

Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day: “That the leaders took the lead in Israel, that the people offered themselves willingly, bless the LORD!

“Hear, O kings; give ear, O princes; to the LORD I will sing; I will make melody to the LORD, the God of Israel.

“LORD, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the region of Edom, the earth trembled and the heavens dropped, yes, the clouds dropped water. The mountains quaked before the LORD, even Sinai before the LORD, the God of Israel.

“In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were abandoned, and travellers kept to the byways. The villagers ceased in Israel; they ceased to be until I arose; I, Deborah, arose as a mother in Israel. When new gods were chosen, then war was in the gates. Was shield or spear to be seen among forty thousand in Israel? My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel who offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless the LORD.

“Tell of it, you who ride on white donkeys, you who sit on rich carpets and you who walk by the way. To the sound of musicians at the watering places, there they repeat the righteous triumphs of the LORD, the righteous triumphs of his villagers in Israel.

“Then down to the gates marched the people of the LORD.

“Awake, awake, Deborah! Awake, awake, break out in a song! Arise, Barak, lead away your captives, O son of Abinoam. Then down marched the remnant of the noble; the people of the LORD marched down for me against the mighty. From Ephraim their root they marched down into the valley, following you, Benjamin, with your kinsmen; from Machir marched down the commanders, and from Zebulun those who bear the lieutenant’s staff; the princes of Issachar came with Deborah, and Issachar faithful to Barak; into the valley they rushed at his heels. Among the clans of Reuben there were great searchings of heart. Why did you sit still among the sheepfolds, to hear the whistling for the flocks? Among the clans of Reuben there were great searchings of heart. Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan; and Dan, why did he stay with the ships? Asher sat still at the coast of the sea, staying by his landings. Zebulun is a people who risked their lives to the death; Naphtali, too, on the heights of the field.

“The kings came, they fought; then fought the kings of Canaan, at Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo; they got no spoils of silver. From heaven the stars fought, from their courses they fought against Sisera. The torrent Kishon swept them away, the ancient torrent, the torrent Kishon. March on, my soul, with might!

“Then loud beat the horses’ hoofs with the galloping, galloping of his steeds.

“Curse Meroz, says the angel of the LORD, curse its inhabitants thoroughly, because they did not come to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.

“Most blessed of women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, of tent-dwelling women most blessed. He asked for water and she gave him milk; she brought him curds in a noble’s bowl. She sent her hand to the tent peg and her right hand to the workmen’s mallet; she struck Sisera; she crushed his head; she shattered and pierced his temple. Between her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still; between her feet he sank, he fell; where he sank, there he fell—dead.

“Out of the window she peered, the mother of Sisera wailed through the lattice: ‘Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the hoofbeats of his chariots?’ Her wisest princesses answer, indeed, she answers herself, ‘Have they not found and divided the spoil?—A womb or two for every man; spoil of dyed materials for Sisera, spoil of dyed materials embroidered, two pieces of dyed work embroidered for the neck as spoil?’

“So may all your enemies perish, O LORD! But your friends be like the sun as he rises in his might.”

And the land had rest for forty years.

(Judges 5:1–31)

Introduction

Queen’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” is widely considered a masterpiece of twentieth-century music. When it was released, reactions were, at best, mixed. Music critics were confused by the seeming senselessness of it all. One described the song as “a superficially impressive pastiche of incongruous musical styles,” and thought that Queen “contrived to approximate the demented fury of the Balham Amateur Operatic Society performing ‘The Pirates of Penzance.’” A second critic wrote, “It has no immediate selling point whatsoever: Among its many parts, there’s scarcely a shred of a tune and certainly no one line to latch onto.” A third simply called it “impossibly disjointed and complex.”

At first glance—at least to the musically unschooled like me—the early critics had a point. Until you understand the nature of rhapsody, the song appears to have little structure. A rhapsody is a piece of poetry or music that appears to lack a formal structure but is designed to express powerful feelings. “Bohemian Rhapsody” certainly has a structure, but it is less—well—structured than conventional songs. The structure can be envisioned something like this: introduction, piano ballad, extended guitar solo, pseudo-operatic midsection, hard rock episode, outro ballad.

And so the song contains a structure, even though, as with all rhapsodies, it may not be the classic structure that we are accustomed to in “ordinary” music.

Sometimes, when we read songs in the Bible, we struggle to initially find the structure in them. This may be because we are accustomed, in Christian music, to a structure of verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, repeat chorus. Biblical songs certainly do not follow this structure, but that does not mean there is no structure to them. One must simply dig a little deeper to find the structure, and it is usually well worth the effort.

In this study, we come to consider one of the Bible's songs—particularly, that composed and sung by Deborah and Barak after the victory that God granted them over the Canaanites. The text suggests that Deborah was the primary vocalist, while Barak, perhaps, was the musical accompanist—Deborah on vocals and Barak on guitar.

The structure of the song is simple, even if not immediately evident to the reader of Scripture. It contains an intro (vv. 1–5), three stanzas—verse 1 (vv. 6–11a); verse 2 (vv. 11b–23); and verse 3 (vv. 24–30)—and an outro (v. 31). The song encourages involvement in the work of God but reminds us that, ultimately, Yahweh is the one who ensures victory in his work.

Each section of the song provides a contrast of characters. In varying ways, and with varying emphases, each section contrasts those who were willing to be involved in God's work with those who were not. The outro issues a concluding blessing to the willing volunteers and a strong warning to the non-volunteers. It provides a call to its hearers to get in the game—to get involved in God's work. The stories of Ehud and Shamgar focus on the methods God used in deliverance; the story of Deborah and Barak focuses on the people God used in deliverance. Let's consider this song and hear the challenge to get in the game ourselves.

Intro: The Volunteers and the Non-Volunteers

The song begins with an intro, in which the (implied) contrast is between volunteers and non-volunteers:

Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day: “That the leaders took the lead in Israel, that the people offered themselves willingly, bless the LORD!

Hear, O kings; give ear, O princes; to the LORD I will sing; I will make melody to the LORD, the God of Israel.

LORD, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the region of Edom, the earth trembled and the heavens dropped, yes, the clouds dropped water. The mountains quaked before the LORD, even Sinai before the LORD, the God of Israel.”

(Judges 5:1–5)

Don't miss the fact that the song was sung “on that day”—that is, the very day that Israel achieved victory against the Canaanites. I find this to be significant, for at least two reasons.

First, that's pretty quick for such an epic song to be written! I once saw a documentary in which Freddy Mercury's band members said that he had been conceptualising "Bohemian Rhapsody" for years before they actually recorded it, and the recording itself took four months. This song appears to have been put together in a matter of hours following the victory against the Canaanites.

Second, "that day" was a drastically different day to the days that had preceded it. Before "that day," Canaan had "oppressed the people of Israel cruelly for twenty years" (4:3). During those twenty years, "the highways were abandoned, and travellers kept to the byways" for fear of open attack. Villagers "ceased" their normal daily activities for fear of their lives, perhaps retiring behind locked doors the moment the sun set. Those were days of war in which the enemy was armed to the teeth and Israel hopeless and helpless with nothing but ox-goads to fight back (vv. 6–8).

Is it any wonder that God's people *sang* on the day of their victory? Singing is the perfectly understandable, often spontaneous, response of people who have been delivered by God. Israel's ancestors had burst into song when God had delivered them from Egypt (Exodus 15:1). A later generation would do the same when delivered from Babylonian exile (Isaiah 26:1). Indeed, corporate singing will be the hallmark of God's people for eternity (Revelation 5:9–10). As Gary Webb observes, "Singing is a natural and proper response to deliverance. It's something people do when God saves them and they are glad and grateful to him."

There is something not quite right when professing Christians stand in Lord's Day worship services and will not open their mouths during corporate singing. You don't have to have the most beautiful operatic voice to sing in praise to the God who has delivered you. A refusal to praise God in song may well reveal a heart that lacks gratitude for what God has done—or a heart for which nothing has actually been done through the gospel. God's people are not ashamed to sing grateful praise to his name.

Verses 2–5 reveal, in brief, what Deborah and Barak were grateful for: the Lord working in the lives of his people to ensure that leaders and people worked together to obey him.

The CSB translates v. 2 more smoothly than the ESV: "When the leaders lead in Israel, when the people volunteer, blessed be the LORD." For twenty years, few were willing to stand against the oppressing Canaanites, and even when leaders like Shamgar showed willingness, followers were nowhere to be found. At times there were no leaders or volunteers. At other times there were leaders, but no volunteers. In both cases, Israel's progress as a people stagnated and their oppressors stood victorious over them.

But then God heard the pitiful cries of his people and started working. And how did he work? By bringing leadership and congregation to a unified purpose. When leaders and congregants started working together toward a common purpose, progress was made and there was reason to bless the Lord.

There are few things as destructive to God's purposes than a leadership and a congregation that are each running in their own direction. On the other hand, there is genuine cause to bless the Lord when the congregation and its leaders are unified in purpose.

This is one reason behind our drive as a church toward a better implementation of elder-led congregationalism. It is one motivation that persuades us, for example, of the long-term benefit of regular members' meetings. It is one reason that we ask the congregation to offer us feedback. If our church will go forward in a way in which we can truly bless the Lord, it will only be as leaders lead and people volunteer, working together for a common purpose.

Let us not miss the fact that this song was composed and sung by Israel's leaders, who were expressing their own gratitude for willing volunteers. Leaders are always thankful when God's people are willing to serve. One of the greatest blessings you can offer your local church is a simple willingness to serve. Few things cause greater consternation for church and ministry leaders than people who are unwilling to give—parents who want their children to benefit from youth ministry but are unwilling to sign up for youth ministry; members who want to benefit from hospitality but are not willing to show hospitality; etc. Conversely, few things cause greater joy than a people willing to freely offer themselves in service to the Lord. If you want to be a real blessing to the leaders God has placed over you, and to your fellow church members, look for ways you can serve and avail yourself to do so.

I recently spoke to a church member about her willingness to be involved in a particular ministry. I knew that she had been facing a time of great stress and angst, personally and in her family. I honestly thought she might ask to be excused, but I was blessed when she replied, "I won't lie, it's been a crazy six months with a lot happening and changing jobs from July, so there's prep to happen there as well. It's tempting to say, not this year. But it will be good to be involved." What a blessing it is when God's people volunteer.

Ultimately, however, Israel's leaders were thankful to the Lord, to whom ultimate victory is ascribed. Even as she expressed gratitude for the willingness of the people to stand and be counted, Deborah ultimately sang, "Hear, O kings; give ear, O princes; to the LORD I will sing; I will make melody to the LORD, the God of Israel" (vv. 2–3). Yahweh was to be blessed because the victory of which she sang was his alone. Victory was not achieved through military intelligence but through the Lord's miraculous intervention. Were it not for the untimely rain that the Lord provided, which left the Canaanite chariots bogged in mire (vv. 4–5), victory would not have been easily attained.

God's people are always thankful to him and willing to ascribe to him glory for the work that only he can do. The intro to this song is a reminder, not only to be willing to be involved in God's work, but to praise God for the saving work that he produces in our lives, and never to try to claim credit for ourselves that belongs to him alone.

Stanza 1: The Cowards and the Courageous

With the intro out of the way, the first stanza focuses attention on contrasting the sad, cowardly plight of the frightened people during Canaanite oppression with the courageous leaders whom God raised to deliver them.

In the days of Shamgar, son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were abandoned, and travellers kept to the byways. The villagers ceased in Israel; they ceased to be until I arose; I, Deborah, arose as a mother in Israel. When new gods were chosen, then war was in the gates. Was shield or spear to be seen among forty thousand in Israel? My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel who offered themselves willingly among the people. Bless the LORD.

Tell of it, you who ride on white donkeys, you who sit on rich carpets and you who walk by the way. To the sound of musicians at the watering places, there they repeat the righteous triumphs of the LORD, the righteous triumphs of his villagers in Israel.

(Judges 5:6–11a)

The days of Canaanite oppression were marked by cowardice. Too afraid to travel in open, the Israelites skulked along back roads in their movements. Men like Shamgar stood out in a time like this. While weaponless Israelites felt ill-equipped to fight back against their enemies, Shamgar's fame spread abroad when he single-handedly fought back six hundred Philistines with nothing but an ox-goad. But that is exactly the point: He did it single-handedly. Sadly, his example did not spur the people onto faith. Instead, "the villagers ceased in Israel" while people hid in their houses.

All of this changed when Deborah came on the scene. Suddenly, people recognised a mother-figure to look to for guidance. They saw someone wise, gentle, and courageous—worthy to be followed. Deborah was the answer to everyone's prayers.

The power of the mother imagery is sadly lost on us today in an age in which motherhood is undermined and desperately needs to be recaptured.

A recent viral video of an *America's Got Talent* contestant highlights the power of motherhood. A young man named Kodi Lee took the stage, carrying a walking stick and flanked by an older woman. When the judges asked who she was, she replied, "I'm Mom. I'm Tina." After explaining that Kodi was born blind and severely autistic, Tina related how Kodi's face lit up as a child when he heard music, and how he began to sing. She realised then, she said, that he is an entertainer, and she has spent the best part of his life trying to help him achieve his entertainment aspirations.

Tina then walked him to the piano centre stage and whispered a few words of encouragement in his ear. She moved backstage and Kodi proceeded to play and sing a truly stirring rendition Leon Russell's "A Song for You," which had at least two of the judges, and many more in the audience, in tears, and earned him Gabrielle Union's golden buzzer.

As incredible as Kodi's performance was, I couldn't help but think that the true hero of his story is Tina—the mother who selflessly and tirelessly guided him to reach his ambitions. Without his mother, it is doubtful that Kodi would ever have achieved what he has achieved. That is the kind of mother image that should be conjured in our minds as we read of Deborah as a mother in Israel.

Deborah the prophetess became a mother in Israel. She tirelessly guided and looked out for the best interests of Israel, and the Israelites recognised this and followed her guidance. Even though the military arsenal had not yet been restored, the people began taking responsibility as they followed her. They began creeping out of their darkened houses, until eventually an army of willing volunteers was prepared to go to war.

The contrast here is one of cowardice versus courage. But note that the courage was not the bland courage of self-confidence. It was, instead, courage that flowed from the centrality of God's word. Deborah, you will remember, was a prophetess. She was widely recognised as God's representative (4:4–5), and once God's word was restored to centrality, confidence was renewed. We saw previously that Barak was willing to march forward in faith as long as he had the promise of God's word with him (4:8), and here you see that he was not alone. Courage was restored to God's people when the word again became central.

There is probably just cause to be critical of Israel's cowardice pre-Deborah. The truth is, God was always ready to bless obedience, and there was ample opportunity during the twenty years of oppression for Israel to rise up and follow the Lord in obedience. Had people swelled to Shamgar's side, who knows what might have happened? But they didn't, and their prolonged oppression was their own fault.

Still, Israel ought to be commended for their courage to follow when God's word directed. It is easy for us to be critical of Israel's failure in divine silence when we too often fail even with clear direction. We have no excuse. We have such easy access to God's word, and yet we often rely on our own understanding instead of trusting in the Lord with all our heart (Proverbs 3:5–6).

Is sin not, at its root, failure to trust God? Is it not thinking that we know better, that we can meet our own needs and desires better than he can?

How often do we try to earn God's favour on our own when we have his clear word that Jesus Christ has done everything that needed to be done to earn God's favour for those who trust in him! How often do people hear the gospel of God's free grace in Jesus Christ preached and yet think that they must first clean out the skeletons in their closet before they can come to him! How often do believers hear the truth that we are completely accepted in Jesus Christ alone and yet think that our righteous standing before God lies in our Bible reading, our prayer life, or our church attendance! These things are good and necessary outworkings of God's grace in our lives, but when we think that they earn God's favour we have fallen into the trap of the cowardly Israelites.

Stanza 2: The Faithful and the Faithless

If the first stanza contrasts cowards with the courageous, the second contrasts the faithful with the faithless—risk-takers with comfort-seekers.

Then down to the gates marched the people of the LORD.

Awake, awake, Deborah! Awake, awake, break out in a song! Arise, Barak, lead away your captives, O son of Abinoam.

Then down marched the remnant of the noble; the people of the LORD marched down for me against the mighty. From Ephraim their root they marched down into the valley, following you, Benjamin, with your kinsmen; from Machir marched down the commanders, and from Zebulun those who bear the lieutenant's staff; the princes of Issachar came with Deborah, and Issachar faithful to Barak; into the valley they rushed at his heels.

Among the clans of Reuben there were great searchings of heart. Why did you sit still among the sheepfolds, to hear the whistling for the flocks? Among the clans of Reuben there were great searchings of heart. Gilead stayed beyond the Jordan; and Dan, why did he stay with the ships? Asher sat still at the coast of the sea, staying by his landings. Zebulun is a people who risked their lives to the death; Naphtali, too, on the heights of the field.

The kings came, they fought; then fought the kings of Canaan, at Taanach, by the waters of Megiddo; they got no spoils of silver. From heaven the stars fought, from their courses they fought against Sisera. The torrent Kishon swept them away, the ancient torrent, the torrent Kishon. March on, my soul, with might!

Then loud beat the horses' hoofs with the galloping, galloping of his steeds.

Curse Meroz, says the angel of the LORD, curse its inhabitants thoroughly, because they did not come to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty.

(Judges 5:11b–23)

These words are a mouthful and perhaps difficult to follow until you sit down and trace carefully what Deborah sings. In essence, she sings about the various contributions that the Israelite tribes made to the war. Ephraim contributed loyal warriors (v. 14a). Benjamin, a small tribe, made a small contribution (v. 14b). Manasseh (Machir) contributed commanders (v. 14c) while Zebulun contributed administrative staff (v. 14d). Issachar took to the front lines with Deborah and Barak (v. 15a). Each of these tribes contributed something vital to Israel's victory, and each was to be commended for their contribution.

Sadly, not all contributed. Reuben held deep discussions about how to be involved but never got around to actually contributing (vv. 15b–16). They spoke and prayed so much about how to be involved that they forgot to actually get involved! Gad, Dan, and Asher sat back and watched as their brothers risked

their lives (v. 17). These tribes were too indecisive, too preoccupied, and too risk-averse to do anything meaningful.

Indecision, preoccupation with worldly pursuits, and risk-aversion are always enemies of God's work. It is absolutely necessary to carefully calculate the cost of following Christ, but at some point indecision must give way to faith and we must make up our mind. We must always be on guard against being distracted by what is fading and fleeting. Allow your devotion to Christ to take priority over the Cricket World Cup or the latest concert at the Dome. There are times when obedience to God calls for us to risk our reputation, our security, even our lives. But the risk is worth it, for inaction, when action is called for, is inexcusable.

But there was one attitude that was even worse than indecision, preoccupation, and risk-aversion, and it is the attitude of Meroz (v. 23). It is impossible to identify Meroz with any certainty, but their attitude is unmistakable: They were willing to watch their brothers risk their lives in the battle (vv. 18–19) but remained unwilling to get involved, even when it was clear that God was at work (vv. 20–22). They played it safe, but in seeking to save their lives, they earned a divine curse. Because they were preoccupied with saving their life, they ultimately lost their soul.

Here is the point: Faithfulness trusts God to work—and therefore moves us to action. The faithful do not sit back and let everyone else do the work for them. The faithful step out in faith and get involved in what God is doing.

There were plenty of consumers in Israel at this point, who were only too willing to benefit from the labours of others, and who no doubt criticised the way that the involved were doing things, but they are immortalised in shame, while those who risked their lives in faithfulness to the Lord are remembered for their obedience.

What will it take for you to get off your laurels and get involved in the work of the Lord? There may be a time to sit back and take a breather, but faithfulness is displayed in action, not inaction. And, as was the case with Barak, faithfulness is displayed in a willingness to act even if you don't get the credit for it.

Stanza 3: The Super-mom and the Psycho-mom

The final stanza is a contrast of two mothers: Super-mom and Psycho-mom:

Most blessed of women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, of tent-dwelling women most blessed. He asked for water and she gave him milk; she brought him curds in a noble's bowl. She sent her hand to the tent peg and her right hand to the workmen's mallet; she struck Sisera; she crushed his head; she shattered and pierced his temple. Between her feet he sank, he fell, he lay still; between her feet he sank, he fell; where he sank, there he fell—dead.

Out of the window she peered, the mother of Sisera wailed through the lattice: “Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the hoofbeats of his chariots?” Her wisest princesses answer, indeed, she answers herself, “Have they not found and divided the spoil?—A womb or two for every man; spoil of dyed materials for Sisera, spoil of dyed materials embroidered, two pieces of dyed work embroidered for the neck as spoil?”

(Judges 5:24–30)

The immediate contrast here is between Jael (vv. 24–27) and Sisera’s mother (vv. 28–30), but there is, in fact, a sense in which the real contrast is between Deborah (with her faithful daughter Jael) and Sisera’s unnamed mother (with her godless son). Jael was not Deborah’s biological daughter, but as one who was in the game—who fought for Israel—she was following Deborah’s motherly leadership as surely as the Israelites did.

We read of Jael’s exploits in 4:17–22. Given Sisera’s view of and approach to women in warfare, it was a bold move for her to invite him into her tent, but she did so as an ally of Israel and therefore a servant of Yahweh. In poetic fashion, Deborah tells of the decisive victory that Jael accomplished over Sisera. He was dead before he knew what hit him.

Meanwhile, Sisera’s mother was waiting anxiously for his return. Concerned by his delay, her only comfort was that he was still dividing the spoil and still busy raping the conquered women. “He’ll be home as soon as he’s finished his bloodthirsty, vicious campaign! And he’ll no doubt bring me something nice.” Little did she know that, rather than conquering women, he lay dead at a woman’s conquering feet.

It sounds shocking that Sisera’s mom could talk so callously of him plundering and raping his victims, with no hint of a twinged conscience. But she had to approve of it, for her own creature comforts depended on his military exploits. Righteousness would interrupt her lavish lifestyle. If it sounds far-fetched that a mother would speak so callously and gleefully of the death of the innocent for the sake of her own comforts, let us listen how callously our own culture often talks of killing unborn children in the womb—often with very much the same motive!

Outro: The Enemies and the Friends

The song comes to an end in v. 31 with a word of application of sorts, in which there is yet another contrast—between enemies and friends: “So may all your enemies perish, O LORD! But your friends be like the sun as he rises in his might.’ And the land had rest for forty years” (v. 31).

This outro is an exhortation to the hearers to see the benefits of getting involved in God’s work. That is the overriding theme of this song: Get involved. It is a song of contrasts—contrasting those who would not get involved with those who were willing to get involved in God’s work. Let’s then consider some lessons from this song.

First, this song is a challenge for every believer to get in the game. Stuart Briscoe is correct: “You can’t be reconciled to God without being recruited.” Or as Phillips Brooks puts it, “It is almost as presumptuous to think you can do nothing as to think you can do everything.” This song treads the fine line of which Brooks speaks: On the one hand, it blesses Yahweh for the victory he gave to Israel; on the other, it commends the volunteers who got involved in the war.

If you are a Christian, you are called to get in the game—to volunteer in the work of the Lord. You are saved by grace through faith apart from works, but you are saved in order to do good works (Ephesians 2:8–10). And those good works are to be displayed within the context of the local church. Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church, and it is our responsibility to build on that foundation, within the context of the church. In the end, the work we did in the church will be judged to determine its worth (1 Corinthians 3:10–15). If you are a Christian, you are expected to get in the game. And the game is played in the local church. How are you serving, in the context of your church, in the work of the Lord?

Second, this song is a warning to those who will not get in the game. Deborah and Barak warned that Yahweh’s “enemies” would ultimately “perish.” Contextually, Yahweh’s enemies are both the Canaanites *and* the Israelites who would not get involved in the work. God’s enemies, in other words, comprise both open pagans and professing Christians who have no interest in serving. God produces in the lives of his people a willingness to serve, and those who have no desire to serve the Lord are making a statement about their spiritual identity.

The warning to those who reject and deny the gospel is stark: They will “perish.” “They will pay the penalty of eternal destruction from the Lord’s presence and from his glorious strength” (2 Thessalonians 1:5–10, CSB).

But this need not be your destiny because, third, this song is a promise to those who get in the game. The promise is that Yahweh’s “friends” will “be like the sun as he rises in his might.” Those who are on the Lord’s side will ultimately shine bright with him. Rather than perishing, they will inherit “eternal life” (John 3:16). They will experience his eternal favour.

The question—and the fourth lesson to consider—is, what does it take to get in the game? The answer is simple: Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. You see, Jesus came to earth to save his enemies (Romans 5:6–10). He did so by living a perfect life, dying a substitutionary death on a Roman cross, and rising victoriously from the dead on the behalf of those he came to save. He took upon himself the curse of God so that those who wish to be delivered from God’s curse can be.

If you wish to be delivered from the eternal destruction—the perishing—that awaits God’s enemies on the day of judgement, there is one way: by believing that Jesus died on the cross for your sins and rose again from the dead for your eternal salvation. Repent of your sins and call upon the name of the Lord and you will be saved. You will be like the sun as it rises in its might.

Are you in the game? If not, get in the game today or perish at the hand of the Lord.

Getting in the Game

Judges 5:1–31

Stuart Chase

AMEN