

From The Depth Of The Sea To The Height Of His Greatness

Exodus 15:1-21

Introduction:

- I used to compose when I was younger. In High School, I wrote MacBeth into a 4 song musical. I wrote a camp song. I wrote 2 songs for our wedding.
- It was a great way to express my heart and my faith.
- I've always wanted to write again.
- I have a dear friend who has written several songs being sung in churches today – he put his sermons into lyrics – “His Robes For Mine,” “Reformation Song”
- Get them free at: <https://www.churchworksmedia.com/songs/>

The Bible Is Full Of Songs

- Deborah and Barak sang about their victory in Canaan (Judges 5:1-31)
- Hannah sang over the birth of her long-awaited son Samuel (1 Sam 2:1-10)
- There were 5 Christmas songs at the birth of Christ - Luke 1-2
 - The Magnificat Of Mary (Luke 1:46-55)
 - similar to Hannah's song in 1 Sam 2 and many Psalms
 - title from Latin version "*Magnificat anima mea Dominum*"
 - meaning "My soul magnifies the Lord"
 - Benedictus Major Of Zechariah (1:67-79)
 - Gloria of Angels (2:14)
 - Nunc Dimittis Of Simeon (2:29-32)
 - Benedictus Minor Of Elizabeth (1:41-45)

▪ But the 1st song recorded in the Bible is here in Exodus 15

• The Eras The Music Died

- Don Henley sang “The Day The Music Died” – but the Church had eras music was challenged

(Source: David Nelson, “Voicing God’s Praise”, *Authentic Worship*, ed. by Herbert Bateman, Kregel Publications, pp. 146-147)

- **Bible Times** (1800 BC – 90 AD) – singing with Israel and Church
- During the **Patristic Age** (200-400 AD), **musical instruments were looked down upon** in the church
 - Clement of Alexandria considered any instrument, other than the human voice, to be a warlike instrument arousing lust and rage (*Paedagogus 2:4*)
 - Tertullian, Chrysostom and Augustine were among the other Patriarchs who were not enamored with musical instruments
- During the Dark Ages or **Middle Ages** (500-1500 AD) – the church did **not sing for 1,000 years**
 - If there was any singing, it was done by professionals
 - Singing could not be appreciated by the average believer

- When the Bible came to the masses during the **Reformation**, so did the **singing**
 - Martin Luther became a great hymn writer
 - Luther's opponents were more concerned about his music than his preaching
 - Zwingli, the Swiss reformer, opposed all music in the worship service
 - During the Reformation, Erasmus criticized theater-style music in the church as too sensuous
- Music is a gift to the church. Let's not take it for granted.
- **Acts 16:25** - Paul & Silas falsely imprisoned – yet they were praying and singing hymns to God
- John Wesley: "See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a slight degree of weakness or weariness hinder you. If it is a cross to you, take it up, and you will find it a blessing."
- "Songs are portable theology." (Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus In Exodus*, p. 89)
- Let's learn from the 1st recorded song in Scripture how to sing praises about God.

I. Sing Praise For His Glorious Salvation (1-2)

^{15:1} 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**; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. 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.

^{15:1} 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**; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.

- Who should be singing at church?
 - Those with great voices? Not just them
 - Those who know musical theory? Not just them
 - But everyone of us – because of God saved each of us
 - **I will sing**
 - Moses sang
 - The people of Israel sang
 - They were all saved
- **Horse & rider** – were superior militarily, they even had chariots which were even more superior than a horse and rider
 - ie/ Mulan movie – the soldiers on horses were faster and had the advantage of height
 - ie/ chariots had the advantage over a horse and rider like a rook over a knight over a pawn in chess
 - yet God **triumphed gloriously**
- We fear Covid – God will beat that
- We fear terrorism – God will beat that

- We fear political points of view – God will beat that
- We fear military

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.

- Our strength is not in our politicians – the Lord is my strength
- Not technology – the Lord is my strength
- Not education – the Lord is my strength
- Not military might – the Lord is my strength
- **Not Egypt – the Lord is my strength and my song**

^{2b} and he has become **my salvation**;

- God saved Israel from sinful oppressors and slavery
- **God has saved us from our sin and its penalty**
- Has He saved you?
- If we don't what we're saved from and how helpless we were to save ourselves, there's not an elation that erupts into songs of praise
 - We sing about ourselves
 - We sing about sin
- **But God has given us a new song!!**

Ephesians 5:19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

II. Sing Praise For His Conquering Victory (3-10)

³ **The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name.**

⁴ "Pharaoh's chariots and his host he cast into the sea, and his chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea.

⁵ The floods covered them; they went down into the depths like a stone.

⁶ Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power, your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy.

⁷ In the greatness of your majesty you overthrow your adversaries; you send out your fury; it consumes them like stubble.

⁸ At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up; the floods stood up in a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.

⁹ 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.'

¹⁰ You blew with your wind; the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

- V. 3 – The Lord is a man of **war**
 - Ie/ we used to quip "I'm not a fighter, I'm a lover."
 - Well God is one who fights and loves
 - He fights for us because He loves us
 - Ie/ Mama Bear protects her cubs

Romans 8:37 we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

- God makes us “more than conquerors”, not just conquerors
 - Gr. *hupernikao*
 - *huper* = hyper, over, super
 - *nikao* = victor
 - ie/ Nike shoe – victor, victory
 - Latin *supervincimus*
 - super – invincible
 - ie/ superman in Christ – not even kryptonite will defeat us
 - “through Him who *loved* us”
 - “loved” is in aorist tense – past tense refers to the cross
 - those who trust in Christ’s work on the cross are the loved ones, the super-conquerors
 - ie/ Like playing a video game in God-Mode – you can’t die
 - Does your playlist reflect defeat or confident victory?
- **V. 3 – Yahweh is His name**
- Yahweh – the self-existent God
 - This is how God identified Himself to Moses in the burning bush
- ⁴ “Pharaoh’s chariots and his host he cast into the sea, and his chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea.
- ⁵ The floods covered them; they went down into the depths like a stone.
- ⁶ Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power, your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy.
- Chariots and officers are no contest against God
 - God takes Him down with His right hand (authority)
 - Israel is fearing a charging army with greater weapons, armors and transportation with the sea to their back
- ⁷ In the greatness of your majesty you overthrow your adversaries; you send out your fury; it consumes them like stubble.
- ⁸ At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up; the floods stood up in a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea.
- Vv. 7-8 describe how easy it was for God to take down our enemies
- ⁹ 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.’
- ¹⁰ You blew with your wind; the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters.
- The cadence changes in the song here
 - J.A. Motyer points out how this becomes “staccato style of speech, reflecting the military tendency. To ‘bark’ orders” (*The Message of Exodus*, p. 167)
 - This is the enemy speaking: pursue, overtake, divide

Who is your enemy?

- Not the other political party
- Not who voted for who you didn’t
- Not the one who doesn’t or does wear a facemask
- **Three enemies: world, flesh, devil**
- That which causes to obey God, believe God, trust God

- The devil wants to misdirect us on who our enemies are
- We dismiss a **devil** with red horns and a pitchfork when he really is an angel of light, a wolf in sheep's clothing
- Our **flesh** wanting us to sin
- The **world** system pursuing the secular over the spiritual
- Yet we've turned on each other
- Ie/ I was with a pastor planting a church who said another pastor in his area preached a sermon against him
- I hear Christians attack Christians, churches attack other churches, people battling people
- The problem in your marriage is a not the other person, but the belief system the other person has
- Your political opponent isn't to be attacked or looted, but brought to God's worldview

Ephesians 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

- God will defeat the powers set against us

III. Sing Praise For His Incomparable Dominance (11-17)

¹¹ **"Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?"**

¹² You stretched out your right hand; the earth swallowed them.

¹³ "You have led in your **steadfast love** the people whom you have **redeemed**; you have **guided** them by your **strength** to your holy abode.

¹⁴ The peoples have heard; they tremble; pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia.

¹⁵ Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.

¹⁶ 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.

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.

- V. 11 – **who is like you? – unique, unrivaled, incomparable**
- God is unrivaled and unique because there are no other gods
- For this, God doesn't want us to be deceived that there are other gods and says there shall be no other gods before me
- God just demonstrated to the Egyptians that there ill-conceived deities are of no effect and non-existent
- **Holiness** means **set apart**
- God is set apart from other gods, enemies
- V. 13a – **steadfast love** – unfailing love (*hesed*)
 - Love based on God's covenantal promise, not emotions

- V. 13a – **redeemed**
 - “Redeemed” – to reacquire for yourself
 - God took broken pottery and

- V. 13b – **strength**
 - Egypt had more money than Israel, but Israel had God
 - Egypt had more military might than Israel, but Israel had God
 - Egypt had more political position than Israel, but Israel had God
 - Egypt had more statues of gods on their shelf, but Israel had God
 - **The world may have more clout, wealth and power than us, but we have God**

- V. 13b – **guided**
 - *have **guided** them by your **strength** to your holy abode.*
 - God is guiding them with a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night
 - God is guiding us
 - His guidance is stronger than a Forbes, Warren Buffet, any church or religion

IV. Sing Praise For His Eternal Rule (18-21)

¹⁸ **The Lord will reign forever and ever.** ¹⁹For 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 on dry ground in the midst of the sea. ²⁰Then 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. ²¹And Miriam sang to them: “**Sing** to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.”

¹⁸ **The Lord will reign forever and ever**

- From 3100 B.C. to 30 B.C., there were **31 dynasties** in Egypt
 - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dynasties_of_ancient_Egypt
- Yet God reigned the whole time
- There were **170 pharaohs** in those 31 dynasties in Egypt
 - <https://www.historyhit.com/famous-ancient-egyptian-pharaohs/>
- Yet God reigned the whole time
- There have been 45 presidencies and **44 presidents** (Grover Cleveland had 2 non-consecutive terms) – yet God has reigned the whole time
- ¹⁸ **The Lord will reign forever and ever.**

²⁰Then 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**. ²¹And Miriam sang to them: “**Sing** to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.”

- **Tambourines** – musical instruments
- **Dancing** – in the Bible there was dancing that praised God (Miriam’s), there was also sensual dancing (Salome) – there’s praising music and sinful music, there’s praising dance and sinful dance, there’s praising words and sinful words
 - Dance unto the Lord
- **Singing** - voice

Conclusion

1. We should sing rejoicing in our salvation (Zeph 3:17; Heb 2:10-12)

- Has God saved you?
- He saved Israel from slavery
- He saved us from the slavery of sin and the punishment of sin
- Jesus Christ

- God the Father sings (Zephaniah 3:17)

Zephaniah 3:17 The Lord your God in your midst, The Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing."

- Christ sings today (Hebrews 2:10-12)

Hebrews 2:10-12 "I [Christ] will sing praise to You [Father]"

2. We should sing songs of victory, not defeat.

- Does our playlist reflect sadness and defeat, despair and depression?
- I have a feel bad playlist – minor key songs that resolve in the major key
- I have a feel good playlist – upbeat songs

Discussion:

- What has God accomplished in your life that has given you reason to sing?
- What do you express yourself musically when you're rejoicing in the Lord? (favorite songs to sing, play or listen to, happy dance, etc.)
- What songs to you greatly convey God's greatness or salvation?
- Write your own verse to your favorite hymn or praise song. (e.g. Amazing Grace, My Chains Are Gone)