

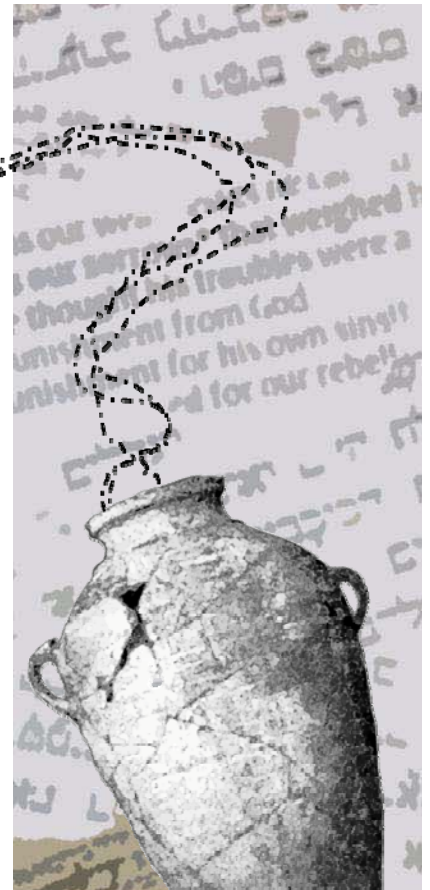
# TREASURE IN JARS OF CLAY



## Deborah

Deborah had every reason to be upset. Instead of living in confident prosperity in the land of milk and honey as God's chosen people, the Israelites were hiding. Attacked and oppressed by the very nations that they had been promised victory over, they were now paying the price of their disobedience. Small villages had been abandoned and the Israelites had retreated to the safety of the fortified cities. The Israelite's were out-weaponed, especially in the face of the new iron chariots of their enemies. Rather than risk open travel on dangerous highways, only smaller footpaths were used, seriously hampering trade. God's people sneaking around fearfully in the land that God had given to them as a promised inheritance! Even worse, this had all come about because the Israelites were failing to recognize the authority of their one and only God and King. Everyone was doing what they thought was right instead of doing what God thought was right. God's own people were turning to inferior, powerless gods. The theocracy of Israel was failing and the people that Deborah knew and loved were suffering because of it. She had to do whatever she could to help. She had to share her conviction that the way to life was God's way. She had to speak up and point people the right direction, reminding them of the God who would love and protect them if only they would acknowledge His ways. As a mother would care for a desperately ill child, so Deborah cared for the Israelites. She was upset, and it drove her to God, who led her to action. It is not hard to imagine her pleading to God in their behalf. When we talk to God, things happen.

Many of my own loved ones are ill. They suffer from a culture that lets each person choose what they think is right. God's way is rejected, because it might be found offensive and intolerant to any who would choose the immorality, or amorality, of inferior gods. My people are living in danger and distress. Do I care? Do I have the same motherly compassion that leads to action for my people that Deborah had for hers? Do I love God's people enough to be willing to participate in God's plan to rescue them? Am I indignant enough to be willing to participate in God's plan to rescue them? Am I indignant enough to be driven to action? Do I believe that God is powerful enough to use me as His unlikely spokesperson? Do I trust God enough to enter the battles that will bring my people peace? Do I sing God's praises for what I have witnessed Him doing?



*"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us."*

*2 Corinthians 4:7*

## READ:

• Judges 4 and 5

## A God-grown Leader

God had called upon the Israelites to be His agents in the land of Canaan, punishing the existing nations who dwelt there for their wickedness. In the days of the judges, God used the remnants of those nations to discipline the Israelites so that they would turn back to God. At the time of Deborah, Jabin, king of the Canaanites had “cruelly oppressed” the Israelites for twenty years. True to the pattern with each of the judges, when the situation got desperate enough that the people cried out to God, God responded by sending a judge— a deliverer. Deborah was the only one of the twelve recorded judges that was a woman. She is also noteworthy in that she actually functioned as a judge, using her God given wisdom to settle disputes brought to her by the Israelite people. During those twenty years of hardship, she had not been idle. She built a reputation for herself as a wise, caring, and godly leader. She used the gifts and talents that God had given her to serve Him. I don’t think she had any idea where her faithfulness would lead her or her nation. She helped people with their problems as a mother helps her children. That must have been a pretty tough job in such a spiritually impoverished environment. The more she helped, the more people came to her. I have no idea how long she sat under that palm, but I think God used that time to grow her into leadership. One thing led to another, and as she was faithful in one thing, God gave her more. Deborah was willing to listen to God and respond to His leading. It’s in the difficulty of the times and absence of any great male heroes that her story stands out, but really Deborah is a woman like so many other women I have known. Women who fill the needs around them as a lifestyle expression of their faith.

## Wonder Woman

Deborah was the original “Wonder Woman.” She was a wife, a judge, a prophetess, a military leader, and a mother— if not physically, then at least the spiritual mother of her people. Which order do you think these occurred in? \_\_\_\_\_

How do you think Deborah gained so much respect, even among the men? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think her husband, Lappidoth, was supportive of her? \_\_\_\_\_

What does Deborah’s song in Judges 5:2 hint that there had been a shortage of? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel that is a problem today? \_\_\_\_\_

What can we do about it? \_\_\_\_\_



## Gifted for Battle

Deborah was supernaturally gifted, as are we! Humility does not deny the gifts that God gives us, it uses them to His glory.

What harm was Jabin causing God's people? \_\_\_\_\_

Who was called upon to lead the Israelites to battle? \_\_\_\_\_

Why was Deborah on the front lines? \_\_\_\_\_

According to Ephesians 6:12, who is our battle against? \_\_\_\_\_

How is he harming God's people? \_\_\_\_\_

What are we called to do about it? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you willing, even as willing as Deborah, to participate in God's battle however He wishes us to? \_\_\_\_\_

What need or difficult situation has been set before you? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you believe that God makes you able to meet it?



What were Deborah's gifts? \_\_\_\_\_

What are yours? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you set restrictions on the ways you will let God use them? \_\_\_\_\_

What similarities do you see between Deborah's society and ours? \_\_\_\_\_

Name some "Deborahs" that you have known: \_\_\_\_\_

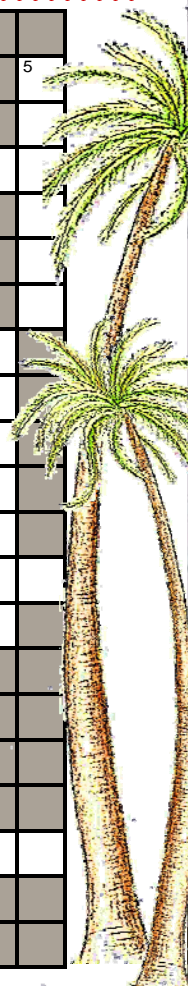
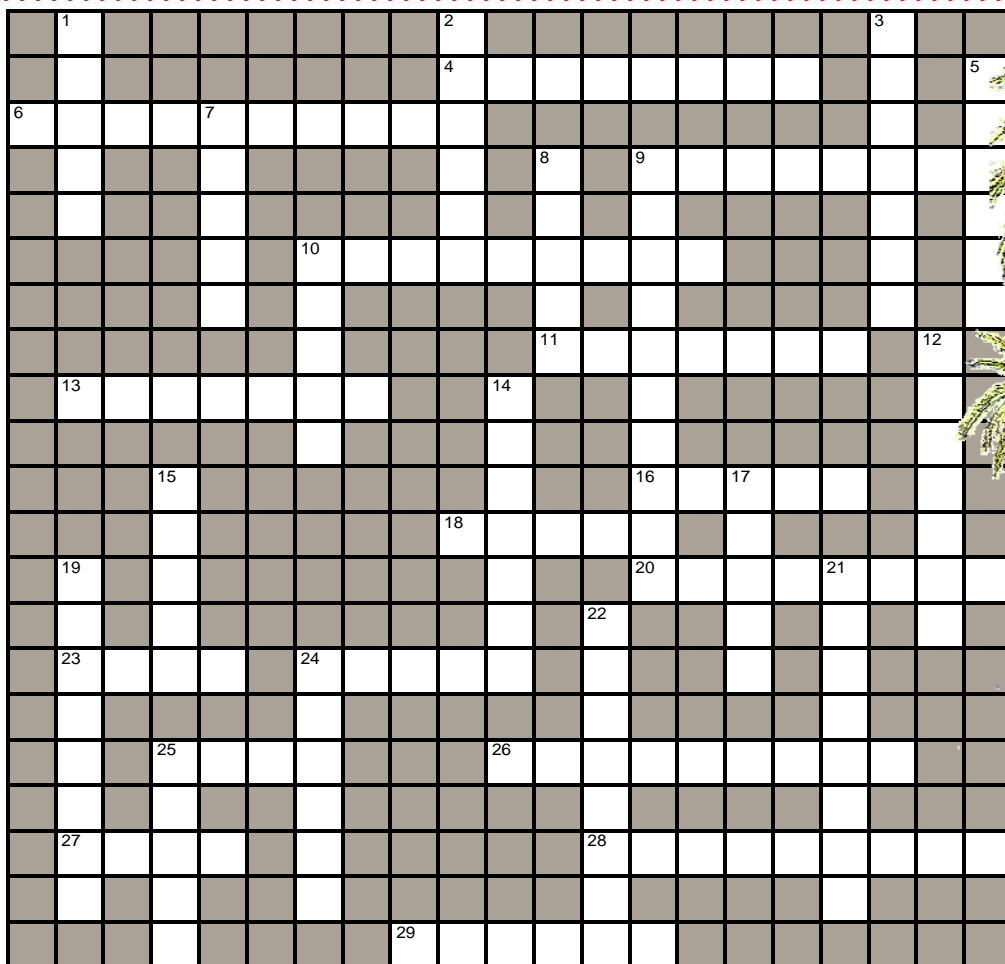
Which tribes joined the battle? \_\_\_\_\_

Why were some of the tribes reluctant to participate? \_\_\_\_\_

*"If we did everything we are capable of doing we would amaze ourselves."  
Thomas Edison*



# PUZZLE PAGE



## Clues

### Across

- 4 princes of this tribe were with her (8)
- 6 she was one (10)
- 9 Jabin had 900 of these (8)
- 10 quaked before the Lord (9)
- 11 minor judge compared to her (7)
- 13 her tribal territory (7)
- 16 mount where the Israelite army gathered (5)
- 18 she was one (5)
- 20 Israel became \_\_\_\_\_ after Sisera's defeat (8)
- 23 went ahead of Barak and his army (4)
- 24 glory for victory would go to this (5)
- 25 Jabin was friends with Heber's (4)
- 26 her husband (9)
- 27 her predecessor (4)
- 28 took paths (9)
- 29 she went here with Barak (6)

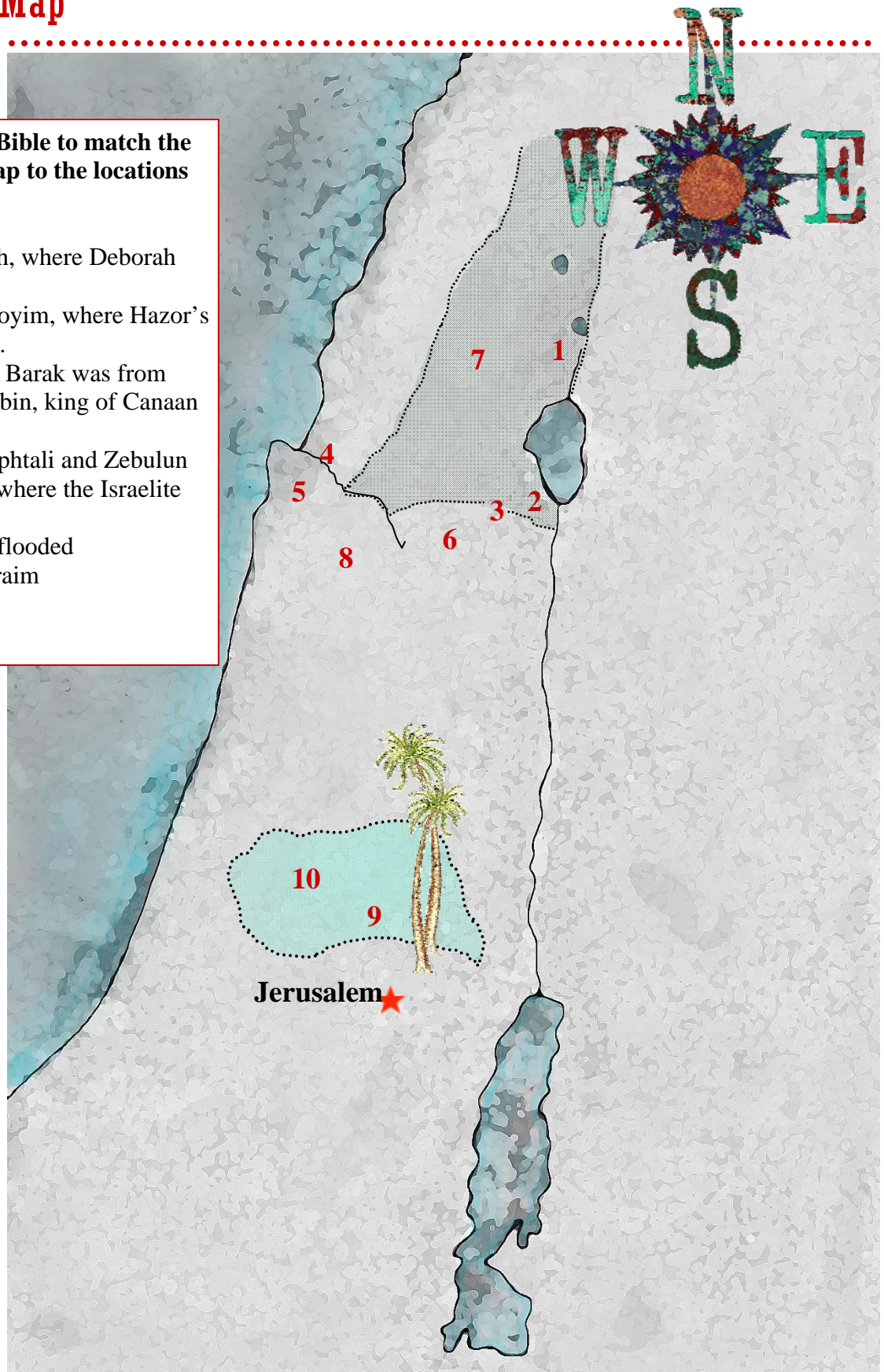
### Down

- 1 years of peace that came to Israel (5)
- 2 river that flooded (6)
- 3 mother to Israel (7)
- 5 enemy commander (6)
- 7 where Jabin reigned (5)
- 8 were abandoned (5)
- 9 Jabin was their king (10)
- 10 she made this to the Lord (5)
- 12 the Caanites didn't get any (7)
- 14 tribe that joined Naphtali (7)
- 15 tribe that didn't help (5)
- 17 Abinoam's son (5)
- 19 life in these had ceased (8)
- 21 tribal territory of Barak (8)
- 22 the Israelites asked her to settle these (8)
- 24 Sisera's mother peered through one (6)
- 25 she held this under the Palm of Deborah (5)

## Map

Use a map in your Bible to match the numbers on this map to the locations listed below.

- \_\_\_ Palm of Deborah, where Deborah held court.
- \_\_\_ Harosheth-haggoyim, where Hazor's army assembled.
- \_\_\_ Kedesh—where Barak was from
- \_\_\_ Hazor, where Jabin, king of Canaan reigned.
- \_\_\_ territories of Naphtali and Zebulun
- \_\_\_ Mount Tabor—where the Israelite army gathered.
- \_\_\_ Kishon River—flooded
- \_\_\_ territory of Ephraim
- \_\_\_ Megiddo
- \_\_\_ battle site

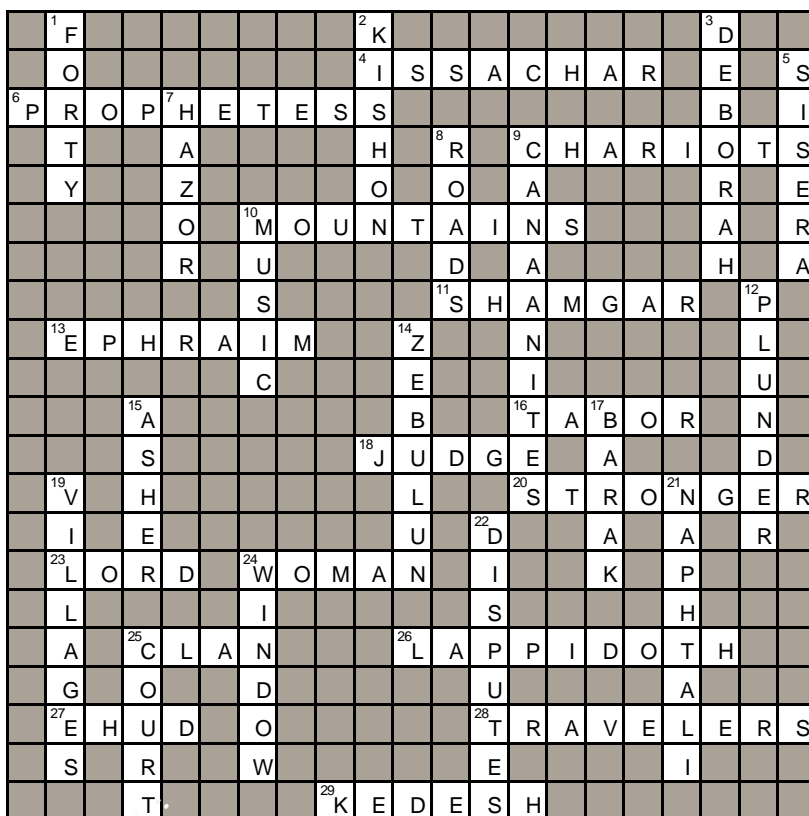




Puzzle answers:

### MAP ANSWERS:

- \_9\_ Palm of Deborah, where Deborah held court.
- \_5\_ Harosheth-haggoyim, where Hazor's army assembled.
- \_2\_ Kedesh—where Barak was from
- \_1\_ Hazor, where Jabin, king of Canaan reigned.
- \_7\_ territories of Naphtali and Zebulun
- \_3\_ Mount Tabor—where the Israelite army gathered.
- \_4\_ Kishon River—flooded
- \_10\_ territory of Ephraim
- \_8\_ Megiddo
- \_6\_ battle site



## Singing His Praises

Deborah was not the first, nor the last woman in the Bible to sing her praises to God.

What did Miriam lead the women in singing praises to God for? Exodus 15:20-21

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What did Hannah sing praises to God for? 1 Samuel 2:1-2

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What did Mary sing praises to God for? Luke 1:46-49

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What do you “sing” God’s praises for, and how do you do it?

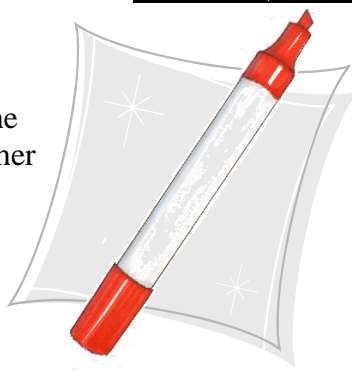
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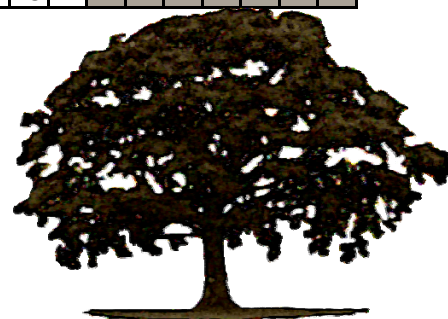
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## Sources:

Map p.5

“King Jabin is Defeated.” *Tyndale Handbook of Bible Charts and Maps*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2001. Print.

