Deborah, Leader of Women's Movements, a Prophetess and Emancipator

LED HER PEOPLE FOR YEARS

Devised and Executed Master Stroke That Won Judge's Liberty

The International Sunday School Lesson For January 10 Is "Deborah and Barak Deliver Israel"

—Judg. 4:4-23; 5:1-22

By William T. Ellis

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If leaders in the modern women's movement knew their Bibles better we should hear oftener of the first feminist in history, Deborah th prophetess and emancipator. It is true that Miriam, the sister of Moses, broke forth into song upon one triumphant occasion, but the next eminent woman who figures in the Bible story, Deborah, really led and inspired her people over a course of years, during the troubled period of the judges. The master stroke that won them liberty was of her devising and execution, and it was she who composed the wonderful pean of rejoicing which celebrated the event.

The husband might as well be called Mr. Dehorah, for Lippidoth is merely mentioned as being the husband of the prophetess. Was it a hard role that he had to play in being merely the helpmate of a public woman? Perhaps our own times will evolve a code for the man placed in this now common position.

Dehorah was greater than her husband. The work to which she was called was one which could not be done through him; for not even the wisest wife can impart force of character, vision and the qualities of leadership to a man. So Deborah dared, in a period when usage prescribed sequestration and a secondary place for her sex, to translate into action her great ideals for her people.

The Woman Who Lead

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The Woman Who Lead
Britain had her Boadicea, France
her Joan of Arc, Germany her Queen
Louise, America her Lucretia Mott,
Susan B. Anthony and Frances Willard. All down the highway of history we see shining occasional women who, when men's hearts failed
or their eyes were dimmed, rose to
the role of leaders and deliverers. In
the great emergencies of America's
pioneer days, and of the war between
the States, women by the hundreds
proved themselves heritors of the
highest traditions of womanly heroism.

what is the most characteristic quality of womanhood, if it is not insight, vision, idealism and a highloyalty? Who feels a nation's wrongs skeenly as its women? Who are the flaming pioneers of all social reforms but women? Why are they foremost in the missionary and temperance enterprise?

flaming pioneers of all social reforms but women? Why are they foremost in the missionary and temperance enterprise?

Soul-sensitiveness eplains it. That quality made Deborah a seer and a propagandist. She had greatness and fineness of spirit. Justice and patriotism were really master passions with her. Every wrong done to her oppressed countrymen by the proud-and cruel Canaanites entered her heart as a sword. Her loyalty to Jehovah, and her zeal for him, made her great. In a dark day when the ordained ecclesiastical leaders proved futile, she led her people back to God.

So Deborah moved from the land of Isaachar south to that of Brajamin, where she would be free to counsel and confer. Thish suggests a word about the geography of the story: and present world events are newly teaching people the importance of geography. The scene of the battle lies back of Mt. Carmel, that long "mountain of a thousand valleys" by the sea, where the modern city of Haifa, with its German colony, its harbor and its terminus of the Damascus Railway is now situated. The scene of the defeat of Sisera is about the same as that of the slaughter of the priests of Baal, after Elijah's dramatic contest on Mt. Carmel. To the eastward, almost in a line with the Lake of Gallee, rose symmetrical Mt. Tabor, which figures in the story as the resort of Barak's army. Issachar, Deborah's home, lay directly south, but she went still further southward, almost to Jerusalem, to a spot between Bethel and Ramah to establish herself as a prophetes to whom the people could resort for counsel and inspiration.

There, under the palm tree by the door of her tent, Deborah sat and received her people. The picture is suggestive. A proud woman, of finely chiselled features, with the reserved demeanor of a greatly burdened soul, she sat day by day and received deputations in ever-increasing aumbers, as her reputation grew. Family strife and village quarrel were adjudicated

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