

# A Womb or Two for Every Man

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In Judges 4–5, we meet Sisera, the military general of the pagans who had cruelly oppressed Israel in the land of Canaan for twenty years (Judges 4:3). Israel’s cries had gone up before the Lord. Under Sisera’s command, the Canaanite military machine dominated God’s people with 900 iron chariots. These were symbols of both military superiority and systemic terror.

The most disturbing insight into Sisera’s evil doesn’t come from the battlefield, however. It comes from the lips of his own mother.

After Sisera flees the battle and is killed by Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, the prophetess Deborah composes a victory song. It is one of the oldest and most vivid war poems in the Bible. In its final verses, she imagines Sisera’s mother waiting at the window, watching for her son’s return. Her attendants comfort her with these chilling words:

*“Are they not finding, are they not dividing the spoil?  
A womb or two for every man...”*  
(Judges 5:30, *literal translation*)

The Hebrew word for “womb” is רֶחֶם (*rechem*)—not maiden, not girl as many modern translations have. It is womb. The text is graphic by design. It pulls back the curtain on what was considered a “normal” reward for victory in the ancient world among the pagans: the sexual violation of captured women. In this line, we are meant to feel the dehumanizing cruelty of Sisera’s regime. Women were not seen as image-bearers, but as objects—“a womb or two” for every soldier.

This verse reflects the dark reality of how sexual violence was embedded into the system of Canaanite conquest. Further, such dehumanization has echoed throughout history, from ancient battlefields to modern trafficking rings.

Sisera was a representative of an entire system of brutality, domination, and abuse. It is into this context that Jael, an outsider, a non-Israelite woman living in a tent, enters the story—not as a victim, but as God’s chosen instrument of justice.

## Jael’s Tent Peg Was Judgment

When Jael took the tent peg and drove it through Sisera’s head, she was executing the divine judgment of YHVH:

*“She struck Sisera, she smashed his head;  
She shattered and pierced his temple.”*  
(Judges 5:26)

Her act is described in language that deliberately echoes Genesis 3:15, the first promise of the gospel:

*“He shall crush your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”*

Jael, as a woman, is cast in the symbolic role of the “seed of the woman.” Sisera—representative of serpent-like evil—gets his head crushed under her hand. This is a deliberate, divinely crafted allusion back to Genesis 3:15. The biblical authors reveal a recurring pattern throughout salvation history: God raises up the lowly to bring down the proud, and He often does so in ways that reflect His profound concern for the vulnerable, for “the little ones.”

Jael’s act was powerful poetic justice. The man who treated women as objects to be violated was crushed by the hand of God through a woman. He was crushed while sleeping, just as he crushed others while they were defenseless.

And Judges doesn’t whisper this story. It sings it aloud!

*“So may all Your enemies perish, O Lord;  
But may those who love You be like the rising of the sun in its might.”*  
(Judges 5:31)

## **The Gospel Is for the Poor—and the Powerless**

This story fits into a much larger biblical theme: God is the defender of the weak. From Genesis to Revelation, God is described as the protector of widows, the defender of the fatherless, the judge of those who trample the poor, and the avenger of the abused.

*“He raises the poor from the dust,  
He lifts the needy from the ash heap  
To make them sit with nobles,  
And inherit a seat of honor.”*  
(1 Samuel 2:8)

*“The Lord is near to the brokenhearted  
And saves those who are crushed in spirit.”*  
(Psalm 34:18)

Jesus echoed the same truth when He began His public ministry with the words of Isaiah:

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,  
Because He anointed Me to bring good news to the poor...  
To proclaim release to captives,  
And recovery of sight to the blind,  
To set free those who are oppressed...”*  
(Luke 4:18)

The gospel is not first for the powerful. It is first for the poor, the weary, the wounded. For the woman stolen in war. For the child trampled by terrorists. For the anonymous ones that history often forgets.

That’s why Jael’s story is not grotesque—it is straight up glorious. Because it reveals a God who does not tolerate evil indefinitely. God is the One who delivers, who sees, who remembers.

## The God Who Sees

For women today, especially those who have known injustice, abuse, or exploitation—this story holds deep comfort. Justice does exist in the heart of God. God is not blind. He is not passive. He does not excuse those who weaponize power. He does not forget the cries of the afflicted.

*“The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed,  
A stronghold in times of trouble.”*  
(Psalm 9:9)

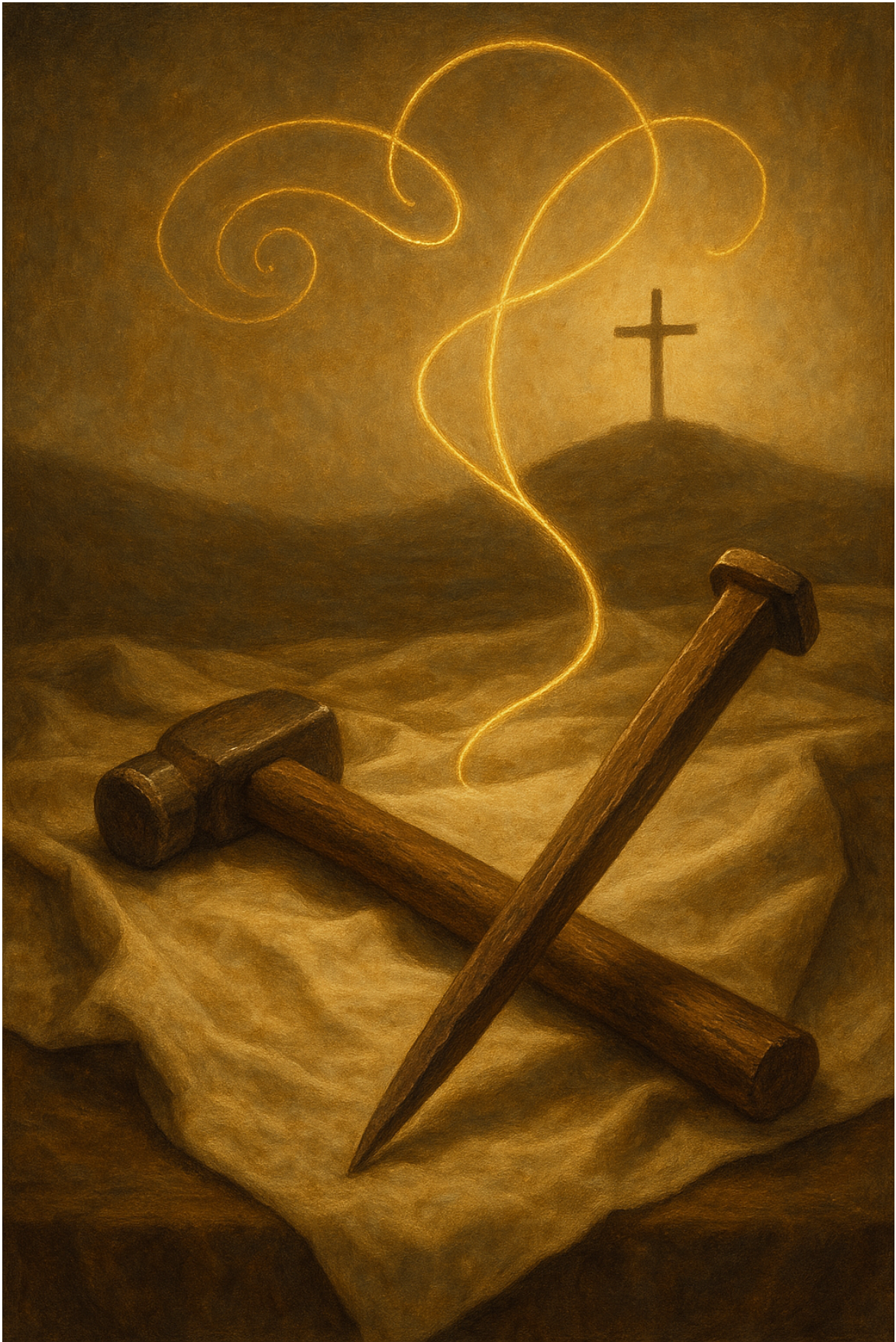
Jael’s act also reminds us that God often works through unexpected hands, through a woman in a tent, holding a hammer. In doing so, she bears witness to God’s justice.

## A Tent Peg and a Cross

Jael’s tent peg was a preview. The cross of Jesus Christ was the true fulfillment.

At the cross, the innocent Son of God bore the full weight of evil and crushed the serpent, not by taking life, but by giving His own.

*“Having disarmed the rulers and authorities,  
He made a public display of them,  
Triumphing over them through the cross.”*  
(Colossians 2:15)



The Tent Peg and the Roman Nails

There, once and for all, justice and mercy met. The serpent's head was crushed. And one day, Christ will return to finish what was foretold:

*"The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet."*  
(Romans 16:20)

Until then, we remember Jael, not simply for her violence, but for her courage, her obedience, and the glimpse she gives us of God's faithful commitment to justice in a world too familiar with Sisera's kind. Maranatha!