



"And now I am no more in the world,
but these are in the world..." (John 17:11).

Use this recent news story to help your students see the relevance
of this week's lesson from the Standard Lesson Commentary®
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ONE ASCENDANT WOMAN

In Europe a week ago, President Trump attended a NATO summit and a G-7 meeting of economic leaders. Historically, America's president has been the leader at such meetings, but things changed this time. Angela Merkel, Germany's "iron chancellor," emerged from these meetings as the apparent new leader based on her fearless public criticism of Trump's stated positions on climate change, trade, Russia, and NATO. Some might see irony in the fact that Merkel, a woman, had gained ascendancy—at least in the eyes of European delegates—over a strong-willed American president.

TWO VICTORIOUS WOMEN

Deborah was the only female among Israel's judges. She delivered the news to Barak that God had chosen him to lead the Israelites in their fight against Sisera, the commander of the Canaanite army. Barak's unwillingness to go into battle against the Canaanites unless Deborah was at his side called out a demonstration of her toughness. She warned Barak that even though the Israelites would win, the honor of victory would go to a woman. We find out later that this woman would be Jael, who killed an exhausted Sisera while he was asleep.

1. In politics, does it matter whether men or women are in leadership? Why or why not?
2. What character traits make a good leader, whether male or female?
3. Do you think God chose Deborah to be judge because no competent men were available, or for other reasons? Explain.
4. There seems to be some irony in Deborah's response to Barak. Do you suppose she enjoyed it? Would it have been right for her to do so?
5. What principles from this biblical incident, if any, can we apply to leadership in today's world?

—Charles R. Boatman

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