

**DEBORAH**

**A JUDGE, PROPHETESS**  
**AND HEROINE OF ISRAEL**

**PRESENTATION BY**

**MICHELLE HAMILTON-COHEN**



# DEBORAH – THE BACK STORY

## Historical and biblical context OF DEBORAH

After the death of Yehoshua, the man who had lead the Israelites into the land of Canaan, YHWH raised up judges to lead and rule Israel. The first Judges YHWH used were Othniel, Ehud and Shamgar (Judges 3). And then came Deborah.

Following Yehoshua's death, the tribe of Yehudah led the tribe of Simeon in a campaign against the Canaanites and Perizzites, defeating Adoni-Bezek at Bezek. Then they marched against Kiriath-Arba (Hebron) and defeated three more kings. The descendants of Hobab the Kenite, father-in-law of Moshe, accompanied Yehudah into the wilderness of Negeb but later left to live with the Amalakites. Yehudah did not take Ashkelon, or Ekron. The Canaanites continued to hold Beth Shean, Dor, and Ibleam. Zebulun was unable to drive them out of Kitron or Nahalol; nor could Asher drive out the inhabitants of Acco, Sidon, Achzib, or Rehob. The Amorites drove back the Danites into the highlands.

Jabin a king of Canaan reigned at Hazor and the commander of his army was Sisera who lived in Haroseth-ha-goiim.

The accounts of Judges 4 and 5 tell the story of a battle at Taanach near the River Kishon. Few allies among the southern tribes could come to the assistance of Deborah and Barak. Israel, which the song of Deborah and Barak numbers at 40,000 spears, was unavailable except for forces from the tribes of Ephraim, Machir, Zebulun, Issachar, and Naphtali.

While Sisera is said to have had 900 iron chariots, "the Song of Deborah" implies that heavy rain rendered them ineffectual.

# THERE WERE 12 JUDGES LISTED IN THE BOOK OF JUDGES

## Major Judges

Othniel, Judges 3:7-11

Ehud, Judges 3:12-30

Deborah Judges 4, 5

Gideon, Judges 6, 7, 8

Jephthah, Judges 11, 12:1-7

Samson, Judges 13, 14, 15, 16

## Minor Judges

Shamgar, Judges 3:31

Tola, Judges 10:1-2

Jair, Judges 10:3-4

Ibzan, Judges 12:8-10

Elon, Judges 12:11-12

Abdon, Judges 12:13-15

# JUDGES 3

3 These are the nations YHWH left to test all those Israelites who had not experienced any of the wars in Canaan 2 (he did this only to teach warfare to the descendants of the Israelites who had not had previous battle experience): 3 the five rulers of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites living in the Lebanon mountains from Mount Baal Hermon to Lebo Hamath. 4 They were left to test the Israelites to see whether they would obey YHWH's commands, which he had given their ancestors through Moshe.

5 The Israelites lived among the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. 6 They took their daughters in marriage and gave their own daughters to their sons, and served their gods.

# Othniel

7 The Israelites did evil in the eyes of YHWH; they forgot their YHWH ELOHIM and served the Baals and the Asherahs. 8 The anger of YHWH burned against Israel so that he sold them into the hands of Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram Naharaim, to whom the Israelites were subject for eight years. 9 But when they cried out to YHWH, he raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, who saved them. 10 The Spirit of YHWH came on him, so that he became Israel's judge and went to war. YHWH gave Cushan-Rishathaim king of Aram into the hands of Othniel, who overpowered him. 11 So the land had peace for forty years, until Othniel son of Kenaz died.

# ISRAEL AT THAT TIME WAS A LAWLESS AND LEADERLESS NATION

It says of those times in Judges 21:25, where is written the well known phrase, "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes." That typifies also the days of Deborah: each did what was right in his own eyes.

It was, then, a time of radical deformation, a time of decay. The degree of degeneration characterising the time is possibly best illustrated by the material written in Judges 17-21, where we read of Micah's idolatry and the brutal raping of the Levite's concubine. It was a time where standards of behaviour and righteousness in Israel were far removed from the norms YHWH had established in His Word.

Specific to Deborah's day: deformation and decay is pointed up by the fact that there were no leaders. Deborah had to call upon Barak to come and lead (Judges 4:6). Once he had been chased up, he was too scared to do anything (Judges 4:8).<sup>13</sup> Where was Barak's backbone? Barak had none; he was not a leader. He didn't know, at least it didn't come out in his conduct, that he could lean on YHWH for strength and wisdom. Nor was Barak the only spineless man in Israel. We read in Judges 5:6 and 7, "In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were deserted, and the travellers walked along the byways. Village life ceased, it ceased in Israel."

Imagine for a moment that we couldn't freely walk or drive down our main roads. Imagine if we, in order to do our business, had to sneak out at night and move cautiously from tree to tree lest we'd be fallen upon. We'd very quickly complain to the authorities in town that our streets aren't safe.

That is exactly what happened in the days of Judges 4. The streets were not safe. What does that say about leadership? This context of fear makes evident that there were no leaders able to lead the people against their oppressors. Recall in this context none of the major judges were likely persons to have been judges! That was the problem of the day: there were no leaders.

Why were there no leaders? Can we find an answer to that question? Yes, we can. For YHWH had promised to deal with Israel according to a pattern. In Deuteronomy 28 YHWH promised His blessings on obedience: "Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of YHWH your ELOHIM, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that YHWH your ELOHIM will set you high above all nations of the earth (vs 1) ...

And YHWH will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only and not beneath, if you heed the commandments of YHWH your ELOHIM, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them" (vs 13). Such security requires leadership, and this is what the Lord promised His people when there was obedience.

Conversely, when there was no obedience: "But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of YHWH your ELOHIM, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country (vs 15) ... And you shall grope at noonday, as a blind man gropes in darkness; you shall not prosper in your ways; you shall be only oppressed and plundered continuously, and no one shall save you" (vs 29).

Here is the fear of Judges 5:6,7, a condition the people could do nothing about because those who were to be leaders had no backbone.

# WHO WAS DEBORAH?

- Deborah lead the nation of Israel. Who said women cannot lead? Here is one of the many women YHWH Himself called and used. She was very much respected. Her leadership qualities were unquestionable. She was also a prophet and married women might also like to note that she was married (Judges 4). Marriage was never designed to hinder the ministry of women but rather to aid it.
- Deborah's duties and ministry was similar to all the other judges of Israel and even went a bit more.
- She was the leader of the Nation.
- She helped to settle their disputes.
- She was also a prophetess who gave the nation direction from God
- She was respected by all the people.

She was called by YHWH.

The land had peace for forty years due to her ministry. (Judges 4 and 5)

If Deborah was under our dispensation she would have occupied the office of a pastor, prophet, and teacher.

It is the calling and gifts of YHWH on a persons life that brings them into the ministry of YWHOVAH. Your sex has nothing to do with it. As you dedicate yourself to HIM and seek HIS face you will be prepared to fulfil HIS will for your life.

**Deborah was unique among the women, and men, of Bible History in that she was prophetess, a judge and a military leader all in one - a powerful triple combination of authority and responsibility held by only two other Israelites, Moses and Samuel.**



In Hebrew, her name, דְּבוֹרָה, translates as bee. The Deborah number, a dimensionless number used in rheology, is named after her.[2]

Not much is known about Deborah's personal life. Her name in Hebrew is pronounced Dvora. Some sources, such as Chabad.org, state that she judged Israel from 1107 B.C. until her death in 1067 B.C.[3]

The Dictionary of World Biography: The Ancient World, claims that she might have lived from 1200 B.C. to 1124 B.C., which would have made her about 36 years old at the time of the battle against Sisera, and 75 at the time her death.[4] The book also says that she was most probably born in central Israel to the tribe of Ephraim, and was also the author of The Song of Deborah.[4]

In the Book of Judges, it is stated that she was the wife of Lapidoth (Hebrew: לִפְיֹדוֹת whose name means "torches"). She rendered her judgments beneath a palm tree between Ramah in Benjamin and Bethel in the land of Ephraim. (Judges 4:5) Some people today refer to Deborah as the mother of Israel because of the "Song of Deborah and Barak" found in Judges 5.

# DEBORAH IS THE ONLY FEMALE JUDGE MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE

Deborah led a successful counterattack against the forces of Jabin king of Canaan and his military commander Sisera, the narrative is recounted in chapter 4.

Judges chapter 5 gives the same story in poetic form. This passage, often called The Song of Deborah, may date to as early as the 12th century BC and is perhaps the earliest sample of Hebrew poetry. It is also significant because it is one of the oldest passages that portrays fighting women, the account being that of Jael, the wife of Heber, a Kenite tent maker. Jael killed Sisera by driving a tent peg through his temple as he slept. Both Deborah and Jael are portrayed as strong independent women. The poem may have been included in the Book of the Wars of YHWH mentioned in Numbers 21:14.



## Deborah was one of the sixteen judges; one of the 14 prophetesses

- Deborah was one of the 14 prophetesses:
- 1. Rachel (Genesis 30:24); 2. Miriam (Exodus 15:20); 3. Deborah (Judges 4:4); 4. Huldah (2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chronicles 34:22); 5. Noadiah (Nehemiah 6:14); 6. Isaiah's wife (Isaiah 8:3); 7. Elizabeth (Luke 1:41-45);
- 8. Mary, mother of Yeshua (Luke 1:46-55); 9. Anna (Luke 2:36-38); 10. Jezebel, a false prophetess (Revelation 2:20);
- 11-14. Phillip's four daughters (Acts 21:9).

# A PROPHETESS

She is further described as a prophetess. In the Bible we read of more women who were prophetesses:

1.Miriam: In Exodus 15:20,21 we read of Miriam prophesying before YHWH and before Israel after the people had crossed through the Red Sea. "Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took the timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them: "Sing to YHWH, for He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!"

2.Huldah: In 2 Kings 22:14 we read, "So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum ... And they spoke with her."

3. Isaiah's wife: In Isaiah 8:3 Isaiah's wife is described as a prophetess: "Then I (i.e. Isaiah) went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son."

4. Anna: Of her we read in Luke 2:36, "Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher."

5. So we have five women in the Scriptures who are known as prophetesses.

# THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PROPHETESS AND THE OFFICE OF A PROPHET

We need to note that the Old Testament does not tell us of an official function of the prophet in the divinely appointed worship service. A prophet is simply someone whom YHWH was pleased to use in order to make known His will to the people in a given situation. Deborah was a prophetess, but nowhere do we read that she was ordained to an office in any way. This differs from Elisha and Jeremiah, for example. YHWH called those two men to the office of prophet. (See I Kings 19:19ff; Jeremiah 1:4ff).

What we also need to bear in mind is that although Deborah is a prophetess, nowhere do we read that Deborah went to the people with a word from YHWH; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and all the other prophets did. They said, "Thus says YHWH ..." and then spoke their prophecy. We do not read that concerning Deborah at all. She did not go to the people with a word from YHWH but the people came to her.

"And the children of Israel came up to her for judgment" (Judges 4:5b). She sat under the palm tree. Exactly the same thing happens with Huldah; she did not go to anyone with a prophecy but instead, we read that "Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess" (2 Kings 22:14).

# TO OUR WAY OF THINKING YHWH CHOOSES UNLIKELY CANDIDATES TO BE LEADERS

- Deborah was an unlikely choice for a judge.....? It turns out that the six major judges (i.e. Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah and Samson) are all unlikely and unexpected choices for a judge.
- Othniel: "... the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother" (Judges 3:9). Bible history teaches us that the younger brother had the less privileged position and had the least chance of making a stamp on society.
- Ehud: "... the son of Gera, the Benjamite, a left-handed man" (Judges 3:15). Ehud, in the accepted way of things, had a disadvantage in that he was left-handed (which in the course of events YHWH turned to an advantage).
- Deborah: From Judges 4:4 we learn that she is a woman. That makes her an unlikely choice for a judge.

- Gideon: When YHWH told Gideon that he had to go and save the people, Gideon replied, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel? Indeed my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house" (Judges 6:15). Gideon: an unlikely choice for a judge.
- Jephthah: Although described in Judges 11:1 as "a mighty man of valour", he was also "the son of a prostitute." That made him an unlikely candidate. Even his brothers rejected him, Judges 11:2.
- Samson: From Judges 13:7 we learn that he was a Nazirite, which meant that he had to be different from the other young men of his day (cf Num 6:1-21). Samson was a social 'odd-ball': he wasn't allowed to cut his hair, was not allowed to touch anything dead, and had to abstain from all alcohol.
- Altogether, the picture arises that the major judges were rather unlikely choices for being judges, and this was true of Deborah too. YHWH chose what is weak, what is base, what is despised in the eye of the world to shame the mighty and the boastful (see I Cor 1:26ff).

## JUDGES 4

4 Again the Israelites did evil in the eyes of YHWH, now that Ehud was dead. 2 So YHWH sold them into the hands of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. Sisera, the commander of his army, was based in Harosheth Haggoyim. 3 Because he had nine hundred chariots fitted with iron and had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years, they cried to YHWH for help

4 Now Deborah, a prophet, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. 5 She held court under the Palm Tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went up to her to have their disputes decided.

6 She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, “YHWH, the G-d of Israel, commands you: ‘Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them up to Mount Tabor.

# DEBORAH – JUDGE OF ISRAEL





7 I will lead Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands. "'

8 Barak said to her, "If you go with me, I will go; but if you don't go with me, I won't go."

- Judges 4:9 “Certainly I will go with you,” said Deborah. “But because of the course you are taking, the honour will not be yours, for YHWH will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman.” So Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh. 10 There Barak summoned Zebulun and Naphtali, and ten thousand men went up under his command. Deborah also went up with him.
- 11 Now Heber the Kenite had left the other Kenites, the descendants of Hobab, Moses’ brother-in-law,[b] and pitched his tent by the great tree in Zaanannim near Kedesh.
- 12 When they told Sisera that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, 13 Sisera summoned from Harosheth Haggoyim to the Kishon River all his men and his nine hundred chariots fitted with iron.

The level of her spiritual authority is particularly demonstrated after she summons a warrior leader named Barak. She tells him to fight their enemy Sisera because the Lord revealed to her,

“I will give him into your hand.” Listen to how Barak responds: “If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go.” (Verse 8) He was not willing to go into battle without her. Lest you think that Barak was some sort of spiritual wimp, note that he is listed in the great Hebrews 11 Faith Hall of Fame. So he evidently knew that Yehowah’s had anointed her for the role of military leadership and spiritual authority.



# DEBORAH & BARAK

- Israelite Forces
- - - Canaanite Forces





Then Deborah said to Barak, “Go! This is the day YHWH has given Sisera into your hands. Has not YHWH gone ahead of you?” So Barak went down Mount Tabor, with ten thousand men following him. 15 At Barak’s advance, YHWH routed Sisera and all his chariots and army by the sword, and Sisera got down from his chariot and fled on foot.



Barak pursued the chariots and army as far as Harosheth Haggoyim, and all Sisera's troops fell by the sword; not a man was left. 17 Sisera, meanwhile, fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, because there was an alliance between Jabin king of Hazor and the family of Heber the Kenite.



**BATTLE OF CHARIOTS**

# Mount Tabor of Deborah's victory



# YHWH CHOOSES A SECOND WOMAN TO SECURE HIS VICTORY

18 Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, “Come, my lord, come right in. Don’t be afraid.” So he entered her tent, and she covered him with a blanket.

19 “I’m thirsty,” he said. “Please give me some water.” She opened a skin of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him up.

20 “Stand in the doorway of the tent,” he told her. “If someone comes by and asks you, ‘Is anyone in there?’ say ‘No.’”

21 But Jael, Heber’s wife, picked up a tent peg and a hammer and went quietly to him while he lay fast asleep, exhausted. She drove the peg through his temple into the ground, and he died.

# JAEL KILLING SISERIA



- 22 Just then Barak came by in pursuit of Sisera, and Jael went out to meet him. “Come,” she said, “I will show you the man you’re looking for.” So he went in with her, and there lay Sisera with the tent peg through his temple—dead.
- 23 On that day YHWH subdued Jabin king of Canaan before the Israelites. 24 And the hand of the Israelites pressed harder and harder against Jabin king of Canaan until they destroyed him.

# YHWH DOES APPOINT WOMEN FOR LEADERSHIP ROLES AND TO TEACH AND INSTRUCT MEN

- Deborah ruled while Israel was under YHWH's judgment. An army commander named Sisera under a king name Jabin had "oppressed the sons of Israel severely for twenty years." (Judges 4:3) Here's how she ruled. "She used to sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the sons of Israel came up to her for judgment." (Judges 4:5)
- I always think it is interesting to see how those who don't believe women can hold positions of governmental leadership within the church get around this passage of scripture. Deborah did it. YHWH clearly appointed her and Israel clearly accepted her authority. The sons of Israel lined up (under her own tree no less) to have their case judged by her; her spiritual weight was evidently heavy.

# WOMEN OF YHWH

## KNOW YOUR WORTH

- Deborah; a prophetess, was leading personality; set a great example for the men and women of her Country and a unique outstanding influence young women; ready for war; having great influence in these End-times! Women who, in spite of outward hindrances, standing with great faith, will not compromise; bringing a message of comfort & hope to those who listen to them! Women, for many were rejected by religious rules and principal thinking; will be in the front-line of battle; never stopping challenging YHWH's chosen people to be bold; to turn from wrong lifestyles and to intercede! Knowing very well these strong army of women will be led and directed by HIM only, and YHWH's people are in a great need of HIS help in their battles!
- They will teach with determination people that only Yahweh's presence is the best advantage over any enemy! Warriors; but certainly intercessors, who will be a leading personalities; setting a great example for the men and women in YHWH's army! There was no singing until after the victory! There had been weeping before that, but now it was rejoicing (Judges 2:4)

- Honoured by the public (Proverbs 31:31)
- Fearless—provident (Proverbs 31:21)
- God-fearing—humble (Proverbs 31:30)
- Dutiful—considerate (Proverbs 31:15)
- Versatile—judicious (Proverbs 31:16)
- Clever at decorating (Proverbs 31:22)
- Excels in virtue (Proverbs 31:28)
- Invaluable (Proverbs 31:10)
- Thrifty—laborious (Proverbs 31:14)
- Watchful—cautious (Proverbs 31:18)
- Confident—hopeful (Proverbs 31:25)
- Honoured by her family  
(Proverbs 31:27-28)
- Deserving—successful (Proverbs 31:31)
- Wise—discreet (Proverbs 31:26)
- Kind—understanding (Proverbs 31:26)



# DEBORAH EMBODIES A WOMAN'S MINISTRY

Deborah shows forth the ministry of woman. Deborah was the first example of a woman called to public service by the Ruach HaKodesh. It is too late in the day to question the public ministry of woman. The facts of YHWH's providence, and the fruits of HIS Spirit, are stronger than all our theological fancies! The Ruach HaKodesh has distinctly recognized woman's place in the Church, not only to love, to suffer, and to intercede, but to prophecy, to teach, and to minister in every proper way to the bodies and the souls of men. The woman is called without restriction to teach, to witness, to work in every department of believers in Yahshua Ha Maschiach.

She was the first public woman of the ages wise enough to call Barak to stand in the front, while she stood behind him, modestly directing his work and proving in the end to be a true leader. It is no disparagement of woman's ministry to place her there! This was Deborah high honour, and no one was more ready than Barak himself to acknowledge her pre-eminence.

May YHWH more mightily direct and use the high and holy ministry of woman in these End-Times, for the preparation of our soon coming Messiyah! As YHWH has done in the past, He will yet pour out also His Spirit on women (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:16-21).



# HAZOR

As far back as 2000 years before Yahshua, Hazor was a major city in the Galilee region. Extra biblical references to the city are found in the Egyptian Execration Texts and in Akkadian writings from Mari (both Middle Bronze age), plus later Egyptian texts from the time of Thutmose III (lived 1504-1450 B.C) and the Amarna Letters (written between 1400-1335 B.C). Located north of Galilee and south of (the now drained\*) Hula (Huleh) lake, it is quite possible that this city acted as a regional capital during Canaanite times. Hazor was also near, and could control, a major trade route from Damascus that passed south of Hula Lake to Megiddo. (Hula Lake is 14 miles, 22 km, north of Galilee). During the conquests of Joshua, Hazor was the source of an organized, yet futile, resistance. It was perhaps due to this prominence and organizational role that has the city being treated more harshly than others in the region, with its complete destruction by fire.

# Hazor



Israel could not maintain its control over Hazor during the time of the Judges. Hazor was rebuilt by the Canaanites which set the stage for cruel oppression at the hands of the Canaanite king Jabin.



One of the most recently discovered finds at Hazor was the discovery of a palace with a throne room. In the 1996 excavation season archaeologists discovered four clay cuneiform tablets. These tablets, inscribed in the Akkadian language, include a list of goods sent from Hazor to Mari (an important trade city in Mesopotamia). Scholars have dated these tablets to the Middle Bronze Age.



**Jeremiah prophesied the destruction and final desolation of Hazor. The massive ruins of today testify to the fulfillment of this prophecy.**

Jeremiah 49:28-33 Concerning Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon attacked: This is what YHWH says: "Arise, and attack Kedar and destroy the people of the East. 29 Their tents and their flocks will be taken; their shelters will be carried off with all their goods and camels. Men will shout to them, 'Terror on every side!' 30 "Flee quickly away! Stay in deep caves, you who live in Hazor," declares YHWH. "Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon has plotted against you; he has devised a plan against you. 31 "Arise and attack a nation at ease, which lives in confidence," declares YHWH, "a nation that has neither gates nor bars; its people live alone. 32 Their camels will become plunder, and their large herds will be booty. I will scatter to the winds those who are in distant places and will bring disaster on them from every side," declares YHWH. 33 "Hazor will become a haunt of jackals, a desolate place forever. No one will live there; no man will dwell in it." (NIV)

# HAZOR TODAY IS A PLACE OF DESOLATION AS PROPHISIED



# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Deborah's name is significant all by itself. Deborah means "bee." That's an important piece of information when studying any Bible personality. A name usually indicated the person's character or their prophetic destiny. If we think about Deborah based on her name she is quite an appealing role model.

Bees are busy focusing on their appointed task. That's why we might get stung if we don't steer clear of them while they're doing what they do best. Yes, bees are no nonsense creatures but ah...the results! All their industry is delightfully fruitful, producing one of nature's most wonderful commodities: honey. I for one wouldn't mind one bit being like a bee (or a Deborah) if I had such a sweet nutritious harvest to show for it.



Deborah had a great fruitful harvest. She didn't neglect or compromise her call from God, as unusual as it was in her time. Deborah was a woman of influence and her spiritual mantle created an atmosphere of courage for both men and women. YHWH favoured her and that is seen most clearly in the Bible's last line about her ministry. Remember that when she Judged Israel it had been under severe oppression for twenty years. The end result was a double portion of victory. "And the land was undisturbed for forty years." (Judges 5:31)

# THE HONEY BEE



Secondly, even in Bible times, the bee was culturally defined as a producer of honey. Honey was the only available sweetener in those days, and honey was recognized as a great source of strength (1 Samuel 14:27). Where milk is compared to the initial nutrition of a new believer (1 Peter 2:2), honey serves the die-hards. Hence Canaan was known as the land flowing with milk and honey (Exodus 3:8), and the judgments of YHWH, as well as His words, were deemed sweeter than honey (Psalm 19:10, Psalm 119:103).

King David reckoned unity in the House of the Lord sweet (Psalm 55:14); Ezekiel tastes a scroll that was given to him by The Word Of YHWH, and it tastes sweet as honey (3:3), and the same happens to John the Revelator (Revelation 10:10).

# Honey Bee behaviour predicts coming natural disaster

- Albert Einstein made the statement, “ If honey bees become extinct, human society will follow in four years.” He was speaking in regard to the symbiotic relationship of all life on the planet.
- Many people would be surprised to know that 90% of the feral (wild) bee population in the United States has died out. Recent studies in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands have shown that bee diversity is down 80 percent in the sites researched, and that “bee species are declining or have become extinct in Britain.” European beekeepers observed similar phenomena in Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain, and initial reports have also come in from Switzerland and Germany, albeit to a lesser degree.

# Colony Collapse Disorder

Possible cases of CCD Colony Collapse Disorder have also been reported in Taiwan since April 2007. The cause or causes of the syndrome are not yet fully understood, although many authorities attribute the problem to biotic factors such as: mites and insect diseases. Other proposed causes include environmental change-related stresses, malnutrition and pesticides, and migratory beekeeping. It is being called Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) and is causing agricultural honeybees nationwide to abandon their hives, and disappear. This is raising worries about crops that need bees for pollination.

Bees have done quite well for millions of years, in the last 60 years that began to change. In recent years, beekeepers have been losing 25 percent of their hives each winter. Thirty years ago, the rate was 5 percent to 10 percent

# Possible meanings to all this:

Seeing Bees, or other creatures, leave may indicate: 1. a coming adverse environmental change (weather, disease, chemical), which humans will eventually detect as well.

2. a current adverse change that is only detectible by bees, but not humans. So, we might need to think about what atmospheric changes are occurring now, that might be interpreted as adverse, not just for them, but for us also. What is “in the air” that is dangerous to the bees, that they need to “leave?”

3. This disappearance of the honey bee will decrease the global food supply, as bees are need for pollination of food plants. The 3rd seal of Revelation described a black horse, which represents famine on the earth. Perhaps, this tiny creature’s behaviour is a clue that the black horse is getting ready to ride.

4. In case of future weather or environmental dangers, look around you, and see how nature is responding. If the honey bees, or other creatures, are fleeing the area, this is a good sign that you should do this also. Leave when they do, and you might just save your own life.

Deborah told Barak, the head soldier in Israel, to attack Sisera, the commander of the enemy forces against Israel. Barak was afraid to do this and insisted that Deborah come with him. He knew that Deborah's presence would guarantee victory. Such was the respect and confidence of Israel in Deborah. She was a woman of YHWH and all recognised it.

Women should never look down on themselves. Deborah did not allow the fact that she was a woman hinder her ministry. She was the first (and only) woman Judge of Israel. Despite the fact that she lived in a time when men seemed to dominate everything she did not allow this to hinder her.

- Deborah was not proud nor did she hold an unspoken grudge against men. This is the wrong attitude that some women take today. Remember Rachel. Hurt or bitterness in your heart will destroy you and hinder your ministry.
- The woman lib and feminist movements that are sweeping the world today are doing much more harm than good because they sow the seeds of discord. They bring women to stand against men. This is not of YHWH.
- It is a godly attitude that will promote you. All human beings will respect and heed to your ministry once they see the love and character of YHWH flowing out from you. Women of YHWH please take note.
- Barak did not kill Sisera but Jael did. Deborah had prophesied that this is what would happen.

# Man and woman are equal before YHWH

The Scriptures Deborah and Israel had taught that YHWH had been pleased to give to man and woman an equal position before Him (see Figure 1). Genesis 1:26,27 tells us, "Then YHWH said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

So YHWH created man in His own image; in the image of YHWH He created him; male and female He created them." Man and woman are both created to image YHWH, and man and woman both receive the mandate to have dominion over the earth, the sea, the cattle, etc. Man and woman both, receive also the task to "be fruitful and multiply" (Verse 28). In this regard there is no difference between the man and the woman. Male and female have an equal position before HIM, and both receive the same broad mandates.

# BOTH MAN AND WOMAN FELL

The fall into sin touched both equally, so that both suffered the consequences of the fall (Gen 3:16ff). When the YHWH established His covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai, He made clear that both the man and the woman needed to come with their sacrifices. Said YHWH to Moses, "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: "When any one of you brings an offering to Adonai ... if a person sins ..." (cf Leviticus 1-4).

YHWH said here applied to man and woman alike. Leviticus 15 likewise makes clear that men and women alike were unclean, and hence both needed cleansing. Both the man and the woman are in need of redemption; both receive forgiveness in Yahshua's blood. This is the clear instruction of the tabernacle service to all Israel: male and female have an equal position before YHWH.

We may conclude: Deborah and all Israel with her could know from YHWH's Word that male and female alike were equally dependent on HIS grace for forgiveness of sins and therefore for life and breath itself.

# IN THE NT MEN AND WOMEN ARE STILL EQUAL

- Is there any change in YHWH's revelation after Judges 4 and 5? There is not. The principle of Genesis 1 and 2 is maintained throughout the rest of Scripture: man and woman are equal before YHWH. Both man and woman are equally in need of salvation through Yahshua HaMaschiach and so Yahshua proclaimed His gospel to man and woman alike. 23 In Galatians 3:28 one reads, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Yahshua HaMaschiach." Before Yahshua we are all the same.
- In 1 Peter 3:7 one reads that the husband is to care well for his wife because husband and wife are "heirs together of the grace of life." Before YHWH man and woman are equal.

As it turns out, YHWH has given to the man and to the woman different positions with respect to each other. Though equal in talent no doubt, and though certainly equal before YHWH, HE has nevertheless arranged a hierarchy in the relation between the man and the woman.

In Genesis 2:7,8 we read that "YHWH ELOHIM formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed." The man —that is Adam— received a place in the garden with the mandate to "to tend and keep it" (vs 15). Then in verse 18 we read that "the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." From the rib of the man God made a woman (vss 21,22).

# MADE IN THE IMAGE OF YHWH



## WHAT DOES HELPER MEAN IN HEBREW?

In the past, people have diminished and narrowed the meaning of the word helper, used in Genesis chapter 2, in reference to the first woman. They have literally demeaned it! So much so, that many people have thought that the word basically implied that the first woman - and all women in general – were designed by God to be nothing more than domestic servants, whose role it was to take care of the family and the household; and in particular, to cater for the needs and demands of their husbands.[1]

Why this narrow and lowly view of the word helper in reference to Eve?

In English, the word help has a broad range of connotations. Help can refer to a simple, modest act or to something much more significant. An example of significant help is the assistance and counsel provided by professionals such as doctors or lawyers, etc. <http://newlife.id.au>

In Hebrew, the word for helper used in Genesis 2:18 and 20, is ezer, and it is always and only used in the Old Testament in the context of vitally important and powerful assistance. According to R. David Freedman, the word ezer is a combination of two roots, meaning “to rescue, to save”, and “strength”.

In Exodus 18:4 it says that Moses named one of his sons Eliezer, which in Hebrew means: “YHWH is my helper”. This verse goes on to explain why Moses named his son Eliezer: not because God had done Moses’ laundry (no disrespect intended), but because God had delivered Moses from Pharaoh’s sword!

Ezer describes aspects of YHWH’s character – he is our strength, our rescuer, our protector and our help! And ezer was the Holy Spirit’s choice of word to describe the first woman. Eve was someone who would provide valuable and vital strength and assistance to Adam.

The Hebrew word kenegdo, usually translated as suitable in Genesis 2, gives the meaning that Eve was designed to be a corresponding companion and partner for Adam. There is no sense of subordination stated or implied, or even hinted at, in this passage in Genesis 2, whatsoever.

Ezer kenegdo – a suitable helper

That same word is used repeatedly in Scripture in relation to YHWH being a helper for His people. Consider the following Psalms:

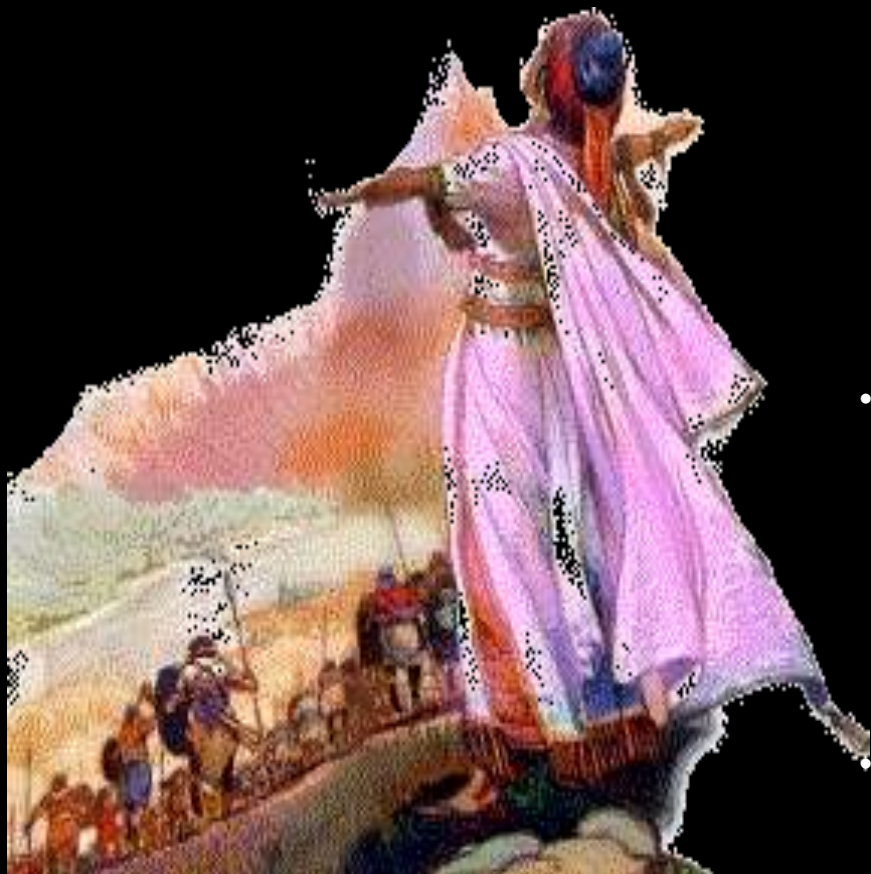
Psalms 33:20: "Our soul waits for YHWH; He is our help and our shield."

Psalms 70:5: "But I am poor and needy; make haste to me, O YHWH! You are my help and my deliverer."

Psalms 115:9-11: "O Israel ... O house of Aaron ... You who fear YHWH, trust in YHWH; He is their help and their shield."

In the above passages there is no concept of 'less' involved in the term. That underlines the point that we may not think of men and women in terms of 'better' or 'lesser'.

# THE VIRTUES OF BEING A DEBORAH



- The "Deborah's" are honest and upright in all her dealings and not doubtful regarding her G-dly advices! They respect and love both YHWH and the people who came for advice, and is good to all in need; the women justly held in universal esteem. They open their mouths and speak wisdom. Kindness is the grace of their lips. They are wise & intelligent and highly cultured in mind and manners. They are graceful and even-tempered in all their ways!
- They are an excellent example of a meek (humble) and quiet spirit! (1 Peter 3:1-8). They instruct their people in practical religion and give them an example of G-dliness, diligence in their way of dealings, and untiring improvement of mind, soul, and body. They are seeing to it that a good education comes next to Divine experiences and leads her people to YHWH in His ways.

They excel all other women as wife's and mothers, and in religion! They are the kind of women who fears the Lord and they should be praised for it! They have the understanding for what 'the spirit of humility' really stands for.

# *CHARACTERISTICS OF DEBORAH*

- Wisdom and patient
- Brave
- Directed & appointed only by YHWH
- Warriors
- Strong intercessors
- Discerning of who is right & who is wrong!
- A judge!
- Prophetic & sometimes they are prophetess!
- Determined and Confident 31:23)
- Great Faith
- Bold
- Comforting others!
- An outstanding influence!
- Victorious!
- Morally complete (Proverbs 31:10)
- Trustworthy (Proverbs 31:11)
- Ingenious—proficient (Proverbs 31:13)
- Joyful—efficient (Proverbs 31:18)
- Thrifty—skillful (Proverbs 31:19)
- Respected—popular (Proverbs

# THE VICTORY SONG

As a singer of victory songs, she echoes Miriam and foreshadows latter women who celebrate David's military success (1 Sam 18:6–7). And as a prophetess, like Miriam, she anticipates later female prophetic figures, such as Huldah, who prophesied the end of Israel's time in Canaan, and Noadiah, who appeared during the restoration from exile. But there are differences in these roles.

Women singers and prophets continue throughout Israel's history, but with the consolidation of the Israelite monarchy, politico-judicial authority of the type enjoyed by Deborah and the wise woman of Abel was handed over to the royal bureaucracies. And except perhaps for some queen mothers, they apparently did not include women.

The Song of Deborah is found in Judges 5:2-31 and is a victory hymn, sung by Deborah and Barak, about the defeat of Canaanite adversaries by some of the tribes of Israel. It is recognized as one of the oldest parts of the Bible, dating somewhere in the 12th century BC based on its grammar and context.[5] The song itself contains a number of challenging differences from the events described in Judges 4.

The song mentions six participating tribes (Ephraim, Benjamin, Machir, Zebulun, Issachar, and Naphtali) as opposed to the two tribes in Judges 4:6 (Naphtali and Zebulun) and does not mention the role of Jabin.

It describes Sisera's death in a different manner. Judges 4:17-21 describes Jael killing Sisera by luring him into her tent, letting him lay down to rest, and then while he was asleep hammering a tent peg into his head killing him.

Though it is not uncommon to read a victory hymn in the Hebrew Bible, the Song of Deborah stands out as unique in that it is a hymn that celebrates a military victory helped by two women: Deborah and Jael. Michael Coogan writes that Jael being a woman "is a further sign that Yahweh ultimately is responsible for the victory: The mighty Canaanite general Sisera will be 'sold' by the Lord 'into the hand of a woman' (Judges 4:9) - the ultimate degradation."

# Music and singing were a cherished part of ancient Israel's culture!

Music and singing were a cherished part of ancient Israel's culture! (still is today!) Judges Chapter 5 is a song, sung and possibly composed by Deborah and Israeli army leader General Barak. It sets to music the story of Israel's great victory! This victory song was accompanied by joyous celebration! It proclaimed YHWH's greatness by giving Him only credit for their victory! It was an excellent way to preserve and retell this wonderful story from generation to generation. In victory, Barak and Deborah sang praises to YHWH. Songs of praise focus our attention on HIM, give us an outlet for spiritual celebration, and remind us of YHWH's faithfulness and character. Whether you are experiencing a great victory or a major dilemma, singing praises to Yehovah can have a positive effect on your attitude.

# DANCE AND SING TO YHWH



# The Song of Deborah

Judges 5:1 On that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang this song:

2 “When the princes in Israel take the lead, when the people willingly offer themselves—praise Adonai!

3 “Hear this, you kings! Listen, you rulers! I, even I, will sing to Adonai; I will praise Adonai, the G-d of Israel, in song.

4 “When you, Adonai, went out from Seir, when you marched from the land of Edom the earth shook, the heavens poured, the clouds poured down water.

5 The mountains quaked before YHWH, the One of Sinai before Yahweh, the G-d of Israel.

6 “In the days of Shamgar son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were abandoned; travellers took to winding paths.

7 Villagers in Israel would not fight; they held back until I,  
Deborah, arose, until I arose, a mother in Israel.

8 YHWH chose new leaders  
when war came to the city gates,  
but not a shield or spear was seen  
among forty thousand in Israel.

9 My heart is with Israel's princes,  
with the willing volunteers among the people.

Praise YEHOVAH!

10 "You who ride on white donkeys,  
sitting on your saddle blankets,  
and you who walk along the road,  
consider the voice of the singers at the watering places.

11 They recite the victories of Adonai,  
the victories of his villagers in Israel.

“Then the people of YHWH Elohim went down to the city gates.

12 ‘Wake up, wake up, Deborah!

Wake up, wake up, break out in song! Arise, Barak!

Take captive your captives, son of Abinoam.’

13 “The remnant of the nobles came down;

the people of YHWH came down to me against the mighty.

14 Some came from Ephraim, whose roots were in Amalek;  
Benjamin was with the people who followed you.

From Makir captains came down,  
from Zebulun those who bear a commander’s[c] staff.

15 The princes of Issachar were with Deborah;

yes, Issachar was with Barak,  
sent under his command into the valley.

In the districts of Reuben  
there was much searching of heart.

16 Why did you stay among the sheep pens to hear the whistling  
for the flocks? In the districts of Reuben  
there was much searching of heart.

17 Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan.

And Dan, why did he linger by the ships?

Asher remained on the coast and stayed in his coves.

18 The people of Zebulun risked their very lives;  
so did Naphtali on the terraced fields.

19 “Kings came, they fought, the kings of Canaan fought.  
At Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo,  
they took no plunder of silver.

20 From the heavens the stars fought,  
from their courses they fought against Sisera.

21 The river Kishon swept them away,  
the age-old river, the river Kishon.

March on, my soul; be strong!



22 Then thundered the horses' hooves—  
galloping, galloping go his mighty steeds.

23 'Curse Meroz,' said the angel of YHWH. 'Curse its people bitterly,  
because they did not come to help the YHWH,  
to help the Lord against the mighty.'

24 "Most blessed of women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite,  
most blessed of tent-dwelling women.

25 He asked for water, and she gave him milk;  
in a bowl fit for nobles she brought him curdled milk.

26 Her hand reached for the tent peg,  
her right hand for the workman's hammer.

She struck Sisera, she crushed his head,  
she shattered and pierced his temple.

27 At her feet he sank, he fell; there he lay.

At her feet he sank, he fell; where he sank, there he fell—dead .

28 “Through the window peered Sisera’s mother;  
behind the lattice she cried out,  
‘Why is his chariot so long in coming?  
Why is the clatter of his chariots delayed?’  
29 The wisest of her ladies answer her;  
indeed, she keeps saying to herself,  
30 ‘Are they not finding and dividing the spoils:  
a woman or two for each man,  
colourful garments as plunder for Sisera,  
colourful garments embroidered,  
highly embroidered garments for my neck—  
all this as plunder?’  
31 “So may all your enemies perish, Adonai!  
But may all who love you be like the sun  
when it rises in its strength.”  
Then the land had peace forty years.

