

Deborah the Judge was also a prophetess and warrior

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Naphtali came together. It was east of Nazareth, southwest of the Sea of Galilee. Deborah said that God had designated Mount Tabor as the rallying place for the ten thousand soldiers who would make up Barak's army when it went to face Sisera's forces (Judg. 4:14).

God had said that He would draw Sisera, the captain of King Jabin's army, with its nine hundred chariots of iron and a multitude of infantrymen, to the river Kishon.

Sisera's large army and powerful chariots no doubt struck terror into the hearts of opponents (vs. 3, 7, 13). It is no wonder that Barak was apprehensive about going up against them with only ten thousand infantrymen and no mention of chariots to counterbalance those belonging to Sisera.

4. How did Barak react to Deborah's message (v. 8)?

Barak sent a reply back to Deborah that must have startled her. "If thou wilt go with me, then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go." Men, of course, traditionally led military campaigns. Why, then, would Barak insist that Deborah go with him before he agreed to go?

Surely Barak considered himself more suited to feats of strength, hard-ship, and military combat than any woman, but apparently he was willing to be embarrassed by his proposal because he realized that a supernatural factor was involved. Knowing that Deborah was a prophetess on good terms with God, Barak

wanted to make sure that she went along with him to assure victory.

5. How did Deborah respond to Barak's proposal (v. 9)?

We can well imagine that Deborah did some serious thinking about Barak's proposal and that she prayed about it to determine the will of God in this matter. It would mean leaving her regular ministry and involving herself in something for which she had no previous experience.

Deborah replied to Barak that she would surely go with him. However, this military journey would not produce honor for Barak himself. Deborah said that the Lord would give Sisera into the hand of a woman.

She did not say she was referring to herself. As it turned out, the woman would be Jael, wife of Heber the Kenite. More will be said about her later in this lesson.

Deborah left Mount Ephraim and traveled up to Kedesh in the tribal territory of Naphtali in order to join Barak. From Kedesh Barak sent out calls to the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali to come to him (v. 10).

When the volunteers arrived at Kedesh, they were met by Barak and Deborah. Ten thousand men followed at their heels as they moved toward Mount Tabor, as the Lord had directed (v. 6).

6. How is a partnership like the one Deborah and Barak had a model for us today?

Barak apparently was not a "glory hog." He recognized that Deborah's presence would give him confidence. Not only did he trust her judgment for civil affairs, he apparently relied on

her for military strategy, mutual prayer, and accountability.

Since Deborah was a prophetess, we can assume that God somehow spoke through her. This would be a great comfort to Barak. Thus the moral, godly strength of one person assisted another through a difficult time. Encouraging Christians to draw upon the moral strength of one another is still a good practice to emulate.

Deborah the Warrior (Judges 4:12-16)

7. How did Sisera learn that Barak was at Mount Tabor (v. 12)? The Bible does not say who they were, but some individuals, probably spies, told Sisera that Barak was at Mount Tabor. Sisera immediately gathered together all of his iron chariots, numbering nine hundred. The chariots, along with a multitude of accompanying foot soldiers, moved out from Harosheth of the Gentiles (v. 13). This city was located in northern Palestine near the Kishon River.

California pastor who once opposed Schwarzenegger now on payroll

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN FRANCISCO—A progressive pastor who once called Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger part of "the national axis of evil" is now a paid consultant with the governor's re-election campaign, upsetting at least one fellow clergyman.

The Rev. Amos Brown, who heads Third Baptist Church, is starting this week in a new radio ad for Schwarzenegger after once dubbing President Bush the governor's "partner in crime" in a San Francisco Chronicle interview.

Brown lauded Schwarzenegger in an official campaign

press release this week as a leader on arts, music and physical education in schools and as an advocate for prison reform and small-business development.

In the past two months, the San Francisco pastor was paid more than \$16,000 after he was put on the Schwarzenegger campaign payroll as a political consultant, according to documents on file with the California Secretary of State's Office. The Schwarzenegger campaign confirmed that Brown is a paid campaign adviser.

"We're proud to have Rev. Brown's wise counsel and

strong support for the governor's re-election," said Katie Levinson, a Schwarzenegger campaign spokeswoman.

A former San Francisco supervisor, Brown said his support for Schwarzenegger stems from what the pastor called Democratic candidate Phil Angelides' indifference to the black community.

The Rev. Harold Mayberry, pastor of First AME Church in Oakland, says that while Brown is well-respected as a black leader, such paid arrangements "may not serve the community." Mayberry has endorsed Angelides for governor.

S.C.-bred Dixie Hummingbirds find perch in hometown of Philadelphia

By Bobbi Booker
THE PHILADELPHIA TRIBUNE

PHILADELPHIA - The Dixie Hummingbirds have been called the Iron Men of Gospel for their durability as a performance group and their adaptability as musical legends. Led by Ira Tucker Sr. - who is now 80 - the group has continued to thrive for more than 77 years. Last week, the Dixie Hummingbirds musical ministry was celebrated with the ceremonial renaming of Poplar Street from Broad Street to 21st Street to Dixie Hummingbirds Way.

Gospel fans, supporters and government dignitaries joined an audience of more than 300 to honor the group's efforts. Musical legends who were unable to attend sent messages of congratulations that were read by Tucker.

"You've earned this honor and I love you like a rock," wrote Paul Simon, referring to the 70s hit song "Love Me Like A Rock" the 'Birds accompanied him on.

"Now I can drive my Christian automobile up Dixie Hummingbirds Way. Watch out!" read the message from Stevie Wonder that drew laughs from onlookers.

"Even though they started in South Carolina, they've been Philadelphians for seven decades and that make this very special for Philadelphia and the state," said Gov. Ed Rendell, who recently bestowed the group with the Governor's Award.

The Hummingbirds relocated to Philadelphia in the 1940s and have called the region home ever since.

"When we first got out here we used to sing for the White folk and some of 'em asked me why did we start singing," said the group's founder James B. Davis, 91. "I told 'em that singing was what we knew."

Actor the Rev. Clifton Davis said the group helped form his musical career. "I want to thank you," said Davis, "for going to those towns where you had to go to the colored out-house, for going on the Chittlin' Circuit to sing the gospel of Jesus Christ. I want to thank you for struggling through segregation. I want to thank you for taking all of that discrimination

and taking it in stride and praising God anyhow. I want to thank you for living long enough so that all of us could stop here today and thank you for what you've done for us."

After the street naming, the audience was led by the Heavenly Horns for their first walk up Dixie Hummingbird Way alongside the historic Metropolitan Opera House, or The Met, at Broad and Poplar Street. For many years the Met served as the gospel venue of choice for many artists and groups. Over the years, the Met has fallen into disrepair and is currently undergoing reconstruction.

"I think the Met should be designated as a historical landmark because Sam Cooke, Soul Stirrers, Dixie Hummingbirds, Clara Ward - everybody who was anybody in gospel sang at the Met and it should be just sitting there like it is," lamented occasional Hummingbirds' vocalist the Rev. Joe Williams.

Other members of the Birds recalled fond memories of their days with the group. "It's an honor that I never had any dream what I would accomplish one day," said the group former guitarist Howard Carrol. "It proved to me that hard work does pay off."

"It sort of transcends time," said the group's youngest vocalist Edwin Cornell McKnight, 21. "It's more so like a time machine because you can hear the tunes of the past and the present day and a lot of people who were around when Mr. Tucker was around are no longer around. I came in knowing nothing about music and now I know so much, and I owe it all to him."

The last living Ward Sister, Willa Ward, 85, practically hopped on stage and declared the group "the greatest quartet that ever lived."


The naming of Dixie Hummingbirds Way also coincides with the group's latest CD, "Keeping It Real...The Last Man Standing." The title refers to the elder Tucker's 60-plus years as the group's lead vocalist.

"I really don't know what to say," said Tucker from the podium. "It really doesn't get any better than this. I believe I voice the sentiment of everybody when I say God is good."

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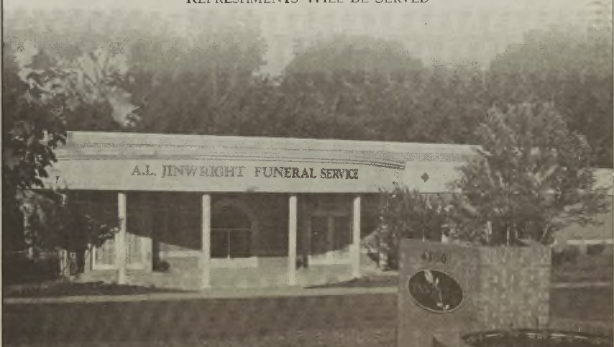
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