# WELCOME TO BIBLE STUDY DISCUSSION

2015-2016

Lesson 2: His Strength, Your Salvation: Judges





### LEAD ON, O KING ETERNAL

Lead on, O King eternal,

The day of march has come;

henceforth in fields of conquest

Your tents will be our home

### Through days of preparation

your grace has made us strong;

and now, O King eternal,

we lift our battle song.

### Lead on, O King eternal,

til sins' fierce war shall cease,

and holiness shall whisper

the sweet amen of peace.

### For not with swords' loud clashing

or roll of stirring drums

with deeds of love and mercy

the heavenly kingdom comes.

Lead on, O King eternal;

we follow, not with fears,

for gladness breaks like morning

where'er your face appears.

Your cross is lifted o'er us,

We journey in its light;

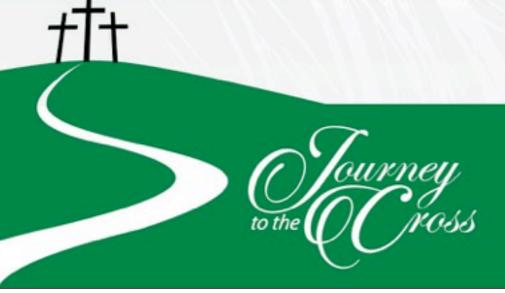
the crown awaits the conquest;

lead on, O God of might.

### **MEMORY VERSE**

FOR IT IS WRITTEN: "WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY."

MATTHEW 4:10b





# Reading the Bible's History Books

- History books of the Bible, like Joshua and Judges, tell us about God's salvation work throughout history, so we shouldn't read them as prescriptive.
- They don't necessarily offer us godly examples to emulate.



### Why Judges and Not Kings?

A fundamental tenet was that the Lord Himself was Israel's great king.

After Gideon defeated the Midianites, the men of Israel asked him to be their king and for his sons to also rule over them.

Gideon replied: "I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you, the LORD shall rule over you."

Judges 8: 22-23

# IN THOSE DAYS THERE WAS NO KING IN ISRAEL. EVERYONE DID WHAT WAS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES.

Judges 17: 6

Judges 18:1

Judges 21:25





### JUDGES

Spans about 350 years from the conquest of Canaan (c.1400 BC) until just before Samuel (c.1050 BC)

Written for readers facing their own crisis in keeping the covenant

Records an era of gross immorality and sin

### THEMESINJUDGES

There were 2 problems in Israel:

There was no king

•The leaders--the judges--kept dying

## DEBORAH THE JUDGE: A CLOSER LOOK

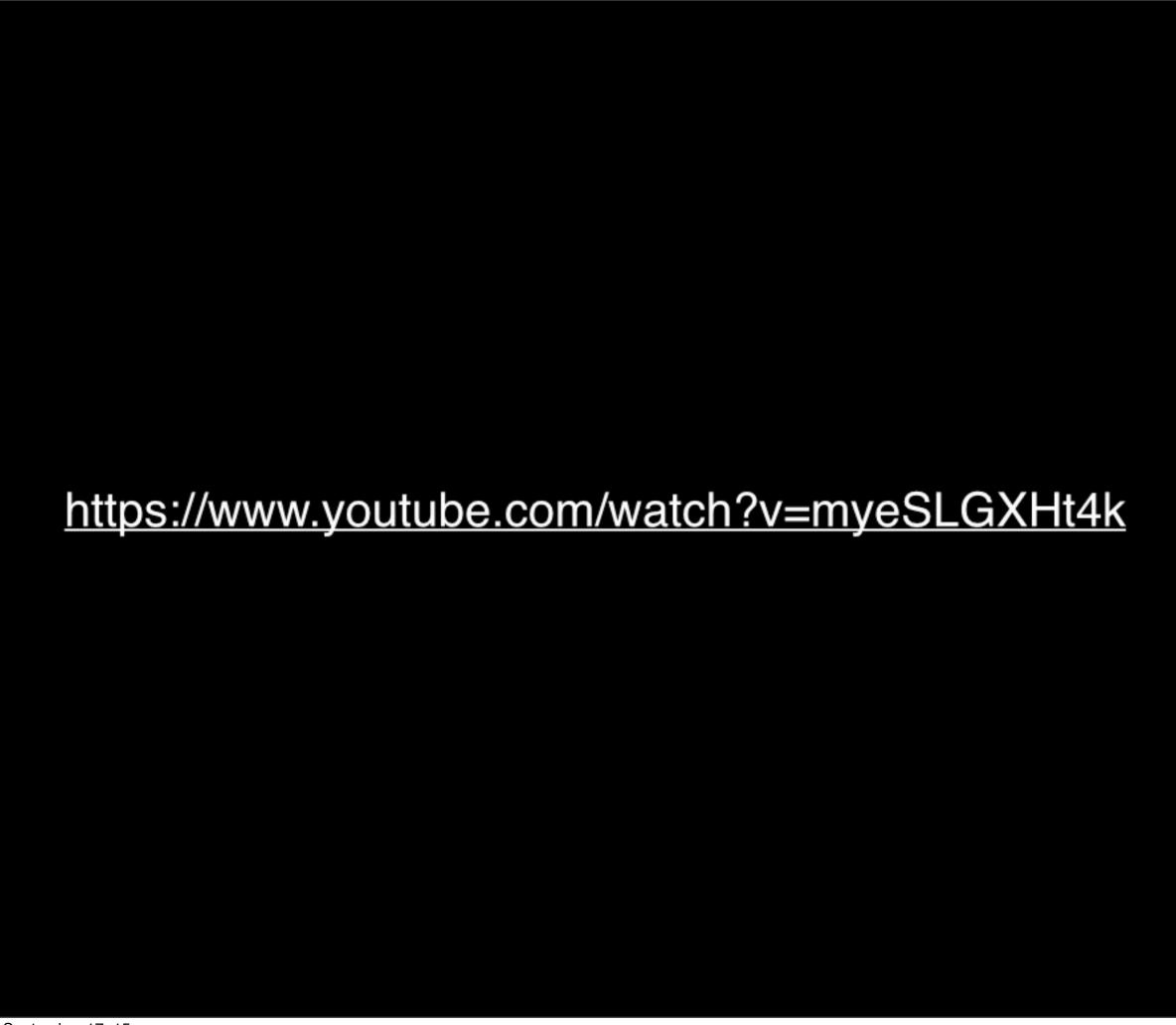




### Role Of the Judges

- Deciding controversies, giving verdicts, executing judgments
- Delivering the people out of self-imposed bondage by being led by God's spirit in military action





### A Mother in Israel Judges 5:7b



- Deborah may or may not have been a mother
- •Title may indicate that her style as an arbitrator was parental, even maternal
- •"Mother" can be an honorary title for a prominent woman in the community
- •Title affirms she was an authoritative administrator of God's plan

### Women Prophets

- Six women are given the title of prophetess in the Bible: 5 in the OT and I in the NT
- A prophet is a person called by God to speak on behalf of God
- God gives him/her the gift of foreknowledge
- True prophesy is initiated by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:2)

### Women Prophets

- Miriam: sister of Moses and Aaron
- Deborah
- Huldah (Kings/Chronicles)
- Noadiah (not so sure about her!)
- Isaiah's wife
- Anna

### Historical background

- Canaanite forces led by Jabin and Sisera oppressed the Israelite tribes in the north.
- Sisera had 900 iron chariots, a very large force for the time, and terrorized the tribes living near the Valley of Jezreel.

- There was no standing military force in Israel in those days
- Armies were recruited and served as needed--sort of like a militia
- Deobrah told Barak to raise 10,000 men from 2 tribes (Naphtali and Zebulun)
- This force was to gather at the foot of Mt. Tabor and attack the Canaanite oppressors



### Barak

- asked Deborah to risk her life to verify her words
- asked her to do what he had been assigned to do: lead the army
- thought the mission was suicidal since the exposed Mt Tabor could easily be surrounded by Sisera's chariots, cutting off any escape
- · his faith was not equal to the danger

### Two Accounts of the Battle



- · Prose version: Judges 4: 1-24
- Poetic version (Deborah's song): Judges 5:1-31.

### Deborah's role

- her presence assured contact with the Lord in the same way that the presence of Moses and the ark brought victory in battle
- her support helped Barak raise many troops
- when she said the Lord "had gone ahead of the army" she meant God would take the lead in striking down the enemy.



### Jael--God's Instrument

- Jael's husband, Heber, was a descendant of Jethro, father-in-law of Moses
- Heber had been on good terms with Jabin,
   King of Hazor, and ruler of the Canaanites
- Sisera trusted Jael's husband, so he trusted Jael and accepted her offer of shelter

### JAEL--Unlikely Heroine

•Jael fulfills Deborah's prophesy



- •Women of the time were responsible for setting up and taking down nomadic tents so Jael was experienced with the tent peg and the hammer
- •Jael shamed both Sisera by killing him and Barak because he did not slay his enemy himself

# Deborah: Best of the Judges

- Sought for her decisions
- Boldly spoke God's commands
- Honored God in a song of victory
- NO scandals or moral controversies
- Her godly leadership brought 40 years of peace

### Where is Jesus in Judges?

- The solution to Israel's problem became apparent over time—Israel needed a man who could be their king, and yet who would never die.
- This could only be fulfilled in the person and ministry of Jesus Christ.

#### **APPLYING THE LESSON IN YOUR LIFE**

Deborah, as a woman, was not the deliverer the Israelites expected God to send them.

Is there someone in your life who had a positive influence on your spiritual life? Was that person someone you would expect or someone unexpected?



