

Let's resume our study now. We'll return to the book of Judges. We'll leave behind the land of the Lamanites and the Nephites and the other strange aberrations. Let me just give you one final comment on Mormonism, and again, I think it's important to be respectful of the fact that all of us have come from somewhere, all of us have had errors and may still have errors in our thinking, and if someone does have a glimmer of interest in God, if they do have potential for coming to genuine faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and a good understanding of Scripture, we would like to be among those people who point them in the right direction and to whom people would look and say, you know, that is an admirable faith. That is a faith I would like to have. I think a hypercritical and offensive, deprecatory, critical attitude, a very abrupt attitude, doesn't help the cause of Christ. It doesn't further the plan and purpose of God.

We are to be ready to give an answer to every man who asks us, not just the ones that we surmise may or may not have a genuine interest. We are to give an answer to everyone who asks us about our hope, and if those people knock on your door and ask you about your hope and wouldn't you like to have their hope, you can say, no, my hope is better than your hope, and here's why, in a nutshell, but in a nice way. Let me just give you a concluding summary on that subject, and I think, leave aside the doctrinal issues. Christians who are concentrating on the Word of God cannot agree on doctrine, and you can argue doctrine until the cows come home.

So I wouldn't argue. Don't get off—they want to talk about the Trinity, they want to talk about one thing or another. Everything rests on authority. Our Christianity rests on the authority of the Word of God that was delivered by messengers who were marked out with God's authority by God's power.

That's what counts. I will obey a lawful order if you could show me that you've got the authority to issue that order. If I don't see your rank and you're just telling me you're a colonel, well, how do I know? I've never seen you before.

You claim to be a colonel. Where's your insignia? You say you're out of uniform for some bizarre reason. I'm not buying it. Show me your ID card. Show me your silver oak leaves. You show me something, and then I will function under your authority, but I'm not just going to take it on your word. This is how people, by the way, bluff their way past a lot of very intensive, sophisticated, and expensive security measures that have been implemented in corporations against industrial espionage.

This is how people end up stealing top secret government information, because people do not authenticate who they're talking to and whether or not they are authorized to be doing what they're doing, saying what they're saying, or getting what they're getting. We as believers have an obligation to ourselves, and we have an obligation before the Lord to ensure that what we believe is the authentic gospel. That's why we're a Bible church and we're not affiliated with a denomination, because denominations are like breeds of dogs.

Any breed of dog—you take a miniature poodle—that's a subset of the genome of an actual dog. I don't want a subset of Scripture. I don't want a subset of doctrine. I don't want somebody's creed as a substitute and a replacement for the entire record of God's Word. We want the unadulterated, unabridged, non-Reader's Digest version of the entire Scriptures.

We want the freedom to go there and study it for ourselves. You are free to disagree with me. You are free to disagree with anybody else, because you have God's Spirit in your heart, and to the extent that you want to know the truth, you will know it. To the extent that you ask and seek and knock, you will find it.

To the extent that you're apathetic and indifferent, you're going to be led astray. It's just a fact. It's documented in Scripture. Authority is the issue, so if you're talking to anybody's cult representative at your doorstep or any place else, go to the issue of authority.

There is no doubt that Jesus Christ was who He claimed to be. His resurrection in His day was undisputed. Nobody could produce a body. Nobody could produce a skeleton. And you can bet the Roman authorities and the Jewish adversaries would love to have proved that Jesus didn't rise from the dead.

And if they had, by any means, been able to prove it, they would have done so. If Jesus' followers, in any way, shape, or form, had stolen His body and gotten His corpse, they would have made relics out of it. Look at what they do to all the other apostles.

You can reconstruct 27 or 28 different Apostle Johns out of all the bones the Catholic Church has got in relic shrines. The guy is everywhere. He's got like 17 fingers and 23 feet and 3 or 4 different skulls, all of which bleed at different times of the year and produce miracles when you touch them.

Do you seriously believe that if someone had stolen the body of the Lord, they would have not turned it into some kind of a shrine and a relic? His body was not stolen, and He could not be produced by the authorities who crucified Him because He arose. Jesus' miracles were never contested during His lifetime. Nobody ever claimed that He didn't do what He did because they were witnessed by way too many people.

And that is God's mark. Nobody questioned whether Moses was from God. Nobody in their right mind.

So it's the issue of authority. Is the book from God or not? Is the Book of Mormon from God or not? Is the man who brought the book, with all of his bona fides and his claims of divine inspiration and divine guidance, is he legitimate or not? Well, the locations, the place names that are given in the Book of Mormon for ancient America from 600 years before the time of Christ—you know, there was supposed to be an exodus where people right after the restoration from the Babylonian captivity, a bunch of people all got together and came to America according to the Book of Mormon. Well, the place names described in the Book of Mormon, there is no correlation whatsoever between any of those place names and any recognized American archaeological site.

We can go back thousands of years in the biblical record and make those connections. You can't do it anywhere for the Book of Mormon. Animals, plants, and technologies named in the Book of Mormon do not exist in the Americas before the arrival of Europeans in the 15th century.

One classic example is, as Joseph Smith started waxing eloquent about the beauties of the landscape here in America when Jesus came and before it all got destroyed in battle, he talked about honeybees flying around from place to place. There were no honeybees in America before the arrival of the Europeans. There were none.

This land, like many other things, didn't have any honeybees. There are other animals and plants and technologies that did not exist here and cannot be found in any archaeological record. There is no linguistic connection between any Native American language or language family.

Go to any of the tribes: Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Cree, Seminole, Flathead, Navajo, Cheyenne, anybody you want to name. None of those languages bear any resemblance whatsoever to any ancient Near Eastern language or language family. If everybody in this country came from the ancient Near East, we ought to have a few leftover words in our language.

The American Indians, who are supposedly descendants of the ancient Ten Lost Tribes, ought to have... You scatter the Jews through Europe for century after century after century, there are still Hebrew elements all through Yiddish, all through... They never lost that.

There's no resemblance whatsoever in the languages. The Mayans, who the Book of Mormon claim were from the ancient Near East, there's no relationship of their writing to any Near Eastern writing system. Mayan records that were written during the time that the Book of Mormon says there were people up here floating around that were from the Ten Lost Tribes and all that—well, the Mayans have histories of this continent, and they make no mention of any place name, any civilization, anything referenced in the Book of Mormon.

This is contemporaneous written history that we have in South America. They have no knowledge of any of this. And finally, and probably most damaging, DNA evidence shows no ancient Near Eastern component in the Native American genetic makeup.

They can today look at your DNA and tell if you had a Jewish ancestor, even if it was one way back. No Native Americans have any Semitic DNA at all. They can trace DNA.

They can use your mitochondrial DNA through the maternal line going back, and they can trace people all the way back to the early days in the ancient Near Eastern basin from which civilization sprang. They can figure out when and where blue eyes came into the gene pool. That's how far back they can go.

And it is definitive and conclusive that there is no relationship whatsoever between North Americans, as the Book of Mormon repeatedly and emphatically states, and the ancient Near Eastern peoples. There's no relationship whatsoever. So these are facts beyond dispute and beyond refutation or contradiction.

And of course there's no objection of this sort of magnitude at any point of the Word of God. Well, back to our book and our study in Judges now. The chapter that contains this song begins with a call for praise to God.

And it says, "When the princes, when the leaders lead in Israel, when the people willingly offer themselves, bless the Lord." It says, "Hear, O kings, give ear, O princes." And this is all in the plural, talking about the multitude of leadership.

What is the failure? Why was this oppression going on for two decades in Israel? It was a failure of leadership. Why was Israel faithful? Why did they have all of that time of rest in the days of Ehud? The land had rest for 80 years under Ehud, right? As soon as Ehud dies, down the tubes. Twenty years of oppression.

Jabin sets up. When there's a good leader like Ehud, they do fine. In the absence of leadership, they fall all to pieces.

Who's supposed to be filling that vacuum? Who is supposed to be leading in Israel? It is the elders. It is the Levites. These are the princes.

These princes sound like they ought to be draped in gold chains and rubies and fine clothing of some sort. The princes and the leaders that are being appealed to here, the kings and the princes, these are the rulers in the tribes of Israel. And so Deborah, in this song, calls to this plurality of leaders who have not done their job.

And she says, "Give ear, O kings. Give ear, O princes." Then it switches to the singular.

Even though it says Deborah and Barak are singing this song, it's kind of like when Simon and Garfunkel sing "The Sounds of Silence." They don't say, "Hello darkness, our old friend. We've come to talk with you again." Do they? It's a song written in the singular and two people singing.

Well, "I will sing to the Lord. I will sing praise to the Lord God of Israel." There's a beautiful literary parallelism here where the rulers of Israel, finally under the leadership of Deborah, woke up and took charge and did their job. Once she called them, once she motivated Barak, and once the two of them went and roused these men to their duty, the people responded.

All the people were waiting for was leadership. So this is what you have in verse 2. When the princes lead in Israel, the people will wake up and follow. This is your topic statement.

When I was a first-class midshipman, a senior in school, I had the privilege of teaching the first-year English class. And so I got to write the curriculum. I got to choose my book.

I got to figure out what would be quizzes and tests. I crafted the entire course within the guidelines of the overall curriculum at the school. I got to do everything.

And my hapless victims came in, and I was their teacher. And I was just a couple of years ahead of them in school. But I gave them their assignment, and they didn't care if I was a midshipman or if I was a 59-year-old, grizzled old English professor.

I had the authority. I had the commission. And when I said, "Do this assignment," they did it.

They responded to the orders that were given because that is the way it works. When you are given a leader, you respond to that leader. So Deborah says, "When leaders lead in Israel, people willingly offer themselves." This people will follow a good leader. That's what they did under Ehud. That's what they lacked after he died.

And these men should have stepped up. So this particular cycle in the cyclical repetition that we see focuses on failure in leadership. You say, "Well, I can kind of coast and just let this go in one ear and out the other because I'm not a leader. And only the men, only the older people, they're the only ones that have to listen to this because this failure in leadership, this is like studying Timothy. That's only for pastors." Not so.

Because how does leadership work? What is leadership? Leadership is being assigned a specific responsibility and being given the authority to implement it. Now, do you have an area of responsibility? And do you have all of the wherewithal necessary to fulfill it?

Even if you are a student, you are given the materials, you are given the assignment, and you are turned loose. There's nobody sitting over your shoulder telling you how many times per minute to put your pen to paper or how long to spend on any given thing. You have authority over your own education, even when you're in the public school, much more so for homeschool and self-paced studies.

But you are the captain of the ship. You are the master of your fate. You operate within guidelines.

They may be wider for leaders that have great authority, and they may be narrower for people who are in a subservient role or a subordinate role, but you still have an area of responsibility and you have the freedom and the assigned authority to carry it out, whether it is cleaning your room, doing your chores, or steering the path for an entire family or a company or wherever you may be. So words spoken to leaders saying you need to step up to the plate and fulfill your God-given responsibility applies to every single one of us.

There's not a one of us that doesn't have responsibility. There's not a one of us that doesn't have the ability, the wherewithal, the authority over ourselves and the stuff in our periphery. "We take charge of this post and all government property in view." That's one of your general orders when you're a sentry.

"I will take charge of this post and all government property in view." Well, the guy's a lance corporal. He doesn't have any juice. He doesn't have any rank.

When he's on watch, he does. When he's on watch, he takes charge of his post. He takes charge of all government property in view. He's accountable. He's responsible.

He will fire bullets to protect it if necessary. He better have a good reason. But he'll fire bullets if necessary to protect it because that's now his job.

When he goes off watch, suddenly that's not his job. Take his rifle and his bullets away from him. So another guy is standing there taking charge of the post.

We all have a post. We all have that authority. So this applies to us. When leaders lead, when princes fulfill their responsibility, the people willingly offer themselves. People will respond.

To the extent that we are responsible for people, if we execute our part in leadership, we can expect that unless you've really got a bunch of ne'er-do-wells, you're going to get a response. People appreciate. We are built to appreciate structure.

Little tiny children rebel and rant and throw fits and do the things they do. And that is literally a feeling for the limits. When are you going to stop me? Where is the wall that I cannot go beyond?

And when you set limits, when you form boundaries, when you implement structure, people thrive. Children thrive. In an organization, you set structure, people thrive within it. They know what they can do and what they can't do.

There's no insecurity. They may chafe from time to time when they think it's too restrictive. They may go nuts when it's too liberal.

And it's the job of leadership to set those boundaries at an appropriate place and find the balance point. God gives authority to fathers in a household. And He says, "Children, obey those parents in the Lord, for this is right."

But He also says, "Fathers, do not vex your children." Don't overuse your authority. There's a balance point.

There is a place where there is an optimum level of leadership and response. And it is the leader's responsibility to find that balance point and to do whatever it takes to bring that unit, that organization, that authority structure into harmony with the Word of God. It's a divine principle under which people will prosper, even if they're not Christians.

This country, often populated by unbelievers, companies within this country run by unbelievers, prospered when they followed this divine principle. So, when the people willingly offer themselves, when leaders lead, bless the Lord. This is an overall principle of divine establishment.

“Hear, O kings, give ear, O princes, I will sing to the Lord. I will sing praise to the Lord God of Israel.” Why? He says, all right.

She says, actually, here's the overall scenario. We're going to talk about leadership and response to leadership. You leaders need to give ear while I sing about God.

She goes on to say, “Lord, when You went out from Seir, when You marched from the field of Edom, the earth trembled and the heaven poured. The clouds also poured water. The mountains gathered before the Lord. This Sinai before the Lord God of Israel.”

And you'll remember that when the Israelites came out of Egypt, they've only got a very general conception of the geography. And when they come to Sinai and God meets them from the opposite direction, as it were, if they're coming from Egypt to Mount Sinai and God is coming from the opposite direction, where is He pictured as coming from? He's pictured as coming from Edom.

He's pictured as coming from Seir, from the land of the east, from the land of the rising sun, the land of opportunity. So this is why God is often pictured in Seir or in Edom, because the mental conception there is this is how we first met God personally. It was at Sinai.

We had the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire, but God with the rumblings and the shakings and the lightnings and the glory cloud, that was Sinai. He met us at Sinai. He traveled across Seir and Edom to get there. This is the poetic idea.

“In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were deserted and the travelers walked along the byways. Village life ceased. It ceased in Israel.” Why? Whose fault is that? Who is not running the police force? Who is not trotting out the militia? Who is not enforcing justice and safety in the villages and highways and byways of the land?

Whose job is that? Is it Ahaziah out there behind his plow? Is it Amos the shepherd out there watching the flocks? Who is supposed to be securing towns and villages and the paths that connect them? Leadership. This is a governmental function.

This is elders. They are supposed to be hunting down and prosecuting people who are robbers and thieves and who are making the roads and the villages unsafe. Because leadership failed, the common man isn't safe, isn't secure, can't go openly in the village, can't travel the highways.

The highways are deserted. Travelers walk along the byways. You've got to find a furtive path and hope that you can escape the vagabonds and so on.

“Village life ceased in Israel until leadership arose, until I, Deborah, arose.” There was such a vacuum of leadership that I, Deborah, was able to rise up and provide more leadership than you guys were. This is one sort of implication. “I arose as a mother in Israel.” And this is a sort of an underhanded rebuke or a backhanded rebuke.

In a household, who is the authority? It's primarily the father. Who is the lesser and subordinate authority? Still an authority over the servants and over the children, but a lesser authority. It is the woman.

It is the mother. She is the moon to the father, husband, patriarch's son. Remember the vision that Joseph had of his family bowing down? He said, “I saw the sun and the moon and stars bowing down.”

Who do those represent? Well, the sun is his father. The moon is his mother. The stars are his brothers. And they said, “Well, you're arrogant.” But this is the way it works.

“Until I, Deborah, arose as a mother in Israel, they chose new gods. Then there was war in the gates. Not a shield or spear was seen among 40,000 in Israel.” Now, this is a condemnation of how they had let things deteriorate in the land.

The choosing of new gods has to do within the vacuum of authority, in the vacuum of leadership. People say, “Well, things are not working here anymore. God promised a land flung with milk and honey. But look, I’ve got to go furtively from place to place. I can’t walk openly in the village. So this system that God set up is not working. So I’m going to go to other gods. I’ll find some other way.”

This breakdown in authority actually sponsors and encourages idolatry. It encourages turning to other sources for aid and for prosperity. The choosing of new leaders also—there’s a double entendre here—because even as the people choose new gods, they’re also looking for new leadership instead of the ineffectual princes.

And they’re looking for new Elohim. And Elohim is a multivalent word in the ancient Near East. It can refer to God. It can refer to angels. It can refer to those who are powerful in the land.

“Unto Elohim” is an adjective that means something very, very great. It was a great city unto God. Well, you’re talking about a pagan city like Nineveh. Nineveh was a great city unto God.

Well, it’s not a city dedicated to God, devoted to God, or you’re looking at God. It means it was a mondo big city. And Elohim can mean just very, very great. So it has that connotation.

So this ultimately is going to turn them back to God Himself. And again, it takes oppression, it takes dire circumstance to get people to go back to the God of their salvation. So it says, “Then there was war in the gates.”

Remember, the gates are the seat of power. The gates of hell, that’s the power of death. There is fighting, there is engaging in battle.

And Israelites live in unwallled villages. They went in and knocked down a lot of the walled towns. And what they built, and what archaeology confirms, in keeping with the Bible, is that the dwellings from this period are unwallled. They’re not fortified cities.

They didn’t need it because initially Joshua had eradicated all of the major attack forces in the land. So the gates can only refer to one kind of town, and that’s the Canaanite towns, the untaken, unconquered Canaanite towns. The Israelites lived in unwallled villages. The Canaanites are the ones that live in places like what Hazor used to be, what Jericho used to be.

So there is war in the gates. “Not a shield or a spear was seen among 40,000 in Israel.” Here are these people in walled cities. We’ve got to throw off this oppression. They’re encroaching. Our princes and leadership are ineffectual. There’s rampant crime. There’s rampant encroachment by the supposedly defeated enemy.

Things are dire. So we can either turn to the gods of the land, or we can turn to the God of Israel. Deborah arose, calling them essentially back to God.

“My heart is with the rulers of Israel who offered themselves willingly with the people. Bless the Lord.” And so they unite in opposition to Canaan, in opposition to the gods of the land, in opposition to the encroachment, in opposition to the crime. All they needed was leadership.

Deborah arose. She stepped into that vacuum. Even though she’s only a mother figure, that was enough. “Speak, you who ride on white donkeys, who sit in judges’ attire.” This is a complimentary reference to those who are now resuming their leadership role.

What was the prediction for the Messiah in the Old Testament? What happened on the day when they were all saying, and throwing down the palm branches? What was the symbolic action? Jesus came into Jerusalem riding on the foal of a donkey.

And what does that communicate? What does it communicate in nonverbal terms? Here’s our King. Authority is going to come in riding on a donkey. Authority is going to come in wearing a white robe. Authority is going to come in and restore, and rebuild, and renew. And it comes in this way.

“Speak, you who ride on white donkeys, who sit in judges' attire, and who walk along the road.” This is similar to verse 3. When you look back at verse 3, this was a call to her audience. “Give ear, O kings. Listen, O princes,” vice versa. “I am going to sing to the Lord. I am going to sing praise to the Lord God of Israel. I am going to call you back to what you should be and what you can be.”

So the same thing again. She says, “Hear,” to these people in verse 3. Now she says, “Speak.” And she's talking to the same audience. You who are not the common villager, you're not the common man behind the plow or the man behind the sheep. You ride a white donkey. You sit in judges' attire. You're an elder. You've got authority assigned by God.

And who walk along the road. They are somehow not subject to the dangers and the problems that other people have when they walk openly in the village and when they try to travel the roads. Are these guys rich enough to pay off the criminals and the opposition? Have they paid protection money to the Canaanite overlords who are creeping into the land?

For whatever reason, they have abused their position. They can ride a white donkey and they're not afraid of being robbed. They can travel the streets. They can walk along the roads.

Remember it says nobody can walk the roads anymore? But these guys can. You who walk along the roads riding your donkeys, wearing your judges' attire. And yet the actual people are not getting any benefit from your authority.

You were given authority. You were given position. You were given power. And the only person benefiting from it is you. You're in good shape. You've looked out for number one. But the rest of the people were scattered.

“You are far from the noise of the archers. You are among the watering places.” So these individuals need to return to pointing people toward God and recounting His mighty deeds and doing what Israel was commanded to do in the law. Make a memorial. Remember.

Remember the four parts of worship that I've constantly emphasized? Take oaths in His name. Bow down before Him. Remember His name. Who is supposed to ensure that this remembrance is made? Who is supposed to ensure that they are obedient and faithful and remember the God of Israel? Who is supposed to be calling them?

Ehud did it. Othniel did it. How come these men have not been doing it? And so she calls to them.

She says, “You who have been riding the white donkeys and able to walk the roads, you who have been far from the noise of the archers and have been among the watering places, there you should recount the righteous acts of the Lord, the righteous acts for His villagers in Israel.” God didn't take this land so that you could ride your white donkey and wear your robe and be safe. You are supposed to be looking out for these people.

This is your job. This is a leadership function that you have abdicated. You should be, first and foremost, calling these people to the God of Israel. This is why there was peace for 80 years with Ehud, because that's what he did. This is why there was peace after Othniel. This is why there was peace after Shamgar, because they reminded people of the God of Israel.

“Then the people of the Lord shall go down to the gates.” If you would call them back to God, if you would remind them of their heritage, if you would exercise your proper leadership function, this is what pastors are supposed to do in the church. Don't have any special elevated position. It's just a job.

It is a job to call the people of God back to God, back to His Word, to put His Word before everyone, including Himself. Then the people of the Lord will go down to the gates, go down to the position of power, go down to that threatening walled city of Canaanites, no longer afraid, no longer skulking in the byways, no longer deserting the streets of the village.

They'll march right down to the gates. If you will do your job, remind them of the God of Israel, call them to faith and obedience, then the people of the Lord shall go down to the gates.

Then there's this little chorus: "Awake, awake, Deborah, awake, awake. Sing a song. Arise, Barak, and lead your captives away, O son of Ahinoam." Lead your captives away.

The opening word here says, after there was war in the gates, and the people marched down to the gates, this is the result of the awakening. You know, they talk about the Great Awakening in history. They talk about the restoration of classical ideas and classical thought and higher artistic elements and so on. There was a spiritual Great Awakening. The Renaissance was sort of a cultural and intellectual awakening.

Awake, awake, wake up. Look at things for what they really are. Awake and sing a song. Arise, Barak, and lead your captives away. Notice: lead, lead, lead. Fulfill the function.

So, when it says the people of the Lord went down against the gates there at the end of the previous verse, they are in the hills. They've been driven up into the hills. They can't go down in the plains. There's chariots and things down there.

And so it says they come down against the gates. They're coming out of their little furtive sneaking about up in the hills. Now they're going to come boldly down against the gates. So the verb there is yarad, and it means to come down against the gates. And it reminds you of the whole topographical situation there.

In the entire Book of Judges, it is only here where people are called the people of the Lord. In the whole Book of Judges, this is the only place that phrase occurs. When are they reflecting that Joshua mentality? When are they back to being the people of the Lord? It is this one instance where they are called, and they respond, and they come out of hiding, and they come down against the gates.

They are called the people of the Lord. And they'll never again be called that in the Book of Judges. And now you have this sort of emotional uplift as you have this repetition.

And when it says uri, uri, this means not so much wake up from sleep as get up off your duff, let's get up and do something. This is more like, "Get up, get up." Not from sleep, but from inactivity, from apathy and indifference.

And when it says sing a song, this is not from shir, which is the verb and the root from which you get the word song, and the word for sing. It's davar, which is in the noun form. It is how we translate it as word or matter. And davar means to speak or to say.

It reminds me of what we've studied in the Christmas story. What happens when the angels surround the shepherds? There was a multitude of the heavenly host standing, praising God. Were they singing? They were speaking, they were saying.

All of this "hark the herald angels speak, hark the herald angels chant." The Bible does not say that the angels sang. John Peterson, bless his heart, wrote the whole cantata, The Night the Angels Sang, the big Christmas cantata. The Bible never says any angels sung at any time during the birth of Christ.

It says, "And there was with that angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, chanting, speaking, glory to God in the highest, honor and peace toward men of good will." Same thing here. Awake, arise, get up.

And this is a cohortative. When it says Deborah, arise, awake, this is you do this yourself and get everybody else to do it. Speak forth the song, chant the song.

And the word speak is very significant there, because it doesn't mean get a tune going and lift them up on a wave of emotion. When you speak the song, it's the lyrics that count. When you speak the song, it's the sentiment, it's the ideas that are embodied.

I would much rather have a hymnal full of lyrics, which I've got my great-great-grandfather's hymnal in there, is all lyrics and no tunes, one of them, a little small one. All of the words are in there. I'd much rather have that.

What is the book of songs? All lyrics, no tunes. Speak a song, say a song, davar a song. Arise, Barak, lead your captives away.

And this is where you turn, once the leadership function is restored, once people have been called to arms and have been motivated, now you need the military leader. And the military leader is not Deborah, it's Barak. So there's sort of a military tone to this.

And now, when it says, "Arise," to Barak, this is a different verb. This is the verb kum, Q-U-M. And this is the same word that was used back in chapter 3, verse 9, when it said that God raised a deliverer in Israel.

"The children of Israel cried out to the Lord. The Lord raised up Othniel." Well, now this call goes to Barak. Arise.

God raised up Othniel. We had a mighty victory, military victory under Othniel. Remember, that was one of the last of the big campaigns.

Barak, rise up. Same verb that was used for Othniel. And it was used again in chapter 3, verse 15, for Ehud.

When the children of Israel cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for them. Barak, you need to be another Othniel. You need to be another Ehud for Israel. Arise.

That word is never used of Deborah. She is not called to rise up in the delivering sense, as Othniel and Ehud and Barak are, because that's a man's job. She is used as a mother in Israel.

What does your mother do for you? Guidance, counsel, motivation. It was Rebecca who counseled Jacob to leave, get out of the house, get away from your brother, go out and make your own way in the world, go up to my people and get a wife, get busy.

And it was Abigail who counseled Nabal, and he wouldn't listen, and so she went over and counseled David, and she prevented a big disaster. But she didn't take command of the troops. She didn't have this arise in the sense of this kum verb.

The charge to Deborah is to chant forth, to pronounce out a song. But the call to Barak is to take his captives captive. Literally.

He is to... The word there that is translated lead and the captives, it's all the same thing. Take captive your captives. Lead captivity captive, Barak.

They're already defeated. They've been pronounced defeated by God. Take captivity captive. Take your captives captive.

In God's mind, they already ought to be captives. They already are captives. You've just got to go get them. Rise up. Take your captives captive.

Well, now in verse 13, the survivors came down, the people against the nobles, the Lord came down for me, against the mighty. And this is sort of a contrast here between two different views of the same people.

You have the people of the Lord here, right? The people. And then they're called survivors. They're called the escapees.

And yes, they can be victorious. As they respond to leadership, when they give themselves, when the leaders arise, they are victors. But they're also deliverees. They are escapees.

And once again, you have that principle of balance. We are saved by grace. We are sinners. We are hopeless, helpless, and useless apart from God's grace. But in God's grace, we are victors. We are overcomers.

The victory that overcomes the world is our faith. And we can be called losers and winners at the same time and in the same breath. We can be called victims and recipients of God's grace, and in the same breath, we are victors and we are conquerors through Him who loved us.

And you get that balance here in this line in verse 13. These deliverees, these escapees, these survivors came down, these people against the strong nobles of the land. The Lord came down for me against the mighty.

All it took was one person in Israel to cry out, and a great deliverance is wrought in Israel. This is the idea. Well, as you can see, there is a lot of meat in this song.

And once you decipher a few of the important terms and references, who is being spoken of, what is being talked about, the key is leadership. The key is taking responsibility for what God has assigned. Do it in faith. Do it in confidence.

And you turn from an escapee into a victor over the walled gates. Well, we'll have to leave it at this point. We'll pick up in the middle of this song next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank You for this great account and illustration of the principle that even when we fail and even when we find in retrospect that we have been far from Your will and far from Your Word, we can recover, we can respond. We find that Your grace has provided leadership. Your grace has provided guidance.

And in our response, we can once again attack the gates. We can once again be delivered. We can once again be victors through that which You have granted to us through the Lord Jesus Christ and through Your Word and through Your Spirit. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will impress these truths on our hearts in the days ahead.

We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.