

Judges 5:23

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being willing to face the enemy and using the secret super weapon of prayer to defeat them.

Scripture: Judges 5:23, Psalm 124, Matthew 12:30, Romans 8:31, James 4:17

Topics: "The Power of Prayer", "Action Against Evil"

Description

Chuck Smith emphasizes the curse of Meroz, highlighting the consequences of inaction in the face of evil. He recounts the story of Israel's oppression under Jabin and Sisera, and how Deborah, a prophetess, called Barak to action. The curse upon Meroz serves as a warning against complacency, as it was not for overt evil but for failing to assist in the fight against oppression. Smith encourages believers to engage actively in spiritual warfare through prayer and action, rather than remaining passive like the inhabitants of Meroz. He reminds the congregation that the power of God is greater than any enemy they face, urging them to take a stand against the overwhelming odds of evil in society.

Transcript

"THE CURSE OF MEROZ."

I. THE BACKGROUND TO OUR STORY:

A. The children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord.

1. As a result, the Lord delivered them into the hand of Jabin who ruled over that great city of Hazor in the upper Galilee.

2. He had a powerful army under the leadership of a captain named Sisera.

3. He had been ruling over Israel for twenty years.

4. The people in their distress cried unto the Lord.

5. Sisera's army was well-armed; he had 900 chariots. In those days a chariot was equivalent to a tank in modern battle.

a. Imagine the infantry armed only with rifles going against an armored division of 900 tanks, and you have a picture of the impossible situation they were facing.

b. Their chance of freeing themselves from the bondage of the Canaanites was zero.

B. At that time a woman, whose name was Deborah, was the ruling judge over Israel, and she was a prophetess.

1. She called a man named Barak to her, who was from the tribe of Naphtali.

2. Being a prophetess, she said that the Lord had commanded him to take 10,000 men from the tribe of Naphtali and Zebulun and go to Mount Tabor and that the Lord would draw Sisera to the valley of Megiddo, and the Lord would deliver Sisera and his army to him there.

3. Brave Barak told Deborah that he would not go unless she would go with him.

4. She promised to go with him, but prophesied that a woman would receive the glory for destroying their enemy Sisera.

5. When Sisera heard that the Israelites had gathered 10,000 men at Mount Tabor, he brought a great army with the 900 chariots into the valley of Megiddo to the river Kishon to fight against them there.

6. God sent a heavy rain that caused the Kishon to overflow, and the chariots got bogged down in the mud and became useless.

7. The army of Sisera was soundly defeated, and Sisera sought to flee the battle scene on foot.

II. THE SONG OF DEBORAH. SHE COMPOSED A SONG TO CELEBRATE GOD'S GREAT VICTORY AGAINST THEIR ENEMY. A. "Praise the Lord for delivering Israel when the people willingly offered themselves." 1. God had summoned the people and they willingly responded to the call of God. 2. It is important to remember that the enemy was much greater in number and power. 3. It was one of those many times, when the people of God were willing to face a much stronger enemy because they had the promise of God that He would be with them. 4.

Paul the Apostle asked in Romans 8, "For if God be for us who can be against us." 5. It appears that the people of God are always facing an enemy that seems overwhelming because of their seeming superior power. 6. There is that great psalm that declares: PSA 124:1 If it had not been that the LORD who was on our side, may Israel now say; PSA 124:2 If it had not been that the LORD was on our side, when men rose up against us: PSA 124:3 Then they would have swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: PSA 124:4 Then the waters would have overwhelmed us, the streams would have gone over our soul: PSA 124:5 The proud waters would have gone over our soul.

PSA 124:6 Blessed be Jehovah, who has not given us as a prey to their teeth. PSA 124:7 Our soul has escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we have escaped. PSA 124:8 Our help [is] in the name of Jehovah who made heaven and earth. 7. Looking at the power of the enemy and the odds that we face, it seems that our seeking to overcome the enemy is futile. 8. And so it would be if the Lord was not on our side. 9. Today as we see how deeply entrenched evil is in our society, we are prone to faint.

We see how Satan seems to control the whole media, magazines, papers, T.V., movies, the government here in the state of California; the public school system. 10. How can you possibly fight against such a powerful enemy? How can you ever hope to win? 11. We see the power of the enemy and many times we

then fail to see the power of God. B. Deborah praised those who offered themselves willingly to go out and face the powerful enemy, verse 9. 1. She speaks how that God fought with them from heaven, referring to the flood of rain that disabled the chariots. 2.

The flooding of the river Kishon carried many of them away. C. She then proclaimed a curse upon Meroz. JUD 5:23 Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty. 1. Note that the curse was not for some great evil that they had done. a. Not for idolatry or the worship of false gods. b. Not for some great transgression. 2. The curse was for doing nothing. 3.

The curse was for their unwillingness to get involved. 4. Jesus declared that if you were not for Him, you were against Him. 5. There are those today who are as Meroz. a. They have not done anything overtly evil. b. The problem is that they just have not done anything good. c. They may even stand back and decry the evil that is in the world today, but they do nothing to stand up against the evil. d. They just do not want to get involved. e. Someone has said that all that it takes for evil to prevail is for good people to do nothing. f.

The fact that evil is prevailing in our nation today is due to the fact that good people have done nothing. g. They used to call us the silent majority, but because we were silent, we have become the silent minority. 6. Our kids in school today are facing terrible pressures from this amoral society in which we live. a. Even a Christian high school has many problems because of the worldly pressures. b. Is there nothing that we can do? Are we helpless against the overwhelming odds? c.

You may say, "Are you advocating that we march on Sacramento?" Should we write our representatives? Shall we get placards and parade through the streets, or shall we endorse certain candidates? d. These are all carnal methods to fight the battle, and the battle is not carnal but spiritual. e. I suggest that you begin to use the secret super weapons that we have been given by which we can defeat the enemy. That is the weapon of prayer. f. How long has it been since you have been on your knees praying for your children, your home, your city, your nation. g.

I am asking you to do something, don't be like Meroz and just do nothing, but let us take the battle to the enemy, let us counterattack. h. We have plenty of prayer meetings here at the church, but it isn't necessary that you come to the church, the beautiful thing about prayer, you can pray anywhere, under all circumstances. i. It may be that in prayer God will lead you to other actions, for you can often do more than pray after you have prayed.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chuck-smith/judges-523/>

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