

# **Cursed be Meroz. Blessed be Jael.**

Sunday, October 15, 2006

**“Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be.” Judges 5:23-24.**

*“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” Rom. 15:4.*

It was a time of great distress. God had sold Israel into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan (and Sisera) who mightily oppressed them for 20 years. When they cried to the Lord, a great and supernatural victory was obtained: a Canaanite army of 400,000 infantry + 10,000 cavalry + 900 chariots of iron annihilated by 10,000 untrained, poorly armed troops under Deborah and Barak: “And all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not a man left.” Jgs. 4:16.

Matthew Henry: This city of Meroz seems to have been a considerable place, since something great was expected from it; but probably, after God’s curse, it dwindled, and, like the fig-tree which Christ also cursed, withered away, so that we never read of it again in scripture or elsewhere. Mat. 21:19; Mk. 11:14,20.

John Trapp: So effectual was this curse, that, as the fig-tree cursed by our Savior withered immediately, so this city Meroz now liveth only by fame, there being no mention of it elsewhere – in scripture or otherwise. Neutrality is most odious to Jesus Christ, the angel here mentioned.

Did Meroz merely dwindle away (Matthew Henry)? or was its demise immediate and dramatic (John Trapp)? Think Pompeii (a seaside resort for the wealthy Roman elite) – and Mount Vesuvius, erupting with deadly force in AD 79.

Ancient historians – Pliny the Younger and Tacitus – tell a grim tale of destruction: Beginning around noon on August 24, Vesuvius began its volcanic eruption, and the streets of Pompeii and the surrounding region began accumulating lapilli, – or small pieces of solidified lava. Residents of the towns began to flee – some further inland, and many towards the sea, which was too turbulent to navigate. By dawn of the following morning, the eruption had poured an avalanche of ash onto Pompeii. Within seconds, thousands were engulfed with 900-degree ash and fume. Simply disappeared until discovered in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, – buried under 75 feet of solidified ash. Even so, Meroz?

**“WRITTEN FOR OUR LEARNING.” Rom. 15:4.** What are we to learn from our Lord Jesus Christ cursing – bitterly cursing! – Meroz? Why was the Lord Jesus so enraged? How does this story give us patience, comfort and hope?

The military campaign of Deborah and Barak – led by the Captain (“Nay, but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come.” Josh. 5:14) – our Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 2:10) – was a grand and glorious event. And it took place in close proximity to Meroz – by no accident or coincidence –but by divine appointment.

## **Meroz had a solemn, non-delegable duty to go “to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.” Jgs. 5:23.**

On the eve of the conquest of Canaan beginning with the siege of Jericho – a truly momentous occasion – Joshua was confronted by the Lord Jesus as Captain – Commander-in-chief – of the “host of the Lord”. Josh. 5:13-15: “And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand; and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the Lord’s host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so.” Josh. 5:13-15. Read, Heb. 2:10.

The Captain leads the Lord’s host in the wars of the Lord aka the battle for Canaan aka the quarrel of the covenant

The wars of the Lord. Num. 21:14. “Wherefore it is said in the book of the wars of the Lord, What he did in the Red sea, and in the brooks of Arnon.”

The Lord is a man of war. Ex. 15:3. “The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name. Pharaoh’s chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea; his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea.”

2 Tim. 2:3. “Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”

Eph. 6:12. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood (i.e., only or even primarily), but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

2 Cor. 10:3-5. “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

## **Blessed above women shall Jael be.**

If you don’t get Usama Ben Ladin, you got nothing: “And all the host of Sisera fell upon the edge of the sword; and there was not a man left. Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet.” Fled away on his feet? But fled where? “Fled away on his feet TO THE TENT OF Jael.” Read Judges 4:17-22. And, Judges 5:24-27.

In every battle of the Wars of the Lord, many truly amazing, spectacular deeds are wrought by David’s (Christ’s) Mighty Men, that will take eternity to tell.