

Exod 04-08-15a

This is Sunday, the 15th of August, 2004. We begin our worship this morning with a word of prayer. Since our music is absent, we get to dive directly into the study of God's Word.

We take a moment at the outset to clear our minds and prepare our hearts, make sure that the time is well spent and that God can minister these truths to our souls. Otherwise, it's not going to do us any good. So let's take a moment here and go to the Lord in prayer.

Father, we thank You for this day and for the opportunity to gather. We know that where two or three are gathered in the Lord Jesus' name, He said He would be in our midst. We know that through the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the truth of Your Word, we partake of the presence both of the Holy Spirit and of the Son and of You, Yourself.

We thank You for that promise. We thank You that we are not alone. We are not left to face the challenges of this life without resources or without answers or without options.

But we know that You have provided for us. You have seen from the foundation of the world the particular path and the particular opportunities that would be set before us. We thank You for the country in which we live, our government.

We thank You for our President and those who are believers who are seeking to fulfill their governmental responsibilities in the light of Your Word. And we pray a special blessing for them that You'll encourage and strengthen each one of them. We pray particularly for our President that You will give him the stamina, the wisdom, and the courage to continue to lead our country as it should be done.

We pray that You'll bless him during this election season and all of those who are seeking to fulfill the principles of Your Word in the various levels of our government. We thank You for those who serve in the military and in the law enforcement area. We ask Your blessing on them, protect them, and bless their efforts.

We know that all of these things contribute to our freedom and our opportunity to study Your Word and to live a life that is pleasing in Your sight without persecution, without harassment, without the afflictions that plague so many around the world today who don't enjoy these basic and often overlooked freedoms. We ask Your blessing on us as we study Your Word this morning. May God the Holy Spirit impart the truth to us in such a way that it will impress us, it will stick with us, and it will motivate us in the days ahead to live in a way that is pleasing to You and glorifying to the Lord Jesus.

We pray it in His name. Amen. We're continuing this morning our study.

We are in Exodus chapter 32. Moses is headed down Mount Sinai with the tables of the law written with the finger of God on both sides. And something is going on at the foot of the

mountain.

We already know that Moses' brother Aaron has made the molten calf. The people have sat down to eat and rose up to play. And this impending revelation and confrontation is about to take place.

But we know already that the attention span of the Israelite people is short. They used to have a program somewhere or other called Short Attention Span Theater. It showed really short things because people just couldn't pay attention very long.

You get that impression. Our scripture reading this morning is a later reflection on this characteristic of the nation of Israel. Now, Hosea chapter 6. You have Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel.

Then you get to Hosea. We don't know a whole lot about Hosea except that he was a prophet who conducted his ministry during the decline and decay of the northern kingdom about 750 B.C. until just before they fell in 721. We're studying the book of Ezekiel sometimes on Tuesday nights that covers a later period when a similar situation faced the southern kingdom.

And then they went out under the warnings, for example, of Jeremiah. So Hosea in his ministry to the northern kingdom is fulfilling the same role that Jeremiah will in the southern kingdom 150 or so years later. Anyway, this is Hosea chapter 6. And God has been speaking through Hosea to Israel.

If you just browse the subtitles of this book, Hosea talks about the unfaithfulness of Israel, and yet it is interleaved with God's faithfulness and God's promises and that God will return and God will restore. So at the beginning of the chapter you have the family of Hosea, the beginning of the book rather, in chapter 1. And he has these children. Her daughter is Lo-Ruhamah.

I will no longer have mercy on the house of Israel. Then she has a son in verse 8. Call his name Lo-Ami. Am means people.

Ami is my people. Lo means no or not. Not my people.

No mercy. Not my people. God sort of disowns Israel.

Yet, in the end of the chapter, the restoration of Israel. Verse 10. Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered.

This goes all the way back to the Abrahamic covenant. So there is a little bit of an outline of the book just in the first chapter. You have God looking at the people, finding failure.

There is going to be discipline. Without mercy, they are going to seem to be cast off, and yet the promises will be fulfilled. There is restoration.

What does this mean to us? We fail. We go astray. The Bible says all we like sheep have gone

astray.

The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. We get off the path. We take a detour off the straight and narrow.

It goes through the narrow gate that leads to life, and we find ourselves elsewhere. And we think, well, and I have had a lot of people tell me this. And I mean a lot of people.

I have talked over the years to several different people in depth who have said, well, you know, I am a Christian, and I used to go to church and all that, but I really got away from it, and now I have made so many mistakes, and I have a pattern in my life, and I have done this, that, and the other, and I really think it is too late for the whole Christianity thing. God would not take me back. There is too much water under the bridge.

This is a lame, pathetic excuse for not getting back to God. It is ridiculous. You look at the nation of Israel.

They did things that put anything we could do in the shade. I mean, pale by comparison. The murder of their own children, rank, gross, idolatry.

You name it. The children of Israel did it. And God did not abandon them.

He constantly calls to them. If you are alive, He says, turn you at my reproof. You do not have to die.

At any point, if you are breathing air, it is time to turn to God if you have gotten away. This is the message of the Bible. And anybody that says, oh, well, you know, I have just done too much.

What are you saying? Well, I have stacked so much on the teeter-totter here. God just cannot sit on the other end and raise it anymore. I mean, God has just done.

I have outdone God. My ability to sin is greater than His ability to forgive. My ability to foul up is greater than God's.

I mean, what are you saying about yourself? What this is is a lame, pathetic rationalization and excuse for not grabbing up guts, taking responsibility, going back to God and saying, Lord, I have messed this up. I have made a pattern out of messing up. I am responsible.

I am accountable. It is time for me to get back and start hewing to the straight and narrow. I am still alive.

Therefore, you still have a plan for my life. Let me pick up at this point and go forward. That is the message of the book of Hosea in a nutshell.

No matter what you do, you can be the ten northern tribes and be wiped out for your sins, and guess what? God will still redeem His people. When you go to the book of the Revelation, how

many tribes are listed there? Twelve. Now, granted, the tribe of Dan seems to have gone beyond the pale, but you still have twelve tribes.

These northern tribes are resurrected, resuscitated. New life is breathed into them, and they will go into the land, those who have faith, those who repent, those who change their minds. So, look at chapter 6 now.

That is a long introduction to our Scripture reading in Hosea chapter 6. This is a call to repentance. Come and let us return to the Lord, for He has torn, but He will heal us. He has stricken, but He will bind us up.

After two days, He will revive us. On the third day, He will raise us up. Now, does that make the hair stand up on the back of your neck? Remember now, this is Hosea.

This is circa 730, 740 B.C. This is 770 years before the Lord Jesus is on the cross and goes to be buried in the heart of the earth. And after two full days, notice, you can't do this Friday crucifixion thing, put Him in the ground at the end of the day on Friday, and raise Him up early Sunday morning, and have any of these prophecies make any sense. The Friday crucifixion, how many different ways is this wrong? How many different ways does this fly in the face of what Scripture says? Jesus said, sign of Jonah.

The book of Jonah doesn't say He was swallowed by a great fish, and a little over a day later, He was vomited out on the ground. He was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. The Lord Jesus Christ is in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.

The day begins sundown on Thursday. He is in there Thursday night, Friday night, and Saturday night. He is in there all day Friday, all day Saturday, and it says in the Word of God, early in the morning on the third day.

Now, the morning is halfway through the day in the Israelite reckoning, because it begins at sundown. Early in the morning on the third day doesn't mean you just had a little bit of the third day. You've had twelve hours of the third day.

You're well into the third day. In the heart of the earth, three days, three nights. That's what you have.

And what does it say here in Hosea? 750, 770 years earlier, after two days He will revive us. On the third day He will raise us up, so that we may live in His sight. Let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord.

His going forth is established as the morning. He will come to us like the rain, like the latter and former rain upon the earth. This is another tremendous prophecy, because the rain comes in the spring, and the rain comes in the fall.

The fall rain is the latter rain. The early rain is the spring rain, the former rain. And how does

the Lord Jesus come to Israel? He comes twice.

He comes early, and He's going to come later. When He came the first time, He fulfilled the first set of feasts. We've studied those feasts, those first four feasts.

What are the first feasts? You start out with the head of the year. You have the 14th Nisan. You have Passover.

You have the Feast of Unleavened Bread. You have the first fruits of the barley harvest, Pentecost. You have four feasts there, all stacked together.

Jesus fulfilled all of those. Passover, Unleavened Bread, and up to Pentecost. Then you have the fall feasts, which are Rosh Hashanah.

You have the Feast of Moods, and another one. I didn't stack my brain with those this morning. But, those are yet unfulfilled.

Those are the fall feasts. Former and latter rain. That's what it's talking about here.

He is going to come to us twice. O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? In verse 4, Your faithfulness is like a morning cloud, and like the early dew, it goes away. It's hevil.

It's a mist. It's a vapor. If you've ever gotten up in the early morning, people that hunt, or people that fish, or people that run early in the morning, whatever reason, you get up before the crack of dawn, and you're out, especially if you're out in the country, when the sun is first beginning to rise over the ponds, and over the bodies of water, you find this mist and this fog.

As soon as the light hits it, it burns away. It lifts. That's what he's talking about here.

Your faithfulness is like a morning cloud. It seems to have substance until the light hits it, and it just vanishes away and is gone. Like the early dew, it goes away.

Therefore, I have hewn them by the prophets. What's your most graphic Old Testament image of hewing by a prophet? The first great prophet in Israel is Samuel, and Saul disobeys, does not fulfill the command to slaughter Agag and all of his plunder, and Agag is standing there when Samuel finally comes, and the prophet hews him in pieces. And there is a foreshadowing because as it turns out, Saul himself is going to be hewn.

His head is going to be hewn off of his body and hung on the gates. His sons are going to be slaughtered. He's going to have no dynasty, no future as king of Israel, and it is foreshadowed in this hewing apart of Agag by the prophet.

God says, I have hewn the people by the prophets. I have slain them by the words of my mouth. When God speaks something, it is as good as done.

God has made us promises about the future. They are sure. They are certain.

People sticking their head in the sand like an ostrich doesn't make a difference, does it? It's going to happen. So many people on this earth talk about their view of God, their view of justice. Well, I just don't believe there is a God who would send people to hell.

I don't believe in hell. I just can't imagine a universe where there is a God who would actually consign people to destruction for all eternity. I just don't believe it.

I don't think it's true. Well, I'm sorry, but God didn't consult you in what you believe when He set up the universe. There is a hell.

People are being consigned there. And you can get thrown in and not believe all the way down. But I think when you hit the flames, you'll believe.

You won't like it. But, you know, I can stand in the middle of the highway and believe that I'm nine feet tall, bulletproof and indestructible and that semi-trucks can't mow me down. And I can believe that right up to the point that I turn to jelly on the front of the truck.

My belief... People overestimate the power of belief. You know, the power of positive thinking and if I think it, it will be so. This is just arrogance beyond description.

If you think that you can make one molecule in this universe move by what you think, that you can levitate something, that you can make something happen... The Indians, you know, you see the American Indians used to think... In fact, if you watch Little Big Man, the old chief that Dustin Hoffman hangs around with, he says, you know, I used to be able to make things happen. And, of course, he ostensibly makes it rain at one point in that movie. It's ridiculous.

If you think that any part of this universe does outside of your own body, perhaps, it does anything just because you think it. Well, I think positive. I think good things are going to happen.

Nonsense. There is no power, there is no force field, except God. And God makes things move according to the counsel of his own will.

So, what's the point here? I have hewn them by the prophets. I have slain them with the breath of my mouth. Now, these people had a completely different world view.

Did they wake up in the morning and say, Well, I believe I'll get up and get slain today. I believe I'll get up and have my country get invaded and destroyed and have all my people carried off into captivity. There is a blindness, like the Jews who refused to leave Germany, who refused to leave Poland, who just could not believe that these historic things were actually happening.

People in Florida, I just don't believe the storm is going to be that bad as they sit there in their mobile home. Well, I'm sorry, but you can believe all you want when the hurricane hits. I mean, you saw the film.

All the believing in the world isn't going to stop that storm. The only belief that has any power is when you put your... It's the object of our faith. When you believe something that is true, that truth has the power.

God's Word is alive and powerful. Faith in God's Word, there's the power. The merit of faith is in its object.

You can believe that your bus driver is a good driver. There was a wreck down in Peru or some far off place. Rickety old bridge, bus driver, Irish tourist, and 24 other people on the bus.

Well, the bus driver, these guys pass on the wrong side and pass outside on curbs up in the Andes Mountains and so on. They just gamble that they're going to make it or that people are going to be able to get out of the way. Well, this guy gambled and lost and the bus driver missed the bridge and plunged 80-odd feet down into a ravine, killed and maimed a bunch of people in the bus.

Well, there was an Irishman and a bunch of other people on the bus. They trusted the bus driver. This guy has driven these roads hundreds of times.

He can get us from pointing... Well, you can believe all you want. If the bus driver is faulty, your belief doesn't keep your bus from plunging into the ravine. Same thing here.

The merit of faith is in the object. What do you believe? Where did you get it? Where did the notion come from? Oh, I just believe in the gentle Jesus. He walks through the field of daisies holding the children by the hand and setting them on his knee.

Well, there's no power in that belief because it's not true. Jesus is not only the gentle Jesus. He's not sort of a cartoon Jesus that has no judgment and has no standards and has no righteousness and that his work does not come subject to conditions, that the fulfillment of promises of salvation do not come subject to conditions.

This is the problem in Israel. These people are having a good time up in the northern kingdom. Your faithfulness is like a morning cloud.

The early dew, it goes away. I've hewn them by the prophets. I've slain them by the words of my mouth.

And your judgments... Now, this doesn't mean judgments these people are making. This is the judgments on you if you look at verse 5. Judgment on you is like light that goes forth. It is clear.

It is instantaneous. When the light strikes you, it's like the light striking the fog. It just burns you up.

Then this well-known verse, this is in our Things That God Requires summary, Hosea 6.6, I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. Notice, it is your attitude, it is your knowledge, not your works. How many people, all of you I'm sure,

have talked to people who say, you know, I'm not a bad person.

I know plenty of people that are worse than me. And I think when God gets to sorting people out, He's going to put me in the good pile because look at all these really terrible rascals wandering around. I'm not in that category.

Look at this verse. God says, it's not what you do. Sacrifice is something God commanded, isn't it? It's a deed of righteousness.

And He says, you know, I'm not after the deed. Do you think if God wanted dead animals, He could probably kill them and do whatever He wants with them? Does He need people to go around slaughtering sacrifices for Him? What's the point? Those sacrifices were supposed to be the reflection of an obedient heart, supposed to be the reflection of a repentant heart, of a heart that acknowledges God and wants to please God in every way. He says, you're missing the point if you get your eyes on the sacrifice.

It's not the sacrifice. It's mercy. Knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

Do you see in verse 6 there another version of what Jesus said about the great commandments? Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your strength. This is the first and great commandment and the second is likened to it. Love your neighbor as yourself.

Mercy is what we express toward each other. Knowledge of God is what we express toward God. These are the law and the prophets summed up.

Knowledge of God is more important than burnt offerings. Mercy toward others is more important than sacrifice. And you can't fake it.

You can't counterfeit it. You can't just do it without the heart because it doesn't count. But, like ordinary men, they transgressed the covenant.

And actually, when you see that word men there, this is Adam, like Adam. And so the Reformed people say, now see, there was a covenant in the garden and they come here. But this is like men.

This is like the run-of-the-mill men out in the world. They transgressed the covenant. There they dealt treacherously with me.

And then he talks about places where it takes place. Gilead is a city of evildoers and defiled with blood. Bands of robbers lie in wait for a man.

So the company of priests murder on the way to Shechem. Surely they commit lewdness. I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel.

There is harlotry in Ephraim. Israel is defiled. Also, O Judah, a harvest is appointed for you when

I return the captives of my people.

There is a call to repentance and there is an ignoring of that call. This is what Hosea sees when he ministers to these people. He says, look, God is waiting with mercy.

God is waiting with a meaning and purpose and a destiny to fulfill. But if you turn your own way, you lose it, you miss it, and you're going to be slain by the same words that promise life. Because it's a two-edged sword.

One side cuts for life. The other side cuts for death. Which side of the sword is going to hit us? That's the question we make.

Well, this is a chronic problem in Israel. As you turn back now to Exodus 32, we see this same idea. God has been giving Moses words of life.

Words to live by. Words that will preserve the nation. Words that will preserve Israelites from each other and provide for justice and provide for worship.

And all of the things that they need as the people of God are in these words given by God, written with the finger of God on stone. Moses is up there receiving it, about to bring it down. But instead, the word of God is going to come for a very different purpose.

Why? We have a great little poem here. If you ever want to memorize a poem, this is a good one to memorize because it is short. It's even shorter than a limerick.

Probably the shortest thing I ever memorized was one of these. I forget the technical name of it, but it's a sentence that reads the same forwards as it does backwards. If you have this sentence talking about Napoleon after he was defeated and they didn't kill him, they exiled him.

They sent him to the island of Elba, way off in the middle of the ocean where he couldn't get out and start another revolution in France. So they sent him to Elba. So there's a little sentence that says, Able was I, ere I saw Elba.

Something that Napoleon would say. Able was I, ere I saw Elba. Well, if you switch that sentence around, it reads the same way.

It reads the same frontwards or backwards. Able was I, ere I saw Elba. It's kind of a little mini chiasm.

So that's the shortest thing I ever memorized, probably except maybe Jesus wept. John 16, 31. But here's a three-line poem.

And our lesson here this morning is right out of this three-line poem because we already saw last time. We saw God talking to Moses, saying you better get down there. The people have corrupted themselves.

They have defiled themselves. They have unraveled themselves. Moses pleads with God.

Why does your wrath burn hot against your people? God says, Stand aside, Moses, that my wrath may burn hot against them, that I may consume them. I will make of you a great nation. Moses pleads.

We saw that intercession last time. He is a picture of Christ as mediator, interceding, putting himself in the way. He says to God, Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, that you swore by your own self.

Remember your promise. And the Lord relented. So now verse 15, Moses turned and went down from the mountains.

So Moses is staved off God. The wrath of God has been ameliorated. It's been stopped from just roasting the entire nation.

So now Moses turns. But you know how this is. If you've ever been in a situation where something bad happens, and your superior chews you out, and you say, Oh look, we can fix this.

We can make it right. But then you turn and go to the person that actually caused this mess, and now your wrath may be just as bad as the one that dumped on you. Stuff flows downhill.

And so Moses now turns and says, What have these people done? So he's going down the mountain here in verse 15. Two tablets of the testimony were in his hand. The tablets were written on both sides.

On the one side and on the other, they were written. Why does Scripture emphasize this? Because it's like the newspaper. You see this over and over again where all creatures great and small.

Siegfried is reading the newspaper in the morning, and Tristan is trying to read the back side of it. He says, Oh wait, wait, wait. Because it's written on both sides.

One person can read one side, the other person can read the other side. And the covenant of God, when you stand it between God and man, is read on both sides. You can read it and God can read it.

The tablets were the work of God and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets. There is great emphasis. In the midst of this drama where you know that something is about to break loose, there's this party going on at the foot of the mountain.

There's God and his wrath and Moses on his way down. And right in the middle of this, there's this threefold emphasis on the tablets coming from God. Tablets of the testimony in his hand, written on both sides, one side and on the other.

They are the work of God. The writing is the writing of God engraved on the tablets. Why this heavy emphasis right in the middle of this very compelling story? Because this is the focus.

It is all about what God has said. What is the object of our faith? What drives our world view? What do we really believe? Thousands upon thousands of people have met in churches this morning, just like we have met, and have a Bible, either in the pew or maybe in their hand. But on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday, what actually conditions our world view? What do we really believe that makes life worthwhile? Do we believe what Scripture says? That this life is going to be meaningless? It's like a leaf that shrivels and vanishes away if it doesn't pertain to God, if it doesn't happen in the light of God's plan, in the light of God's Word.

That's what gives it meaning. We hear the stories. People achieve riches, fame, celebrity, and when they get to the top, they say, I got there and I looked around and I didn't find what I thought I was going to find.

I thought I would have fulfillment. I thought I would have happiness. I have the money.

I have the fame. I have the success. I have achieved my goals and I still have this empty place.

And we say, well, that's you. You wait until I get to the top. I'll be happy.

I'll be satisfied. Let me up there. Let me try that out for a while.

I'll tell you what's happy. I will spend like a sailor on liberty. I will get myself all of the things that make for happiness.

Well, universal. You talk to people who have been there and done that, and they say, you know what? I was still hungry. I was still empty.

The reason is, human beings are born, come into this world with a God-shaped vacuum in the soul. And there's nothing on this earth as big or as permanent or as satisfying as the Lord God. And we can shovel as much garbage into that hole as we want.

It doesn't fill it. It doesn't satisfy it. It doesn't last.

And we don't last. Our capacity to appreciate is so shriveled and dwindled that we can't... You know, you watch a great movie, and you say, boy, that is the best movie I ever saw. But what if you watch it again? Is it as good? I mean, some people, you know, Lord of the Rings, people go watch it 10, 12, 15 times.

But it's never as good as it was the first time because now you know what's coming. Now you anticipate. Now you're watching for different things.

And pretty soon it wears off. People that have stacks and stacks of videos in their house, how many times do they go every Saturday and watch the same video over and over again? We don't. Why? We've been there.

We've seen that. That's old. Show me something new.

I need something else. It's transient. It's temporary because we don't have... And I'm not saying that that's all there is to life, but it's an example of temporariness and the fact that we experience something, and then we have to have something more, something better, something different.

And we don't just find a movie that we can just sit and watch endlessly and we're always happy every time we turn it on. Nothing in this life does that except God Himself because He is eternal. He is infinite.

He is the reason we are here. And any time we're not associated with Him, any time we are not circling that axis, we're falling away. We're disintegrating.

That's what we saw in Hosea 6. That is what we see here. Look at this poem. That Word of God is given great emphasis because we're about to see the contrast.

When Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses... And you see, there is, *is* in italics. You can just mark it out. Joshua turns to Moses.

They're both hearing this babble, this raucous noise coming from the foot of the mountain. And Joshua says, Noise of war in the camp. There's battle going on down there.

Moses responds with this poem. And it is verse. It is poetic.

And you know, sometimes people are just inspired at a certain point and they say something that just rings. Yogi Berra used to do this a lot. You know, you can observe a lot by watching.

If you come to a fork in the road, take it. That kind of thing. I mean, there are certain things you say and they just kind of distill a truth and they're memorable.

Moses says, in English here, it says, It is not the noise of the shout of victory, nor the noise of the cry of defeat, but the sound of singing that I hear. In Hebrew, there is a three-fold repetition of a word here. Anot.

A-N-O-T. Let me just attempt to read this to you in Hebrew. Vayomer.

This is Moses. He said, doesn't even mention his name. Vayomer.

And he said, Ein kol anot gabura. Ein means it is not. We saw this in Ecclesiastes.

Ein tov. It is not good. Ein tov.

There is nothing good. He says, Ein kol. Kol is the word for voice.

Q-O-L. Voice or sound. Same word in Hebrew.

Voice and sound is kol. Ein kol anot gabura. Gabura is the word for victory.

The gibur are the strong. The giburim are the mighty men of valor. And so, gabura, G-B-U-R-A-H, gabura, comes to mean this is the overcoming of the strong.

These are the valiant, shouting the war cry of triumph. These are your lusty young warriors who have just defeated the enemy and they are saying, yeah! It's the shout of the strong. Moses says, it is not the sound of the shout of victory.

It is not the sound of the anot of triumph. And this word anot comes from ana, which is the word that means to answer. A-N-A-H.

In its root form, it means to answer. We saw a variation of this word again in Ecclesiastes, which is translated task, where they say it is a grievous task that God has given to the sons of men, or it is an evil task. And we said this is from ana, and it means an answer.

It's a response. It's an evil answer God has given. Man says, what is the point of this life? Well, the answer that you find when you look around that God has given in creation is it's futile.

It vanishes. Everything is cyclical. You build, it washes away.

You put footprints in the sand, the ocean comes and washes them away. It's an evil answer God has given the sons of men to be answered with. Ana.

Here, this is not the sound of the answer of the strong. The response of the strong to a victory. The response to a victory.

This is not the voice of the answer of victory, or the singing of victory. It comes to mean people would have something happen that's happy, and they would sing. They would have something mournful happen, and they would lament.

They would sing a woe song. And so, this word answer is very versatile. It means, what is your response? Moses says, this isn't the response.

This isn't the sound of a response to victory. An answer to victory. So, ein kol anot gebura.

Ein, it is not. Kol, the sound. Anot, the response or the song.

Gebura, a victory. Second line. And, ein kol anot kalusha.

Very same beginning, and it is not the voice or sound of a response or answer. Then we have this word kalusha. Kalusha is a rare word.

It's not the normal word for defeat, as you have it translated here. Kalusha is from halash, which is a Hebrew verb that means to be weak, to be anemic, to have the life and the strength ebb away from you, to be in a state of decrepitude or great loss. But, it isn't the word for military defeat.

He says, this is not the gebura song of the strong, and this is not the morning wailing of the weak. What is it? But, it says, in fact, there's not even a conjunction there. After kalusha, it says, kol anot anoki shome.

Kol is, it is the sound. Anot is the same word we had in the first two verses. It is the sound of an answer or a response or a song.

And then it says, anoki, which is the emphatic personal pronoun, I myself, shome is from shama, which means to hear. And the O-E infix, shome, means it's like I-N-G, that I am hearing. So, as it stands in the Hebrew, it is not the sound of the singing of the strong.

It is not the sound of the singing of the weak. The sound of singing, I myself hear, is what it literally says. It's just singing.

It isn't victory. It isn't defeat. It isn't triumph.

It isn't loss. It isn't strength. It isn't weakness.

It's just singing. Singing for its own sake. It has nothing qualifying it.

There is some speculation that that anoki was originally a repetition of the word anot. It's a slightly different form. You have an I-N in anot.

You have an aleph in anoki. But there have been things like this happen before. When you go to the Septuagint and Samaritan Pentateuch, they wrestle with this.

And what it ends up being in the LXX and in the other versions is it is the sound of drunken singing that I hear. You have the same word used, anot, over in Isaiah. I will sing a song of the vineyard.

I will sing a drunken song of the vineyard. I love the vineyard. Yay for the vineyard.

Hoist your glass to the vineyard. It's a drunken song. And this is pointed with an emphatic here in this third use of anot.

And you get the idea that this is the song of revelry. This is just singing for its own sake. What's the point? With the word of God, we recognize that this life is a battle.

There is victory and there is defeat, but at least you are in the fight. If you are seeking to live your life to please God, you will have your successes and you will have your failures, but at least you're in the battle, even when you get defeated. At least you're aware of the conflict.

You know you've been defeated. You know you failed to take your objective or to pass your test, but you know it. Everything relates to the battle.

You think of your life in terms of the battle, of your strength or your weakness as it relates to God in the light of His judgment, in the light of His righteousness, looking at us. We judge and

measure things in terms of weakness or strength, victory or defeat based on the way God sees it. That is progress.

Even if we err and fall short again and again, as T. Roosevelt said, at least you're in the arena, at least you're in the struggle. This is singing that has no point. This is singing that doesn't relate to the forward progress of God's plan and purpose.

They're off in another world. They're daydreaming. They're off.

It's self-centered. It's a song of myself. You know, Emerson or somebody wrote, Thoreau or one of those guys wrote, Song of Myself.

I sing a song of myself. Aren't I great? That's what Moses hears. He says, this is pointless singing.

This is singing of a self-centered nature. This is drunken singing. This is revelry singing.

And that's the tragedy. It is focused on here as a tragedy. We're going to pause and take our break.

When we come back, we'll pick up in verse 19.