

The Watford Word

www.watfordchurchofchrist.org

What's on

Wed 26th - men meet in person to discuss hermeneutics further

Fri 28th - women meet in person to discuss hermeneutics further

Sunday 30 April - service, 10:30AM. *Mordecai and Esther*. Malcolm speaking

Wednesday 03 May, 7:30PM - Watford Teaching Meeting: 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; 14:33-40 --

"Women should remain silent in the churches"?

[https://iccmissions-org.zoom.us/j/97718981449?](https://iccmissions-org.zoom.us/j/97718981449?pwd=QUV0K25jUERmUU03NU0yOE9ibU50Zz09)

[pwd=QUV0K25jUERmUU03NU0yOE9ibU50Zz09](https://iccmissions-org.zoom.us/j/97718981449?pwd=QUV0K25jUERmUU03NU0yOE9ibU50Zz09)

Meeting ID: 977 1898 1449

Passcode: 999912

Sunday 07 May - service, 10:30AM. *Ruth & Boaz*. Malcolm speaking

Sunday 14 May - service, 10:30AM. *Jesus and the women who supported his work*.

Sunday 21 May - service, 10:30AM. *Jesus and the Samaritan woman*.

Sunday 28 May - 10:30AM. *Jesus, Mary & Martha*.

Coronation Weekend: 7th June

The coronation gives us a good excuse to bring food to church, eat together and celebrate the King of Kings!

Simon and Patricia Palmer have taken on the task of coordinating everything (thank you!). We have gone for cold food as a simpler option this time.

Here are their suggestions:

Salad options: Salad 🥗 bowls. Rice salad. Pasta salad. Potato salad

Sandwiches; Quiches; Crisps

Chicken options: drumsticks 🍗 / Satay skewers, nuggets for the kids (big and small!)

Platter options: Salami, ham, beef and cheese (camembert, brie) with baguettes.

Dips: Hummus, mayonnaise, coleslaw, thousand island etc.

Cocktail extras: Cocktail sausages, pork and vegetarian, cheese cubes, olives, cherry tomatoes.

Dessert option: Cakes, cup cakes, Trifle

Other items: Decorations/ bunting/ cutlery etc. Plastic or wooden cutlery, plastic bowls, cups, paper plates serviettes. Union Jack/ coronation flags and bunting.

Deborah and Barak

The focus of the lesson is Deborah and Barak.

Background to the context of Judges

I recommend the Bible project video, which you can find here: <https://youtu.be/kOYY8iCfIJ4> The book of Judges outlines the salvation and administration of Israel by those called "judges."

What is a 'judge'?

A judge was a 'shafat' (Hebrew). They were rulers, rather than those who judge in a court of law. They were the 'saviours' of Israel between the times of Joshua and King Saul. This was not a period of peace. In fact, it was characterised by anarchy and instability.

Judges were not part of a dynasty, nor could they appoint a successor. It was a temporary office with no remuneration attached. They did not even have authority over the whole of Israel, but only the tribes that allowed them to lead them.

Background to Deborah

Deborah is an interesting case, because when she was commissioned to deliver Israel she was already a judge.

She was a prophetess and “wife” (woman?) of Lapidoth. Jabin, the king of Hazor, had for twenty years held Israel in degrading subjection. The spirit of patriotism seemed crushed out of the nation. Deborah roused the people. She became a “mother in Israel” (Judg. 4:6, 14; 5:7), and “the children of Israel came up to her for judgment” as she sat in her tent under the palm tree “between Ramah and Bethel.” She summoned Barak from Kadesh to take the command of 10,000 men of Zebulun and Naphtali, and lead them to Mount Tabor on the plain of Esdraelon. With his aid she organised this army. She gave the signal for attack, and the Hebrew host rushed down...upon the army of Jabin, which was commanded by Sisera, and gained a great and decisive victory. In Judg. 5 is given the grand triumphal ode, the “song of Deborah,” which she wrote in grateful commemoration of that great deliverance. (Edited notes from Easton’s Bible Dictionary)

Background to Barak

His father was Abinoam (Judges 4:6) and his name means ‘lightning’. Rather a good name for a military leader. He makes it into the pantheon of the greats of the faith in Hebrews 11:32. He goes to war at the request of Deborah, and defeats the enemies of Israel in Judges 4. The success is celebrated in chapter 5.

Brief summary of traditional interpretation

Barak was not a strong enough ruler. He needed a woman. It’s an example of the shame brought upon Israel that there was no man to do the job. However, is he in fact demonstrating strength in accepting a call to humbly and bravely serve God at a woman’s behest?

Brief summary of alternative interpretation

Deborah and Barak worked together to achieve God’s desires. The song of Judges 5 is sung by them together.

“Deborah is the only judge given extensive narration of whom nothing negative is said or implied. In fact, her narrative episode ends with a beautiful song of triumph and praise of God sung together with her military partner, Barak. In one of the darkest eras of Israel’s history, Deborah stands as a singular, but intensely bright, luminary.” ‘Tell Her Story’, Nijay K. Gupta and Beth Allison Barr

Could Deborah and Barak be a model of the vision given us in Genesis 1 and 2? Rather than become enmeshed in the schemes of the enemy they work in harmony to defeat those who oppose God and threaten His people.

What do you think the key lesson is from the working relationship between Deborah and Barak? Also, what does this tell us about God?

Malcolm

AIM UK&I

The Old Testament Survey module took place recently. If you missed it, but would like to join in and watch the recordings, please speak to me or email courses@aimukandireland.com. The website www.aimukandireland.com contains more information.

Watford Media

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj9Qa8D9zumJZdoAtARDUww>

Podcast: <https://www.podbean.com/pu/pbblog-aiinq-iaef9o>

