

## Scripture Readings

*The second reading from Hebrew Scripture is received from **Judges** chapter 4, verses 1-7, which can be found on page 273 in the **old testament** of your pew bible...*

<sup>1</sup> After Ehud's death the Israelites once again did what was wrong in the eyes of the Lord, <sup>2</sup> so he sold them to Jabin the Canaanite king, who ruled in Hazor. The commander of his forces was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-of-the-Gentiles.

<sup>3</sup> The Israelites cried to the Lord for help, because Sisera had nine hundred chariots of iron and had oppressed Israel harshly for twenty years. <sup>4</sup> At that time Deborah wife of Lappidoth, a prophetess, was judge in Israel. <sup>5</sup> It was her custom to sit beneath the Palm-tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill-country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her for justice. <sup>6</sup> She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, 'These are the commands of the Lord the God of Israel: "Go and draw ten thousand men from Naphtali and Zebulun and bring them with you to Mount Tabor, <sup>7</sup> and I will draw Sisera, Jabin's commander, to the Torrent of Kishon with his chariots and all his rabble, and there I will deliver them into your hands." '

*The reading from New Testament Scripture is received from **Matthew** chapter 25, verses 14-30, which can be found on page 36 in the **new testament** of your pew bible...*

<sup>14</sup> 'It is like a man going abroad, who called his servants and put his capital in their hands; <sup>15</sup> to one he gave five bags of gold, to another two, to another one, each according to his capacity. Then he left the country. <sup>16</sup> The man who had the five

bags went at once and employed them in business, and made a profit of five bags,<sup>17</sup> and the man who had the two bags made two.<sup>18</sup> But the man who had been given one bag of gold went off and dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master's money.<sup>19</sup> A long time afterwards their master returned, and proceeded to settle accounts with them.<sup>20</sup> The man who had been given the five bags of gold came and produced the five he had made: "Master," he said, "you left five bags with me; look, I have made five more."<sup>21</sup> "Well done, my good and trusty servant!" said the master. "You have proved trustworthy in a small way; I will now put you in charge of something big. Come and share your master's delight."<sup>22</sup> The man with the two bags then came and said, "Master, you left two bags with me; look, I have made two more."<sup>23</sup> "Well done, my good and trusty servant!" said the master. "You have proved trustworthy in a small way; I will now put you in charge of something big. Come and share your master's delight."<sup>24</sup> Then the man who had been given one bag came and said, "Master, I knew you to be a hard man: you reap where you have not sown, you gather where you have not scattered;<sup>25</sup> so I was afraid, and I went and hid your gold in the ground. Here it is—you have what belongs to you."<sup>26</sup> "You lazy rascal!" said the master. "You knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered?<sup>27</sup> Then you ought to have put my money on deposit, and on my return I should have got it back with interest."<sup>28</sup> Take the bag of gold from him, and give it to the one with the ten bags.<sup>29</sup> For the man who has will always be given more, till he has enough and to spare; and the man who has not will forfeit even what he has.<sup>30</sup> Fling the useless servant out into the dark, the place of wailing and grinding of teeth!"

*May the Lord God help us to apply this scripture in our lives.*