

MOSES' GREAT SONG OF PRAISE: PRAISING GOD FOR HIS GREAT DELIVERANCE EXODUS 15:01–21

Introduction

God delivers His people through the trials of life. When we experience His deliverance — the power of His hand upon our lives — our hearts are always filled with joy and rejoicing. Praise floods our hearts. And usually, the greater the deliverance, the greater the praise lifted up to God.

This is what happened to the Israelites. God's great deliverance at the Red Sea was the most wonderful deliverance Israel was ever to experience as a nation. God knew this; therefore, in His infinite wisdom, He stirred Moses to record the praise of his heart forever in Holy Scripture. The song is usually divided into five sections or stanzas.

=> Verses 1-5 => Verses 6-8 => Verses 9-10
=> Verses 11-12 => Verses 13-18

However, this division seems to focus present-day thought and divisions upon the song. It seems far more natural to look at the song as a whole with Moses declaring how God Himself delivered His people, gloriously delivered them.

Note that Moses' sister Miriam also led the women in singing praises to God (vv. 19-21). Both songs are obviously two of the oldest songs ever recorded in written form.

This is the subject of the present passage, this is: *Moses' Great Song of Praise: Praising God for His Great Deliverance*, Exodus 15:1-21.

- I. A song of God's praise (vv. 1-2).
- II. A song of God's great deliverance (vv. 3-12).
- III. A song of God's glorious purpose: to lead the redeemed to God's holy dwelling (the promised land) (vv. 13-18).
- IV. A song of special praise and dance: sung by the women of God's people (vv. 19-21).

I. *Exodus 15:01–02 Moses' Song of God's Praise*

The song in this passage is a song of God's praise. It is sung to the LORD. The LORD is the focus of the praise. He is addressed thirteen times in this passage, in just twenty-one verses.

- The song sung by Moses addresses God ten times as LORD (Jehovah, Yahweh) (vv. 1, 2, 3, 6, 11, 16, 17, 18)
 - The song of Moses also addresses God as Adonay one time (v. 17)
 - The brief song sung by Miriam (vv. 19-21) addresses the LORD two times (vv. 19, 21)
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Moses and the Israelites were flooded with the joy of the moment, and their hearts were just overflowing with a spirit of rejoicing and praise to God. Two reasons are given for Israel breaking out in song.

1. The LORD had gloriously triumphed on behalf of His people: He had hurled the armed horsemen of their enemies into the sea. The LORD had gloriously delivered them from being recaptured and enslaved again by the Egyptians. Moreover, the LORD had miraculously drowned the Egyptian army in the Red Sea. He had made absolutely sure that the ancient Egyptians would never again enslave His people. This was the greatest day of redemption in the history of Israel. God had redeemed them, saved and delivered them from their enemies.
2. The LORD was, therefore, worthy of praise and renewed commitment (v. 2). Note how personal the LORD was to the Israelite believer during these moments. His *relationship to the LORD* was very personal. His heart just broke forth praising God for the personal relationship God had made possible and wrought.
 - a. The LORD is “my strength” (v. 2). No matter what trial confronts the believer, God strengthens the believer to face the trial of...

- problems
- temptations
- sufferings
- evil persecution

The believer is weak within himself, but the LORD is always present with him. The LORD is his strength. This the Israelites, God's people, were declaring.

- b. The LORD is “my song” (v. 2). The believer faces the same trials and sorrows upon earth as unbelievers do. Both believers and unbelievers suffer upon earth; often believers suffer more because of the persecution and hatred of the world. Nevertheless, God comforts the believer and gives him the peace and security of His Holy Spirit. The believer knows that the world and its afflictions can take his life, but not his soul. He knows that he is going to serve God forever in the new heavens and earth. Therefore, the believer is to...

- joy in trials
- rejoice through sufferings
- sing in the face of sorrow

The believer is weak within himself, but the LORD is always present with him. It is the presence of the LORD that always puts the song within the believer's heart. Moses and the true believers among Israel knew this glorious truth; therefore, they led all the people in declaring the glorious truth: “The LORD is my song.”

- c. The LORD is “my salvation” (v. 2). The enemies of the world — including evil men, sin, death and hell — are always attacking and threatening the believer. But God is the believer's Saviour: He will deliver and save the believer from all that opposes him.

- d. The LORD is “my God” (v. 2). He is the true and living God. God had just proven this once again by miraculously delivering His people through the Red Sea and destroying their enemies. The miracle had just taken place. It was time for God’s people to reaffirm their faith and declare that God is “my God.” It was time for them to praise and make a renewed commitment to Him. Each Israelite had reason to stand up and shout...
- “The LORD, He is my God.”
 - “I will prepare my heart for His *indwelling presence*.”
- e. The LORD is “my father’s God.” Their fathers had taught them to believe God and His great promises to His people. Their fathers were strong in faith and God had blessed them ever so richly. Therefore, the Israelites declared that they were committing themselves to follow the God of their fathers. He was worthy to be followed. Thus He had just proven by delivering them so miraculously through the Red Sea.

II. *Exodus 15:03–12 A Song of God’s Great Deliverance*

The song was a song of God’s great deliverance. Six facts are declared about God’s great deliverance.

1. God delivered His people by His name: He is the LORD, and the LORD is a warrior (vv. 3-5). The very name LORD (Jehovah, Yahweh) means that God is our Redeemer, Deliverer, Saviour. The LORD...
- fights for us
 - stands against our enemies for us
 - conquers all opposition for us
 - triumphs and gains the victory over all the forces of evil for us

This the LORD did for Israel:

=> He hurled Pharaoh’s chariots and army into the sea (v. 4).

=> He drowned the best of Pharaoh’s officers in the Red Sea (v. 4).

=> He covered and sank them in the depths like a stone (v. 5).

Note the emphasis upon the water where Israel crossed:

=> The army was cast into the sea.

=> The army was drowned in the Red Sea.

=> The army was covered by the depths.

=> The army sank to the bottom like a stone.

The point: the place where Israel crossed the sea was not a shallow place, not only ankle or knee deep. It was a large body of water, a body so large that it drowned the Egyptian army when God released the two walls of water to flow back together again. A miracle? Yes! A phenomenal, miraculous work of God – all to save His people just as He had promised He would.

Thought 1. The very name LORD is the picture of a warrior who delivers, saves and redeems us from the enemies of this world (see Exo 14:14). The LORD is the warrior who saved Israel from being slaughtered and enslaved by the Egyptian army. Similarly, the LORD is the warrior who will save us from our enemies.

Exo 14:14 *“The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.”*

2 Chr 32:8 *With him is only the arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles.*

Psa 24:7-8 *Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.*

Jn. 12:30-31 *Jesus said, “This voice was for your benefit, not mine. Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.”*

John 16:33 *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

1 Cor 15:24 *Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.*

2 Th 2:8 *And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the LORD Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming.*

Heb 2:14-15 *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

1 John 3:8 *He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.*

Rev 6:2 *I looked, and there before me was a white horse! Its rider held a bow, and he was given a crown, and he rode out as a conqueror bent on conquest.*

Rev 17:14 *They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is LORD of lords and King of kings — and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers.*

2. God delivered His people by His right hand of power (v. 6). The *right hand* is a symbol of power. In reference to God, it refers to His omnipotent power. God is omnipotent: all power belongs to Him. He can do anything, and nothing is too hard for Him. God's right hand can roll back and make a passage-way through the waters of any sea — if He so wills. God can reverse any law of nature as He wills. The Israelites had just witnessed this astounding miracle of God. Their song declared the glorious fact:

=> The right hand of the LORD was majestic in power.

⇒ The right hand of the LORD destroyed and dashed the Egyptian army into pieces.

Thought 1. God is omnipotent. He has the power to deliver and save us from any force, no matter how evil, terrible or terrifying. He even has the power to save and deliver us from death, the power to plant the seed of eternal life in us.

1 Chr 29:12 *Wealth and honour come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all.*

Job 42:2 *"I know that you can do all things; no plan of yours can be thwarted."*

Psa 115:3 *Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.*

Isa 43:13 *"Yes, and from ancient days I am he. No one can deliver out of my hand. When I act, who can reverse it?"*

Mat 19:26 *Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."*

Luke 1:37 *"For nothing is impossible with God."*

Eph 3:20 *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.*

Phil 3:20-21 *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*

2 Tim 4:18 *The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

3. God delivered His people by the greatness of His majesty (v. 7). Note that Pharaoh and his army are said to have risen up against God, not Israel. God counts believers as His own, as His very own people, as His very own family. Therefore, to rise up against believers is the same as rising up against their Father, against God Himself.

⇒ God overthrew those who opposed Him. The word *overthrew* (haras) is the picture of destroying a building. The enemies of God set out to destroy the building of God, His people, His Old Testament body of believers. Therefore, God destroyed the building of their army. (Frank E. Gaebelin, Editor. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 2, p. 394).

⇒ God sent forth His wrath and consumed them as stubble. He consumed them as though their building was nothing but stubble.

The majesty of God is so glorious — so brilliant and bright — that it can consume the mightiest army upon earth, consume it as though it is nothing more than mere stubble.

1 Chr 29:11 *Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendour; for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.*

Job 37:22-23 *Out of the north he comes in golden splendour; God comes in awesome majesty. The Almighty is beyond our reach and exalted in power; in his justice and great righteousness, he does not oppress.*

Psa 29:4 *The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is majestic.*

Psa 93:1 *The LORD reigns, he is robed in majesty; the LORD is robed in majesty and is armed with strength. The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved.*

Psa 96:5-6 *For all the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Splendour and majesty are before him; strength and glory are in his sanctuary.*

Isa 2:10-12 *Go into the rocks, hide in the ground from the fearful presence of the LORD and the splendour of his majesty! The eyes of the arrogant will be humbled and human pride brought low; the LORD alone will be exalted on that day. The LORD Almighty has a day in store for all the proud and lofty, for all that is exalted (and they will be humbled).*

Isa 57:15 *For this is what the high and lofty One says — he who lives forever, whose name is holy: “I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.”*

Jude 1:24-25 *To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy — to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our LORD, before all ages, now and forever more! Amen.*

4. God delivered His people by His mighty control over the waters (v. 8). Note that the “blast of God’s nostrils” is said to have caused the strong east wind that divided the Red Sea (14:21). This is simply descriptive language, a poetic way to declare God’s control over the waters. The fact is unquestionable, obvious: the blast of God’s nostrils, the blast of God’s control...
 - piled up the waters
 - stood the stormy, surging waters upright
 - congealed the deep waters
5. God delivered His people by His glorious triumph over the bitter hatred of the enemy, over their pride and boastings (vv. 9-10). The spirit of the Egyptians is exposed in these two verses. They had been gripped with a spirit of bitter hatred against the Israelite slaves. To the Egyptian mind, the Israelites were the scum of the earth, descendants of detestable shepherds, a people worthy only to be enslaved. Moreover, the Israelites were the cause for the ten plagues being launched against Egypt, the cause for the destruction of Egypt and its economy. The Egyptians had always loathed the Israelites, but after the terrible destruction of their nation by the God of the Israelites, their loathing grew to hatred — bitter hatred. Thus, the Egyptians had vowed to utterly destroy God’s people.

- a. Note the sixfold vow and boastings of the Egyptian army. It is as though they are so bent on pursuing and destroying God's people that they can hardly catch their breath. The picture is that of a heaving chest and a breathless voice boasting...
- "I will pursue."
 - "I will divide the spoils."
 - "I will draw my sword."
 - "I will overtake."
 - "I will gorge myself on them" (NIV).
 - "My hand shall destroy them" (v. 9).

- b. But God had promised to deliver His people, and this He did. He fulfilled His promise. God caused the wind to blow and note what happened:

=> The sea covered the Egyptian army and they sank like lead in the mighty waters (v. 10).

Thought 1. The world hates believers. Believers live righteous and pure lives; they teach love and compassion, unselfishness and giving, giving even to the point of sacrifice. The world despises this way of life. The worldly of the world want to...

- do their own thing
- get and possess all they can
- live their own way
- be comfortable and indulge their desires

Thus the life of believers and the life of the worldly are at odds. The result is tragic: the worldly ridicule and persecute believers. But God has promised a glorious triumph over the worldly of this earth. He has promised to deliver us from this world. And God will fulfil His promise; this is the strong declaration of Scripture.

Job 5:19 *From six calamities he will rescue you; in seven no harm will touch you.*

Psa 91:3 *Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence.*

1 Cor 10:13 *No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*

2 Tim 4:18 *The LORD will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

2 Pet 2:9 *If this is so, then the LORD knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.*

6. God delivered His people by His matchless person: no god is like Him (vv. 1-12). No person, no being – real or imagined – can compare with God. This the LORD had just proven.

=> Egypt was renowned for its gods, but they were nothing but man-made gods. They were mere idols who were helpless in protecting the Egyptians from the execution of God's holy justice.

=> The leaders, kings and princes of this world are often treated as gods, but they are mere men. They are only frail, limited and mortal, totally incapable of standing before or against the LORD.

The song of Moses graphically declares the truth: “Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you...”

- majestic in holiness
- awesome in glory
- working wonders

What wonder? The LORD stretched out His right hand, and the earth swallowed the enemy of His people. No man-made god could keep God from executing justice upon the oppressors and evil persecutors of His people.

***Deu 32:4** He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.*

***Psa 37:28** For the LORD loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. They will be protected forever, but the offspring of the wicked will be cut off.*

***Isa 9:7** Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.*

***Jer 33:15** “In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line; he will do what is just and right in the land.”*

***Eze 39:21** “I will display my glory among the nations, and all the nations will see the punishment I inflict and the hand I lay on them.”*

***Hab 1:12** LORD, are you not from everlasting? My God, my Holy One, you will never die. You, LORD, have appointed them to execute judgment; you, my Rock, have ordained them to punish.*

***Rom 2:2-3** Now we know that God's judgment against those who do such things is based on truth. So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment?*

***2 Pet 2:9** If this is so, then the LORD knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.*

III. Exodus 15:13–18 A Song of God's Glorious Purpose

The song is a song of God's glorious purpose: to lead the redeemed to His holy dwelling, that is, to *the promised land*. This passage is definitely referring to *the promised land*. Note that enemies would stand in the way as Israel marched to claim their promised inheritance, but God would cause the hearts of the enemy to melt. God was going to bring His people to their inheritance, to the promised land, to the very sanctuary where the presence of the LORD dwelt (a symbol of heaven). (See *The Promised Land*, Exo 2:24; note, Gen 12:1.)

Note a significant fact: these verses point to the future. They declare the assurance of God's people in the great promise of God. What promise?

=> That God was going to lead His people to the promised land; that God was going to make absolutely sure that His people received their promised inheritance, the inheritance of the promised land (see 1 Sam 26:19; Psa 79:1).

The Scripture and outline points cover the message proclaimed by the song. God's glorious purpose is to lead His redeemed people to His holy dwelling, to the promised land (symbolically, the promised land of heaven where His holy presence dwells eternally).

1. The source of God's great purpose is His mercy, His love (v. 13). God had demonstrated His mercy and love by redeeming His people. He had saved them from the bondage of slavery by delivering them from their enemies through the Red Sea.

The point is clear: in looking to the future, God's people could trust the mercy and love of God. God's mercy and love would continue to lead His people until they reached the promised land.

Thought 1. It is God's mercy and love that redeems us, that saves and delivers us throughout life. We can rest assured: God's mercy and love will lead us to the promised land, the promised inheritance of living with God eternally.

John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

Eph 2:4-7 *But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions — it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus. In order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*

Titus 3:5-7 *He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

1 Pet 1:3-4 *Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. And into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade — kept in heaven for you.*

2. The impact of God's leadership and guidance was clearly seen: it was a clear demonstration of God's awesome power (vv. 14-16). God's hand would rest powerfully upon His people. Note the impact upon Israel's enemies. Fear would grip them. Note the five different descriptions of the fear.

=> Nations would hear and tremble.

- => Enemies would be in anguish.
- => Leaders would be terrified and tremble.
- => Enemies would melt away, the enemies who stood against the march of God's people to God's dwelling (the promised land).
- => People would be gripped with fear and dread, as still as stone, until God's redeemed people reached God's dwelling (the promised land).

Thought 1. No enemy will ever be able to stop God from leading us to the promised land of heaven. God protects and guides us day by day, and He will protect and guide us until He is ready to take us home to heaven.

2 Chr 16:9 *“For the eyes of the LORD range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him. You have done a foolish thing, and from now on you will be at war.”*

Psa 23:1-6 *The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD [heaven] forever.*

Psa 34:7 *The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.*

Psa 48:14 *For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end.*

Psa 73:24 *You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory.*

John 14:2-3 *“In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”*

Phi 3:20-21 *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Saviour from there, the LORD Jesus Christ, Who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*

IV. Exodus 15:19–21 Miriam's Song of Praise

The song stirred a special praise and dance by the women of God's people. These three verses cover what is called “The Song of Miriam.” Remember, Miriam was the sister of Moses, the older sister who had so lovingly looked after him when he was a tiny baby. (See outline and notes, Exo 3:1-10.)

1. When did Miriam sing this song? Right after God's glorious deliverance (v. 19). Scripture says...
 - right after God destroyed the Egyptian army in the sea
 - right after the Israelites walked on dry land through the sea
2. Miriam led all the Israelite women in dancing and praising the LORD (v. 20). Note that Miriam is called a prophetess. (See *Prophetess*, Exo 15:20.)
3. The song of Miriam was sung to the LORD (v. 21). The song focused upon two great facts:
 - a. The King James Version declares this:
 - => The LORD has *triumphed gloriously*.
 - => The LORD has thrown the horse and rider into the sea.
 - b. The New American Standard declares this:
 - => The LORD is *highly exalted*.
 - => The LORD has hurled the horse and rider into the sea.

Thought 1. God delivers His people. He always has and He always will deliver us from evil, even from the final evil, that of death and hell.

2 Sam 22:2 He said: "The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer."

Isa 46:4 Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you.

Jer 1:8 "Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD.

1 Cor 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

2 Tim 4:18 The LORD will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Heb 2:14-15 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

2 Pet 2:9 If this is so, then the LORD knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment. ■

EXODUS 15:20 PROPHETESS

The calling of the prophetess is the same calling as a prophet. The prophetess was a woman called by God to be God's spokeswoman. She was called, appointed, and anointed by God...

- to declare God's Word
- to be the messenger of God
- to be endowed with the very power and authority of God

Scripture mentions several other women who were called by God to receive the prophetic gift to speak for Him, to be His prophetesses:

=> Deborah (Jude 4:4)

=> Isaiah's wife (Isa 8:3)

=> Huldah (2 Kng 22:14)

=> Noadiah (Neh 6:14)

=> Anna (Luke 2:36)

=> Philip's daughters (Acts 21:9) □