which God created, would have more power than the Almighty, Eternal God.

Rather, they did not want to do it, so they said, we can't do it, they have chariots of iron. So, back to Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite, and we read that there was a peace treaty alliance that was made with Javan.

So, there's this distant relation with the Israelites, but yet, the Kenites kind of branch off and do their own thing, and then Heber branches off and does his own thing. We see that Heber has this peace treaty, or this alliance with Javan, which is why Sisera would have fled there, seeking shelter in this tent of Heber, where Jael was dwelling.

So, was Jael's action treachery? there's much debate over how to classify what occurs and what occurs here.

[28 : 02] Is it treachery? Well, you might think that if you were Sisera, but Sisera has no thoughts about it now. Some call it a scandal. You could even call it a stumbling block.

But Jael is commended, isn't she? And in chapter 5, she's commended for her dirt nap done in faith. And Jael recognized that Sisera was a wicked, oppressive commander of the evil, oppressive enemy.

And we know this further in chapter 5, if you've read it recently, that when Sisera, the commander, when he's late in returning from battle, and his mother starts to worry about why he's late, how is she comforted?

His mother's comforters try to comfort her by telling her he's probably just off raping and pillaging, and she's comforted by this. This is the state in which these people are in, that the mother is comforted by the fact that he's late because he's raping and pillaging.

This is Sisera, and this is the army of Javan. This is the people whom we're talking about. And not only that, but this is war. This is war, a time of war, in which it occurred, and in this war, J.L.

[29 : 21] recognized that here is this oppressive, evil enemy. And the oppression was so harsh that the highways were deserted. Try to picture it, try to picture it where there is such harsh oppression that the highways are deserted and village life ceased.

The highways were deserted until J.L.'s tent became the place of the oppressive enemy commander's crushed skull and a bloody spike.

And in 5.24, it says she is most blessed among women. Now, Scripture uses this language more than once, doesn't it?

Most blessed among women, so also was Rahab, and also Ruth. Rahab and Ruth were also outsiders, Gentile outsiders, whom God brought in and used in the unfolding genealogy through whom Christ came.

Through them, through them functioning as mothers, through the genealogy, through these women functioning as mothers, would come the skull crushing seed of the woman.

[30 : 39] Now, in looking at the various people in this narrative, we must also look at the Lord and his role in this deliverance. The Lord is the champion and true savior of Israel.

Chapter 4, verse 9 says, the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. Look over to 4, chapter 14 and 15 and see what that says.

Then Deborah said to Barak, up, for this is the day in which the Lord has delivered Sisera into your hand.

Has not the Lord gone out before you? So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with 10,000 men following him and the Lord routed Sisera in all his chariots and all his army fell with the edge of the sword before Barak.

The Lord routed Sisera, that is, threw them into confusion, threw them into a panic. The Lord is the champion and the true savior of Israel. It's interesting, isn't it, especially considering back in chapter 1 when these chariots of iron were too much, they can't be defeated, but yet here Sisera and his army with 900 chariots of iron thrown into confusion and defeated at the edge of the sword.

[32 : 02] God is the uncaused first cause who uses second causes. God is eternal, he is infinite, he is first, there is nothing and nobody before God, there is nobody who caused God, there is nobody who created God, God did not take somebody else's advice in being God or in his works of creation, his works of providence, his works of redemption.

God is uncaused, he is independent, he is self-existent, he is infinitely wise, he is the uncaused first cause, but yet he uses second causes such as Sisera.

The Lord has used unlikely, unexpected, and unconventional people and methods. I think we've seen that as we've worked through judges so far, and so it continues in our narrative today.

Which brings us to our third point, that these Old Testament human heroes are not the skull crushing seed of the woman from Genesis 3.15.

So our third point is the woman and the skull crusher. In Genesis, in the Genesis 3.15 gospel promise, what is the instrument through whom would come defeat of the serpent?

[33 : 33] The instrument through whom would come defeat of the serpent was the woman. The seed of the woman would crush the serpent's head. head. That's important.

The seed of the woman. I think we all understand the concept of how the seed works and women being mother and giving birth. But what to say in all this is that it was the seed, the seed of the woman.

The woman functions as a mother. This is all kind of very simple, but I just don't want to pass over it too quickly and lose sight of the details. Deborah is not the deliverer.

Barak is a deliverer. But Deborah, it is promised through her who acts as a mother. She says in her song in chapter 5, she is as a mother.

So it is promised through her who acts as a mother that deliverance would come from the Lord.

This is sounding rather familiar, isn't it? Barak, the military leader, is the deliverer.

[34 : 41] But he doesn't get the glory. He doesn't get the glory of the crushing blow. Instead, J.L. J.L., it says, is most blessed among women.

J.L. gets the glory. It says, she is most blessed among women. Now, the word blessed as it's used here, it's not in the context of being excused for having sneezed.

It's something much more. It's in the context of deliverance. It's referring to though, it's in the context of deliverance, which is fulfilled, being blessed is fulfilled by being purchased back by God, delivered from the bondage of sin, adopted as sons, and heirs with Christ, blessed to all eternity.

So, let's quickly revisit and summarize the functions of the different people. Deborah, as a mother, rings bells reminding us back to Eve in Genesis 3.15.

J.L., who says is most blessed among women in 5.25, is pointing us forward to another mother, another mother who is most blessed among women.

[35 : 56] J.L., this can I stay at home tent wife, was used by God in the crushing of the enemy's skull. J.L., most blessed among women, points ahead, she points ahead further than Rahab and Ruth.

She points ahead to Luke 1.42, and in Luke 1.42 it says, Mary was told, blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, the seed.

Eve was told that the skull crushing deliverer would be the seed of the woman. J.L., most blessed among women, crushed the enemy's head, and Mary, most blessed among women, brought forth the skull crushing seed of the woman.

Do you hear the echo? It echoes through the Old Testament leading up to the coming of Christ.

People need a deliverer. So, some concluding uses to take of this narrative.

First of all, Genesis 3.15 is echoed throughout Scripture. Some have said quite appropriately that one way to look at the Bible is there's the first three chapters, and then the rest of the Bible is the unfolding or outworking of the first three chapters, or Genesis 3.15, leading up to Genesis 3.15, and Genesis 3.15 unfolding for the rest of the Bible.

[37 : 32] So, Genesis 3.15 is echoed, and Genesis 3.15 is where it revealed through the curse, the promise of the coming deliverer through the seed of the woman who would crush the serpent's skull.

So, it's echoed throughout Scripture and revealed by farther steps. First, and shadow by types and copies in the Old Testament, and then in substance by Christ in the New Testament.

And some of these echoes in the Old Testament, whether it can be a person, it can be a place, it can be an event, it can be an institution, but some of these echoes signify truth by typified function being associated with a person, place, event, institution, etc.

So, to say that in other ways, when something that has happened in the Old Testament is referenced by that person, that place, that event, that institution, it's not referring to that particular thing, but the function which occurred surrounding it.

So, a simple example would be Noah and the Ark, when we understand that as a type of Christ, it's not that Christ is made of gopher wood, but the function of the Ark is that God's people were led safely through judgment to a type of new land.

[38 : 52] So, it's the function, it's not that Christ is made of gopher wood, but that those who are in Christ are led safely through judgment into new creation land. So, it signifies the truth typifying the function associated with the thing.

The New Testament, having the light turned on by Christ's name, it's the Advent, further describes the spiritual kingdom of Christ, that which is not seen, the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and the Advent further describes this kingdom of Christ with analogical language from the Old Testament. And the use of Old Testament language and names, it's not to indicate a return to those things, it's not to indicate a reversal in redemptive history to go back to that which pointed of Christ, rather it's to put forward a picture of the function which occurred tangibly to understand that which is unseen. So, it tangibly demonstrates a truth or function. Now, in Revelation 16, if you've read it recently, you recall that Revelation 16 speaks of a battle against an enemy with a grudge who has been oppressing God's people.

Sounds rather familiar, doesn't it? And in Revelation 16, when it speaks of this battle against an enemy with a grudge who's been oppressing God's people, it tells us it's the battle of Armageddon. [40 : 30] And then it says, which means Mount Megadu. And this, in reading this, triggers us to remember Deborah's song.

Deborah's song in chapter 5, verse 19, speaks of the battle at Megadu. So, when we read this, we are to remember the function that occurred at Megadu to understand what it's speaking of in Revelation 16.

So, in doing so, in triggering us to remember Deborah's song of the battle at Megadu, her song celebrating the Lord's battle victory over a harshly oppressive evil enemy force with a grudge, this is very comforting for us.

This is very comforting for believers because as we understand the function that occurred here, and bring that with us when we read that in Revelation 16, it's very comforting for believers in knowing that the forces of darkness of an evil enemy with a grudge will in no way at any time have victory over Christ and his church.

Not past, not present, not future. Second concluding use is that Jael used a mallet and a spike to crush the enemy's skull.

[41 : 51] Now, if you think that this points to the gospel, you've hit the nail on the head. Jesus, the seed of the woman, who knew no sin, was made sin, and he bore the sins of the many, that is, his people past, present, and future, and Jesus was nailed to the cross at Golgotha, Golgotha being the place of the skull.

He was nailed to the cross at the place of the skull, and at the cross, the believer's sin was driven through with bloodied spikes, and full payment was made as the enemy was defeated with a crushing blow.

So, in Isaiah 53, verse 5, it says, he was pierced for our transgressions. The people of the Old Testament, they were not the Messiah.

These heroes, these Old Testament heroes of the Old Testament, they are not the Messiah. These people, they are not the skull-crushing seed of the woman, which was promised and anticipated from Genesis 3.15.

They're not even moral examples, which are telling us to hammer down on morals. They're not intended to cause us to gaze upon ourselves, but to gaze upon Christ.

[43 : 11] We're not told to receive ourselves. We're not told to rest upon ourselves. We're not told to embrace ourselves, to entrust in ourselves. Not to gaze upon ourselves, but to gaze upon Christ, to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel, to rest on Jesus Christ alone, to receive Christ, to trust in him.

And through the unlikely incarnation of the word, the unexpected substitutionary death of the Messiah, and the victorious resurrection and ascension of the Redeemer, the enemy was defeated. That is, sin, death, Satan, hell, the forces of darkness, defeated. It was crushed. In the book of Judges, it's full of death, it's full of blood, it's full of gore, and so is the account of our deliverance. The account of our deliverance is bloody, it's graphic, it's gruesome, and it's horrific. And every bit of it is exactly what our sins have earned.

It's exactly what our sins deserve. It is the wages of our sin. And it's the penalty that we owe. But Jesus paid it all.

[44 : 33] Once for all, in our place, the one for the many, because God is immutably holy, righteous, and just. Remember when we started off.

Why God's judgment against sin? Because God is holy. God is righteous. God is just. And he does not change. And we see here, looking back at Christ crucified on the cross, when we look back, we

are able to see, if you will, the afterglow of the glory of Christ in a way which cannot be otherwise seen in such detail.

Now, if you recall when Moses wanted to see the glory of God, he could not. Because sinful man cannot gaze upon the glory of God and live.

We cannot gaze upon the fullness of the glory of the holiness of God, the righteousness of God, and of the justice of God, and live. But with Moses, you remember, as it were, God put him in the cleft of the rock, passed by, and in looking back, or at the back, or the afterglow, what did he see? What did God declare about himself? God declared his compassion, and his long-suffering, his abounding in love, and grace, and in truth.

[45 : 54] Sinful mankind cannot gaze upon the glory of God. All that is in God is God. God does not change from being holy to become compassion, but as we look at God from a different angle, that is, looking back at Christ having passed by in the afterglow, we see that God is compassionate, God is long-suffering, God is abounding in mercy, and love, and in truth.

Jesus paid it all. Once for all, in our place, the one for the many. And so believers, then, can say, my sin is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more.

We can look back at Christ and say, my sin is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more. So, let's hammer the point home.

Deliverance, salvation, forgiveness, rest, these things come from not looking to ourselves, but from looking to Christ, believing on Him alone for salvation, receiving Christ, and in receiving Christ, receiving His penal substitution, that is paying the penalty in our place as a substitute, that we would have forgiveness of sins, and receiving His righteousness, receiving His penal substitution and His righteousness.

And finally, the fourth concluding use, Judges 5, 31, ends in this way. Actually, turn there if you still have it open. In chapter 5, verse 31, Deborah's celebration song of the narrative of the victory, it ends in this way.

[47 : 41] Look at verse 31. Verse 31. Thus, let all your enemies perish, O Lord, but let those who love Him be like the sun when it comes out in full strength.

So, the land had rest for forty years. Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord. Here we go again.

One of my favorite quotes is by Augustine in his book called Confessions. It's really an autobiography where he recounts his life theologically.

He theologically explains his life and his conversion. And he does so directing it to God as it's a prayer. Theologically recounting his life autobiographically as a prayer towards God.

And in it, in speaking to God, he says, Thou hast formed us for thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in thee.

[48 : 47] The rest that the land had in Judges, it was temporary. But the rest that is found in Christ, it's not for just forty years. It's not forty years of rest.

It is an eternal rest. Eternal rest, being most blessed of all people to all eternity. Dear Lord, we thank you for your word.

We thank you for how Christ is revealed in your word. We thank you that you reveal wonderful things to us through your word. We thank you for the shape of Christ, the promise of Christ, the shadow of Christ, Christ's kingdom, and the gospel, and this account.

We thank you for redemption, which is in Christ, and eternal rest. We thank you that the oppressive, evil enemy has been defeated, has been crushed.

We thank you that the penalty for sins of the elect, of believers, has been paid in full. That when we look back and that we see bloodied spikes and crushed skulls, that we see this echo of the seed of the woman who would crush the head of the serpent, which points to Christ.

[50 : 01] Thank you that we can look back and look at Christ crucified, that we can rest on Christ alone for salvation. There are those here today who have not yet rested on Christ for salvation.

I pray, Lord, that you would be at work and that you would save the lost. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll stand and sing, When Peace Like a River.

If you'll take your hymnal and turn to hymn 580, When Peace Like a River.