

THE IN-BETWEEN

Angels, Demons, the Devil, Heavenly Powers, Dark Powers, Human Beings Between Death and Resurrection

Section 3

The Spiritual Realm in Israel Before the Kings

(perhaps roughly 1406-1052 BC)

Joshua 5:13 to 6:5 — What did the person Joshua encountered look like?

- Who did this person say he was?
- Whose side was this person on—Israel's side or the enemy's side?
- *From class discussion:* What lesson does this person have for us during divisive times?
- What instructions did this person bring to Joshua?

Judges 2:1-5 — To whom did the angel of the Lord appear?

- According to the angel of the Lord, how had Israel disobeyed God?
- What penalty did Israel face because of this disobedience?
- How did the people of Israel respond to the angel's message?

Judges 5:23 — *Read 5:19-27. Following Israel's victory over the Canaanites, Deborah the prophet and Barak the leader of Israel's army sang this song (5:1). Verses 20-21 hint that Israel received supernatural help in the battle. But Meroz, an Israelite town near the site of the battle, did not assist Israel in the conflict—and in so doing, it failed to "help the Lord against the mighty." Meroz, according to the prophet Deborah, is therefore cursed by the angel of the Lord. The Kenite woman, Jael, in contrast—herself not an Israelite—supported Israel and, in fact, struck the greatest blow against the enemy, killing the enemy commander.*

- What do you think being cursed by the angel of the Lord might signify?

Focal Point #1 — THE ANGEL OF THE LORD SENDS GIDEON TO LEAD ISRAEL IN BATTLE**Judges 6:1-24**

- How did the angel of the Lord appear to Gideon?
- What were the angel's first words to Gideon?
- In what, if any, sense is the angel of the Lord the Lord himself?
- Would you dare to argue with an angel?
- What convinced Gideon that he was speaking with a supernatural being? Why didn't he realize this sooner?
 - To whom did Gideon think he was speaking?
- Did Gideon offer a sacrifice to an angel? What do you think?
- 6:12 — What miracle(s) did the angel of the Lord perform before Gideon's eyes?

Focal Point #2 — THE ANGEL OF THE LORD FORETELLS THE BIRTH & MISSION OF SAMSON**Judges 13**

- How did the angel of the Lord look to Manoah's wife?
 - What prophecy did the angel of the Lord bring? And what instructions?
 - verse 3:
 - verse 4:
 - verse 5:
 - To whom did Manoah and his wife initially think they were speaking? (verses 6, 8, 10-11)
 - What convinced them that they were encountering a supernatural being?
 - Can/Do angels eat human food?
 - What do you think of the angel's statement that his name was beyond understanding (verse 18)?
 - Consider verse 22. Is there a sense in which if you've seen the angel of the Lord, you've seen God? How does seeing an angel compare with literally seeing God?
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