

YHWH's Song of Praise



Judges 5

The Power of Music and Song

“I have no use for cranks who despise music, because it is a gift of God. Music drives away the Devil and makes people joyful; they forget thereby all wrath, unchastity, arrogance, and the like. Next after theology, I give to music the highest place and the greatest honor.” (Martin Luther)

I. A Introduction of Praise (1-5)

A. The Lord's work is praised! (1-3)

Authorship: There is some debate as to who actually wrote the song. Most scholars agree that due to feminine tense of the word “sang”, that Deborah wrote it. Regardless, this was sung as a duet both with Deborah and Barak.

Purpose: To praise the Lord in response to His victory over Sisera

Remember the context of Judges: What phrase characterizes the book of judges?

“Every man did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6, 21:25)

Man's way = death

God's way = blessing

I. A Introduction of Praise (1-5)

B. The Lord's power is praised! (4-5)

Psalm 18:6–14 (ESV) — 6 In my distress I called upon the Lord; to my God I cried for help. From his temple he heard my voice, and my cry to him reached his ears. 7 Then the earth reeled and rocked; the foundations also of the mountains trembled and quaked, because he was angry. 8 Smoke went up from his nostrils, and devouring fire from his mouth; glowing coals flamed forth from him. 9 He bowed the heavens and came down; thick darkness was under his feet. 10 He rode on a cherub and flew; he came swiftly on the wings of the wind. 11 He made darkness his covering, his canopy around him, thick clouds dark with water. 12 Out of the brightness before him hailstones and coals of fire broke through his clouds. 13 The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Most High uttered his voice, hailstones and coals of fire. 14 And he sent out his arrows and scattered them; he flashed forth lightnings and routed them.

“YHWH is not set in historical concrete at Sinai, rather the One of Sinai is mobile, marching forth again and again to rescue His flock. And when He does, creation comes unglued! (Davis)

II. What it was like before the Lord acted (6-9)

A. Desperation

B. Apostasy

“Sometimes it is only when God’s people see how helpless they are, that they can appreciate how mighty YHWH is. Desperate people and sufficient God are placed side by side that the former might rest in the latter. Surely God’s afflicted people should derive great comfort from knowing that the God from Sinai is the God who comes repeatedly to his people in distress. Omnipotence delights in encores.” (Davis)

III. Praise for the Righteous deeds of the Lord (9-13)

The Rich: “You who ride on white donkeys, You who sit on rich carpets”

The Poor: “And you who travel on the road—sing!”

The Faithful: “At the sound of those who divide flocks among the watering places. There they shall recount the righteous deeds of the Lord, The righteous deeds for His peasantry in Israel”

IV. Recognition and Rebuke (14-18)

A. Recognition

Ephraim

Benjamin

Machir- Son of Manasseh, founder of the most dominant branch of Manasseh

Issachar-“into the valley they rushed at their heels” (chased Sisera into the valley)

Naphtali-“high places in the field” (18..the most strategic place in the battle)

Zebulun-“despised their lives even to death” (14,18...”willing to sacrifice their lives for the cause”)

B. Rebuke

Reuben

“great resolves of heart”(lit: deliberations..should they go, should they not go)

“Great searching of heart” (lit: searchings ...why should they go)

End result: stayed with the sheep

Gilead (Gad and rest of Manasseh)-remained across the Jordan

Reason: Indifference? Geography?

Dan-stayed in their ships (probably refers to their involvement as hired laborers to the Phoenicians after they moved from the south and settled in the north)

Asher-sat at the seashore, remained by its landings (same as Dan)

Reason: possibly lose economic benefit from Phoenecians

“Some of the tribes of Israel had failed to come to the aid of their brethren in this battle. Their absence was noticed, despite the fact that the Lord brought a great victory without them. Conversely, those who fought at their own peril were remembered and honored for their faithfulness to God’s people. Those who faithfully participate in the Lord’s work will be blessed, while those who shirk their responsibilities will deprive themselves of reward” (MacArthur)

V. Providence Prevails! (19-22)

Definition of Providence:

*The **providence of God** may be defined as His guardianship and care for His creatures and creation. Also, any manifestation of such care may be described as providence. Providence means that God has not abandoned the world that he created, but rather works within that creation to manage all things according to the “immutable counsel of His own will” (Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology)*

One aspect to his providence is “concurrency”:

Concurrency is "an aspect of God's providence whereby he cooperates with created things in every action, directing their distinctive properties to cause them to act as they do"

Short definition: God acts in space and time to accomplish His eternal purposes and uses the things in which He created, without having to change their makeup to do so

V. Providence Prevails! (19-22)

What we know from Judges 4:15 ...

Lit: “(The Lord) threw Sisera and all his chariotry and all his troops into disarray”

What we find out from Deborah ...

1) Sisera’s Motive: to humiliate YHWH

2) God’s defeat of Sisera was a sovereign act of Providence

“the heavens also dripped, Even the clouds dripped water”

-The Lord brought a rainstorm, flooded the Kishon, and caused a flash flood to wipe out Sisera’s chariots

“The stars fought from heaven, From their courses they fought against Sisera”

-A play on words

-The Canaanites thought of the stars as heavenly powers that controlled the weather.

-Deborah is saying, this act did come from heaven, but it came from YHWH, the One who created and is sovereign over all things

VI. The Faithful vs the Wicked (23-30)

“Meroz”: Disobedient

More than likely, it was a town of whose inhabitants were called on to aid Israel in their battle against Sisera

“Jael”: Obedient

“Mother of Sisera”: Wicked

31 “Thus let all Your enemies perish, O Lord; But let those who love Him be like the rising of the sun in its might.” And the land was undisturbed for forty years.

Application:

- We are to love the Lord in response to His love for us

Our “A-Hab” because of His “Hesed”

John 14:23–24 (ESV) — **23** Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. **24** Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father’s who sent me.

The Lord wants His people to obey His Word, and to obey eagerly— not by compulsion. We cannot experience the Lord’s full blessing in our lives unless we willingly obey His commands. As Deborah sang, “When leaders lead in Israel, when the people willingly offer themselves, bless the LORD!” (Judges 5: 2). (MacArthur)

- Praise the Lord for His omnipotent power...especially over sin

1 Thessalonians 1:9–10 (NASB95) — **9** For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, **10** and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come.