

PM Exodus 15:1-21 "This is my God, and I will praise him"

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[0 : 00] Exodus chapter 15. What happens next?

Well, we are coming to what happens next following the crossing of the Red Sea! A truly momentous event in the history of God's people! That will be looked back on really throughout the whole old years.

The Old Testament and the whole of the rest of Scripture really as an awesome demonstration of God's power. God's greatest act of salvation save for the cross itself.

And what happens immediately following the crossing of the Red Sea? Well, very appropriately there is thanksgiving. And it comes in the form of the Song of Moses.

We'll read Exodus 15 and the first 21 verses. This is God's Word. Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord, saying, I will sing to the Lord for He has triumphed gloriously.

[1 : 09] The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation. This is my God and I will praise Him.

My Father is God and I will exalt Him. The Lord is the Lord and I will voy across the voy forbade.

In the greatness of your majesty, you overthrow your adversaries. You send out your fury, it consumes them like stubble. At the blast of your nostrils, the waters piled up, the floods stood up in a pile, the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.

The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil. My desire shall have its fill of them. I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.

You blew with your wind, the sea covered them, they sank like lead in the mighty waters. Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods?

[2 : 27] Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? You stretched out your right hand, the earth swallowed them. You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed.

You have guided them by your strength to your holy abode. The peoples have heard, they tremble, pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia.

Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed. Trembling seizes the leaders of Moab. All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. Terror and dread fall upon them.

Because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone. Till your people, O Lord, pass by. Till the people pass by whom you have purchased. You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain.

The place, O Lord, which you have made for your abode. The sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established. The Lord will reign forever and ever.

[3 : 32] For when the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, the Lord brought back the waters of the sea upon them. But the people of Israel walked in dry ground in the midst of the sea.

Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand. And all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. And Miriam sang to them, Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously.

The horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. Amen. It will be helpful to have Exodus chapter 15 open in front of you this evening.

There are a number of things that occur near the beginning of the Bible. And then again at the very end. For example, you have the tree of life mentioned in Genesis chapter 2.

And then we don't hear it mentioned again until the book of Revelation. Where it reappears three times in the very last chapter of the Bible.

[4 : 46] On either side of the river, the tree of life with its leaves for the healing of the nations. And we have in front of us tonight the first song recorded in the Bible.

And also the final song to be mentioned in the Bible. The first song recorded in the Bible is the song of Moses. And then what is the very last song that is mentioned?

It's the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. Revelation chapter 15. And I saw those who had conquered the beast and its image and the number of its name.

Standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. And they sang the song of Moses, the servant of God and the song of the Lamb.

The song of Moses and the song of the Lamb. It is one song, not two. But why the song of Moses and the Lamb? Well it is the song of Moses.

[5 : 48] Even in the book of Revelation. Because the way God works doesn't change. The way God delivers his people doesn't change. But it's also the song of the Lamb.

Because we view it now through the lens of the cross. In fact, even back in Exodus 15.

One old commentator, John Gill. Says that the song of Moses there could properly be called the song of the Lamb. Because he is the main person in it.

And he is the one to whom it is sung. After all, Christ was the angel of the Lord who appeared to Moses in the burning bush. And who went before the people in the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night.

And who then moved behind them as they went through the Red Sea to bring down judgment upon the Egyptians. Jesus is the strength and song and salvation of his people here in verse 2.

[6 : 58] So we have the song of Moses near the beginning. Exodus 15. And then Revelation 15.

The song of Moses and of the Lamb. The fact that it reappears near the end of the Bible should fill us with a sense of the significance of this song.

Maybe we read about it in our Bible reading. We read the song of Moses. And then we forget about it. But the writers of scripture, the Holy Spirit didn't forget about it.

And revisited it as we come to the climax of the whole Bible. The themes of this ancient song are so enduring that even at the very end of time they will still be relevant for God's people.

And in particular these words are appropriate for us today because of the dual perspective they teach us to have on life.

In other words they teach that the Christian is always to be looking both backwards and forwards.

We're always to be looking backwards in thankfulness to God's deliverance in the past.

[8 : 12] But we're also to be looking forward in confidence towards God's final victory. And so we'll look at the song of Moses under those two themes this evening.

And firstly we have looking back in thankfulness. Looking back in thankfulness. There are some things which just naturally go together.

And so to have one without the other would just seem strange. Maybe you can't imagine having curry without rice. Or ice cream without jelly. Or there are certain psalms that you always sing to the same tune.

And to sing it to any other tune would just seem strange. But two things which should always go together but sometimes don't are salvation and thanksgiving.

Isn't that what went wrong with the ten lepers? Boys and girls how many of the ten lepers that Jesus healed came back to say thank you?

[9 : 23] Ten lepers. Just one came back to say thank you. Only one came back to say thank you to Jesus for healing them. And it is strange.

It is unfitting. Salvation should be followed by thanksgiving. And so it is no surprise here that God's greatest act of deliverance of his people in the Old Testament.

His deliverance of his people through the Red Sea is followed by almost a whole chapter dedicated to thanksgiving. Psalm 147 puts it.

A song of praise is fitting. Yet we perhaps tend to be better at praying for things than for giving thanks to God once he gives them to us.

So praise is fitting. It wouldn't have been appropriate for the Lord's great act of deliverance here in chapter 14. Not to be followed by this great crescendo of praise in chapter 15.

[10:32] And as God's people today. Redeemed by an even greater act of salvation than at the Red Sea. Redeemed by the blood of God's own Son.

It is fitting for our lives to be marked by gratitude. Do we live in a grateful culture? Far from it. We live in an entitled culture. How we will stand out if we are humble and grateful people. And we'll only be there if we never get over the cross.

So praise is fitting. And it is fitting. Not just for some people. It is fitting for all people.

What we seem to have here is an antiphonal song. In other words the men sing. And then the women echo them. In verse 1.

[11:34] Moses and the people of Israel. Literally the sons of Israel sing this song to the Lord. Then down in verses 20 and 21. Miriam and the woman respond by singing the same thing.

Verse 21 is the same as verse 2. And presumably the woman went on to sing the rest of the song as well. It is worth just noting here in passing.

That although Miriam is called a prophetess. She doesn't actually prophesy. She just sings back the words that God's prophet Moses has just sung.

So why is she called a prophetess then? Well it is likely simply because of her connection to Moses. In Isaiah 8 verse 3 Isaiah says I went into the prophetess.

But who is he talking about? He is talking about his wife. She is called a prophetess. Not because she prophesies. But simply because she is married to a prophet.

[12:41] We have 66 chapters of Isaiah's prophecies. We don't have any chapters of Isaiah's wife's prophecies. And it seems like something similar is happening here.

Miriam is called a prophetess. Not because she prophesies. She doesn't. But because she is a sister of a prophet. But the bigger point we want to make here is that everyone is praising God. Men and women. No one is missing from this chorus of praise. Why? Because it is fitting for all people to praise God.

Even if God hadn't saved us. It would still be fitting for us to praise him as our creator. But how much more so now that he has also redeemed us.

So let's never end up thinking. Ah well some people go to church. Some people don't. That's just life. As the apostle Paul put it. God gave to all mankind life and breath and everything.

[13:48] How could we not praise him? How could a Lord's day pass? And people not even think of coming to worship the God who has made them. And yet but for the grace of God that would have been each one of us.

Let this shape how we think of the good, decent, unbeliever. Or because maybe you know unbelievers who are perhaps nicer than many Christians you know.

And there's nothing they wouldn't do for you. But as much as we like them. As much as we appreciate them. If they're not Christians they are living out Romans chapter 1.

For although they knew God they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him. And if we do find ourselves in church each Lord's day.

Let's not simply go through the motions. But let's stir ourselves up to thanksgiving. So thanksgiving is fitting.

[14:52] It's fitting for all people. But thanksgiving must also be personal. And we see that particularly in verse 2. The Lord is my strength and my song.

And he has become my salvation. This is my God and I will praise him. My Father's God and I will exalt him.

Just like the shepherd boy we were thinking of earlier in our service with the children. The Lord is my shepherd. This is my God and I will praise him.

In the events of the Exodus the people had seen the Lord work on their behalf. Back in Exodus chapter 3. Moses worries about going to the people of Israel.

Because if he says the Lord has sent me to you. He thinks the people won't even know who the Lord is. But now for the people of Israel.

[15:57] The Lord is no longer simply the God of their ancestors. He is their God. Something had changed. And children we pray that the day will come.

When each of you will publicly say this. As you join the church. As you perhaps stand at the front of this very building. And you will say this is yes my Father's God.

But he is also my God. When you will say that the Lord has become your salvation. Through confessing your sins and putting your trust in Jesus.

And maybe some of you will be able to say that you don't remember a day when that wasn't true for you. And if you do put your trust in the Lord Jesus.

If you have already put your trust in the Lord Jesus. You will find verse 3 that the Lord fights for you. Now on the face of it verse 3 might seem a bit strange to us.

[17:01] Because in what sense is the Lord a man of war? Because surely that doesn't describe something intrinsic to God's character.

Before the creation of the world it would have been possible to say God is love. Because from all eternity there was love between Father, Son and Spirit.

But would it have made sense before the foundation of the world to describe God as a man of war? Especially when the promises about the new heavens and the new earth are of wars coming to an end.

And people beating their swords into plowshares and so on. So surely the only reason God is described as a man of war is because of the entrance of sin into the world.

He will fight against whatever it is that seeks to ruin his creation. As King Jesus restrains and conquers all his and our enemies.

[18:08] We're told a number of times in scripture that it is the Lord your God who fights for you. And we should take confidence in that. Maybe you haven't had many people in life to fight your corner.

Or maybe you have had in the past but they're not there anymore. But remember tonight that you do have someone in your corner. It is the Lord your God who fights for you.

So Thanksgiving is fitting. It's fitting for all people. It must be personal. The last thing we want to see under this first point is that it's based on a real historical event.

Verse 4. Pharaoh's chariots and his horses he cast into the sea. Verse 5. The floods covered them. They went down to the depths like a stone. Verse 8. At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up. The floods stood up in a heap. If the events of the Red Sea hadn't happened. God's people wouldn't have had anything to sing about. Because they'd be defeated.

[19:20] They'd be captured. They'd be back in Egypt. And our thanksgiving too is based on a real historical event. It's based on the cross.

And actually some of the verses here we could simply take and apply directly to the cross. And Jesus victory over Satan there. Verse 6 for example. Your right hand oh Lord glorious in power. Your right hand oh Lord shatters the enemy. That happened to the Red Sea. And above all that happened to the cross. Or what about verse 9.

We have the enemy. The great enemy. The enemy said I will pursue. I will overtake. I will divide the spoil. My desire shall have its fill of them. I will draw my sword and my hand shall destroy.

Is that not what happened to the cross? Satan thought he was going to win. But he was caught in his own trap. Just when victory looked certain.

[20:21] He was undone. And so in light not just of the Red Sea. But of the cross. We can join in the words of verse 11. With God's people of old.

Who is like you oh Lord among the gods. Who is like you majestic in holiness. Awesome in glorious deeds.

Doing wonders. So firstly tonight looking back in thankfulness. And the second of our two points. Looking forward in confidence.

Looking forward in confidence. Now what? Have you ever faced a question like that?

Perhaps after some major life event. Where a big change has taken place. And you look to the future. And you wonder. Well now what? What is life going to look like now?

[21:21] Or what if someone had just become a Christian. And they were to ask you that question. Well now what? What will the rest of my life look like? And they're not asking you to make some kind of prophecy over them.

But on the big picture level. What does life look like? For someone between them becoming a Christian. And then dying and going to be with Jesus. What does this bit in between look like? Well in a way you could simply take them to verse 13 here. You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed.

And you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode. That's what the angels can say each time a new person enters heaven.

You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed. You have guided them by your strength to your holy abode.

[22 : 24] The message is that God doesn't just save us and leave us there. But rather he leads the people he has redeemed. And he guides us by his strength until we reach his holy abode.

Becoming a Christian isn't the end of the journey. It's the beginning of the journey. Perhaps tonight as someone who has been a believer for a while.

You find yourself a bit disorientated. Even if you haven't admitted as much to those around you. Reaching the end of the Christian life suddenly seems a lot more challenging than it used to be. And yet hear God's promise tonight. That he will guide in his steadfast love the people he has redeemed. And guide them by his strength to his holy abode.

Perhaps your vision tonight is filled with the potential challenges that lie ahead. You feel like you're struggling to follow Jesus now. But what about when the challenges of older age set in?

[23 : 29] What about when those who have encouraged you and helped you persevere in the Christian life are no longer around? What if you get sick? What about when it comes time to die?

Will you have the strength to keep going? Well the good news is that it's not about you.

What will the angels say when you enter heaven? Will they say, well there's John. He really had the strength to keep going despite all those obstacles he faced.

No. All the focus will be in the Lord. And they'll say to the Lord. You have guided him by your strength to your holy abode.

All those challenges that lie ahead of you believer. They're like the nations that the Israelites still had to conquer. Because yes they're through the Red Sea but they still have a long way to go to get to the promised land.

[24 : 35] They still have a lot of enemies to defeat until they can call it home. Until they can sleep peacefully in their beds that first night in Canaan.

There's the Philistines verse 14. There's Eden verse 15 and Moab. All the inhabitants of Canaan in fact. And it's not hard to imagine Mr. Pessimist saying to Mr. Gloomy.

Well yes I know that the Lord miraculously made a path for us to walk through the Red Sea. Yes in such a way that none of our people were lost. And yes I know that at just the right time he brought the waters down on the Egyptian army.

And drowned them all. But boy we don't stand a chance against the Philistines. But do you hear what they're saying? Surely the God who has led them through the Red Sea will be able to deal with the Philistines.

And in fact if God wasn't going to be able to deal with the Philistines and the Moabites and so on. Why bother bringing them through the Red Sea? And so the logic of Moses' song is exactly the same as the logic of the Apostle Paul in Romans 8.32.

[25 : 47] He who did not spare his own son but gave him up for us all. How will he not also with him graciously give us all things?

Do you have a sense of perhaps even terror or dread as you think about the future?

Well actually verse 16. Those who should feel and who one day will feel terror and dread are not God's dear people but they are God's enemies. So take confidence brother or sister in Christ as you look to the future.

Jesus' victory at the cross is a guarantee of future victory. The cross is D-Day. In the Second World War D-Day happened in June 1944 when the Allies landed in France.

V-Day, Victory in Europe Day when the Germans surrendered unconditionally wasn't until May 1945. So there was almost a year of fighting in between D-Day and V-Day.

[27 : 02] But once D-Day happened, V-Day was inevitable. It was only a matter of time until it would follow. And in the same way, Jesus' victory at the cross is a guarantee of ultimate victory.

And a guarantee of Satan's ultimate defeat. And what about when it comes time to die? Will your faith hold up?

Well I came across a quote the other week also from John Gill which might encourage you. It's a bit of a longer quote but I'll give it to you and then summarise it.

He says, He says, What's he saying?

What's he saying? He's saying based on God's promises, based on scriptural accounts of dying saints and based on his own experience as a pastor often at bedsides.

[28 : 48] Yes, believers go through turmoil at times on their deathbeds. But usually when the time comes for them to die, they do so comfortably and at peace.

We fear the future. We fear the future. Including when it comes time to die. But we don't need to. If you're downcast about the future, brother or sister in Christ, remember who you are.

Who are you? In the words of verse 16, you're one of the people that God has purchased. And what have you been purchased with? The precious blood of Christ.

We tend not to lose things that we've spent. We've spent a great sum of money on.

And God is not going to lose any whom he has bought with the precious blood of Christ. And so as you look to the future, remember the cross.

[29 : 58] The great victory has already been won. And remember who you are. You're the people that God has purchased. And remember as well God's ultimate purpose for you.

The Lord's purpose for the Israelites wasn't simply to bring them through the Red Sea. And then deposit them on the dry land and leave them there. And his purpose for you isn't simply to save you and leave you to it.

But we see God's purpose for us in verse 17. You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain. The place, O Lord, which you have made for your abode.

The sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established. Why does God save us? It's so that we could come to know him.

And that is reflected in the very structure of the book of Exodus. What is the focus on the second half of the book of Exodus? It's building the sanctuary, building the tabernacle.

[31 : 05] It's probably the part of the book that we're most tempted to skip over. And yet everything in the first half of the book. The burning bush, the plagues, the blood on the doorposts, the Red Sea.

It's all so that God's people could know fellowship with him. The very climax of the book of Exodus is the glory of the Lord filling the tabernacle.

Perhaps one of our prayers as we read the second half of this book, when we come to it in our Bible reading plans or whatever, is that we would get as excited by the idea of fellowship with God as we do about the idea of salvation.

Lots of exciting stuff in the first half of Exodus and it pictures our salvation. But the second half pictures what our salvation is intended for, to bring us into fellowship with God.

Because that's what salvation is all about. We're saved, we're redeemed that we might know God. And in that sense, the tabernacle, the temple, the promised land, they're all signposts to our true home.

[32 : 19] Which is heaven itself. What will happen to you this week, brother or sister in Christ?

Or in the rest of 2025? Or in the rest of your time on earth? However long or short that might be. We don't know.

But we do know how the story ends. You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain.

The place, O Lord, which you have made for your abode.

The sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established. And then we have that magnificent statement of confidence in verse 18.

The Lord will reign forever and ever. If you're familiar with Handel's Messiah, and particularly the great climax, the Hallelujah Chorus, it's probably hard not to hear it at this point.

[33 : 21] And he shall reign forever and ever. As the truth is restated in Revelation 11. Which in the last chapter of the Bible becomes true of us as well.

They will need no light of lamp or sun. For the Lord God will be their light. And they will reign forever and ever. And so the climax of Moses' song is the climax of the whole Bible.

And so brothers and sisters, let us look back in thankfulness. And look forward in confidence.

Amen. Amen.