

Exodus 15 - Thursday, October 30th, 2008

- In chapter 14, the Israelites had just miraculously crossed the Red Sea on dry ground and then seen how God destroyed the Egyptians.
- In chapter 15, we have the first recorded song in the Bible, known as; "The Song of Moses," where Israel praises and worships God.

15:1 Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and spoke, saying: "I will sing to the LORD, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea! 2 The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him.

- The first thing we notice about this song is that it seems to have been spontaneous because of a heart attitude of gratitude to God.
- To say that this song is all about God would almost be an understatement. This is true worship of God because it's directed to Him.
- What makes this first recorded song in the Bible so beautiful is that it's not produced or manufactured, it's genuinely from the heart.

- Notice that the song starts off with; "I will sing unto the Lord, For He has triumphed gloriously!" This is unto the Lord and it's for the Lord.
- You can actually count a total of 45 references to the Lord in this song, and remarkably, the whole song is only 18 verses long.

"Observe the sublimity and simplicity of the composition. Fine, florid language suits the little elegancies of man but not the glories of the Lord. Note how all the song is to the praise of the Lord alone, there is not a note for Moses or for Aaron; no hint of secondary agents, but Jehovah alone is exalted."

Charles Spurgeon

3 The LORD is a man of war; The LORD is His name.4 Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea.5 The depths have covered them; They sank to the bottom like a stone.

- This full on "God song," if I can call it that, describes for us the nature and attributes of Who God is by virtue of what God has done.
- It's interesting how they sing that; "The Lord is a man of war." The Lord is just, and the Lord is a man of war means it's a just war.

- Also, we have an eyewitness account of a very important detail; "the depths have covered them; they sank to the bottom like a stone.
- It's almost like the Lord left some forensic evidence proving that the water couldn't have been only 18 inches deep as skeptics claim.

6 "Your right hand, O LORD, has become glorious in power; Your right hand, O LORD, has dashed the enemy in pieces.7 And in the greatness of Your excellence You have overthrown those who rose against You; You sent forth Your wrath; It consumed them like stubble.

- They sing about the "right hand" of the Lord becoming "glorious in power." This is known in the scriptures as an; "anthropomorphism."
- In other words, it's God's way of communicating with us using a human figure of speech, while not intended to be taken literally.
- They're worshipping the Lord using this figure of speech to glorify Him in His power and might, which is what the right hand symbolizes.

8 And with the blast of Your nostrils The waters were gathered together; The floods stood upright like a heap; The depths congealed in the heart of the sea.9 The enemy said, 'I will pursue, will overtake, I will divide the spoil; My desire shall be satisfied on them. I will draw my sword, My hand shall destroy them.'10 You blew with Your wind, The sea covered them; They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

- Here again we have eyewitness details woven into this song which prove that the water was not only deep, it was mighty as well.
- This beautiful spontaneous worship song brings up an interesting question that I think we would be grossly remiss not to ask.
- Why, and even how, was this song sung in the first place? Because God created us to worship Him! He even pre-wired us musically.

- The truth of the matter is; they are simply responding to the Lord in the manner in which the Lord had actually created them to respond.
- I suppose you could say that they couldn't help but worship God for all that He had done for them, in saving them from the Egyptians.

"Remark the noise, hurry, and violence of the foe, in verse nine, and the calmness of the Lord, in verse 10. It will be well to read them both again. Man is raving and threatening, and the Lord in placid omnipotence defeats his rage. Consider also how the poet infers the future from the present. God who brought his people though the sea, would surely bring them into their heritage. He who has wrought marvels of grace already, will not leave us till grace is turned into glory."

Charles Spurgeon

11 "Who is like You, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, Fearful in praises, doing wonders?12 You stretched out Your right hand; The earth swallowed them.13 You in Your mercy have led forth The people whom You have redeemed; You have guided them in Your strength To Your holy habitation.

- This is a magnificent verse in this song as they magnify the Lord among all the other gods by singing; "Who is like You, O LORD?"
- It's important to note that they are proclaiming and singing that none of the many gods of the Egyptians are like you are God.

14 "The people will hear and be afraid; Sorrow will take hold of the inhabitants of Philistia. 15 Then the chiefs of Edom will be dismayed; The mighty men of Moab, Trembling will take hold of them; All the inhabitants of Canaan will melt away. 16 Fear and dread will fall on them; By the greatness of Your arm They will be as still as a stone, Till Your people pass over, O LORD, Till the people pass over Whom You have purchased. 17 You will bring them in and plant them In the mountain of Your inheritance, In the place, O LORD, which You have made For Your own dwelling, The sanctuary, O LORD, which Your hands have established. 18 "The LORD shall reign forever and ever." 19 For the horses of Pharaoh went with his chariots and his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD brought back the waters of the sea upon them. But the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea.

- Here they begin to sing about what they know will happen now because of what God had done for them. Their enemies will be afraid.
- In other words, word will travel and the world will hear about the mighty deeds of the Lord God of Israel, and they will melt in fear.
- What's interesting about this is in about 40 years, a prostitute by the name of Rahab will tell the Israelite spies what Jericho had heard.

Joshua 2:8-11 8 Before the spies lay down for the night, she went up on the roof 9 and said to them, "I know that the LORD has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us, so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you. 10 We have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites east of the Jordan, whom you completely destroyed. 11 When we heard of it, our hearts melted and everyone's courage failed because of you, for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below. NIV

20 Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took the timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. 21 And Miriam answered them: "Sing to the LORD, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!"

- Miriam, Moses' older sister, now leads the women in a worship song and notice how that she even led them in a dance unto the Lord.
- It's almost as if they are now starting at the beginning of the song as we have it recorded in the beginning of the chapter in verse one.
- This may be the beginning of the song again, but it will be the end of what we here about the song because of what happens next.

22 So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. 23 Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah.

- Three days after this jubilant worship of the Lord, they went to the Wilderness of Shur, but they sure don't have any water to drink.
- They then arrive in Marah, which means "bitter," and found water, but it was bitter and they couldn't drink it so they now become bitter.
- The Israelites are really having some serious troubles related to water; first at the Red Sea, and now while at the Wilderness of Shur.

"Their first trouble was too much water, the second is too little; our trials are of all kinds."

Charles Spurgeon

24 And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

- The same people who lifted their voices in praise to God are now, after only three days, lifting their voices and complaining to Moses.

25 So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them,

- So, let's see if we got this straight, when Moses is shown a "tree" to cast into the bitter water, it would then be made sweet to drink from.
- I may not be the sharpest knife in the drawer, but this has got typology written all over it in how it points to salvation in Jesus the Christ.

The tree	The cross
The bitter water	The bitter bondage of sin
The tree put in the water	Jesus put on the cross
The water turns sweet	The sweetness of salvation
Three days in the wilderness	Three days until the resurrection
Would have perished without water	We will perish without Christ
Able to quench their immediate thirst	Drink from Jesus and I will never thirst

"God has provided remedies for all ills, sweetening trees for bitter waters, and the cross to sweeten all."

Charles Spurgeon

26 and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you." 27 Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters.

- It's most interesting that Moses would now declare to them that if they will obey God's commandments that they won't get diseases.
- In other words, if the Israelites heed God's law, the diseases that come upon the Egyptians won't come upon them. God will heal them!
- Notice that they then came to, and then set up camp in, Elim. This was a place with "twelve" wells of water and "seventy" palm trees.

- This is interesting because "12" in the scriptures is associated with government, or rule, and "70" is associated with universality.
- Perhaps God is establishing universal rules and governing principles for the Israelites to live by if they wanted to be healthy.
- If that's the case, and it could very well be, then that may explain the "natural" component to this supernatural drinking water at Marah.

One commentator had this to say: "Even though the waters were now drinkable, there was undoubtedly still a significant magnesium and calcium content in the water. The laxative effect of this would have effectively cleaned out the systems of the children of Israel of common Egyptian ailments such as amoebic dysentery and bilharzia, a weakening disease common among Egyptian peasants. In addition, calcium and magnesium together form the basis of a drug called dolomite - used by some athletes as a performance enhancer in hot weather conditions. At Marah, God was providing the right medicine to both clean out their systems, and prepare them for a long, hot march to Sinai.

- The fact of the matter is; God has given us healthy "universal rules" to live by in His Word, so "none of these diseases" come on us.

- Actually, there is an excellent book by the same title; "None of These Diseases" that was written by medical doctors about this.
- In the book they write how God's laws impacted hygiene and health; practices such as washing in running water, and kosher eating.
- Beyond the direct medical implications, obedience also means we are at peace with God, and free from the stress and anxiety of life.

"God told the Israelites when He brought them out of Egypt, "If you listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you" (Exodus 15:26). It's no secret; our lifestyles are killing us! Elevated stress hormones are toxic to our systems, poisoning our bodies. Grief and bitterness, like wounds to the soul, cause spiritual cancers of anger and depression. Unhealthy habits lead to a myriad of diseases. Can faith really produce better health? Can corporate worship reduce hospital visits? Can prayer replace pills? Modern medical research reveals in 80 to 90 percent of studies what Christians have known for centuries: Weekly church attendance, daily Bible reading, and a constant attitude of prayer is the prescription for healthy living – mind, body, and soul."

"None of these Diseases" S.I. McMillen, M.D. & David E. Stern, M.D.

Lessons I can learn from Exodus chapter 15:

1. Like with this beautiful worship song being spontaneous, so too is it true for us; the more spontaneous we are, the more beautiful it is.
2. Like with the song being to God, about God, and for God, so too is it true worship when it's for the Lord and it's all about the Lord.
3. Like with the Lord being a man of war, so too can man justify war when it is for the sake of righteousness. It then becomes a just war.
4. Like with the Israelites praising God for the strength of His "right-hand," so too do we praise God when we realize He is our strength.
5. Like with the Israelites not being able to help but worship God, so too is it so for us when we realize all that God has done for us.
6. Like with the creation of God being pre-wired to worship God, so too will we worship Him in ways that He has gifted and enabled us.
7. Like with the Israelites singing "Who is like You, O LORD?" so too should all worship magnify God because no one is like unto Him.
8. Like with the enemies of the Lord hearing, and fearing Israel, so too is our enemy more afraid of us than we should ever be of him.
9. Like with Miriam leading the women in song and dance; so too can our worship be in song and dance, like Hula, if it glorifies Him.
10. Like with the tree put into the bitter water making it sweet, so too will my bitterness turn to sweetness in light of the cross of Christ.

- If there's one thing I'm learning in this life it's this; "It doesn't matter what someone does to me, it only matters that Jesus died for me!"

11. Like with the Israelites heeding God's laws, so too will none of the world's diseases come on us if we live obedient to God's Word.