



The Song of Moses - a Prayer of Praise and Thanksgiving

This Chapter, which includes the Song of Moses, is one of the greater chapters of the Bible in my humble opinion. It sets the tone and tenor for the attitude of continual prayer in our lives – to include the asking, thanking and praising, of God. We always ask the Lord to bless the food we eat but, after the meal, how many return thanks to Him for the gift that He has given?

1 Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. (Ex 15:1)

Since Egypt is spiritually the Land (life) of Sin, the horse could very easily be compared to the world and its power. The rider is Satan.

The Song of Moses is the first recorded song, or of singing, in the Bible. Moses' hymn, as most hymns do, contains four intertwined elements:

1. It tells the story of salvation, in this case the exodus, in fairly detailed terms. Hymns tell the story in poetic fullness of what God has done.
2. In telling the story hymns also describe the majesty and power of God. God is known because of what God has done.
3. Glory is ascribed to God for salvation. God is not just sung about, but actual praise and glory is rendered unto God.
4. There is a forward looking element as to what God is going to do. For Moses that entailed being led into the Promised Land.

In many of our Christian hymns the last verse is either about heaven or Christ's return. Thus, hymns lyrically spell out what God has done, who God is, and what God is going to do, and that all glory belongs to God because of who God is, what God has done, and what God is going to do. The fullness of the story is important in order to know God and to know one's salvation. Without the details we do not know why we are singing.

So Moses begins his Song (he is the author of it), which is also a prayer, just as is every proper hymn of the Church, with praises for the mighty power of God. He continues, *The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.* (Ex 15:2) This verse introduces a novel concept, theologically speaking. Of course God is our Salvation, but how do we prepare for Him "an habitation?" *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.* (1 Cor 3:16-17) God's Temple is pure and free of sin. He will not abide sin in His Temple. So, if you will be the Temple of God, you must have your soul washed free of sin by the Blood of that Passover Lamb of God – Jesus Christ. In a profound way, Moses was a type of Christ in that God used him to fulfill His will for Israel, and it was the outstretched arm of Moses over the Sea that stood in the stead of God's.

³*The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.* ⁴*Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea.* ⁵*The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone.* ⁶*Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.* (Ex 15:3-6) Let not the modern, weak-kneed liberal theologian hear that the Lord is a "Man of War" for it flies in the face of his pacifist and compromising notions. He prefers to hide under the skirts of the state claiming that separation to be mandated by God when it truly comes from an altogether different source. He will stand up for no Godly law that contradicts the dictates of the state. I am happy to know that our forefathers were of an altogether different mold.

One amazing point made in verse 4: *Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea.* He cast them into the sea by their own volition. Every man, in rejecting God, is opting for Hell. If we are destined for Hell, we are destined by our own choices.

And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble. (Ex 15:7) Pharaoh denied the Children of Israel their freedom. When one opposes the setting free of the people of God, one rises up in revolt against God Himself. Forget not that God is a *Consuming Fire!* *For our God is a consuming fire.* (Heb 12:29) The Scriptures tell me that this same destruction of the wicked will occur again at the last trumpet. *And with the blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the floods stood upright as an heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea.* (Ex 15:8) As we learned earlier, that blast was of a strong east wind from across the eastside of the Red Sea (the Empty Quarter – largest desert in the world whose air is devoid of moisture). In the path beneath the Sea, God made the dry, hot wind to dry up the ground over which Israel passed. Yet, on either side, the waters were frozen erect (congealed). Both fire and ice - treasures of Sun and treasures of the snow – are bound up in the Hand of God. Moses uses beautiful imagery, yet his vocabulary is insufficient to describe the full wonders of God – and so is ours so limited.

The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea covered them: they sank as lead in the mighty waters. (Ex 15:9-10) The pride of potentates and empires are crushed in the Hand of an angry God. His plans are spoiled and he is destroyed by the same wind that saved the people of God – Israel. Weighed down by their armaments of war which were conceived to destroy others, they perished with the help of that heavy weight. Pharaoh (a good type of Satan) has sorrowed at letting God's people go free, and, like Satan, he cannot rest until he has reclaimed for Hell the souls he has lost to Heaven. But his very plan resulted in his own demise. He who walks on the waters of the sea has command of those waters.

Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation. (Ex 15:11-13) The Egyptians considered Pharaoh to be their greatest god – even greater than their frogs (sorry, had to point that one out!), yet he fell by his own miserable plan. There is but one God, and no others. Neither angels, mighty men, nor demons can stand in His place. The same mercy that saved His people Israel was the obverse side of His wrath that destroyed a nation's army in the Red Sea.

The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina. Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased. (Ex 15:14-16) That same fear that is the "beginning of knowledge" to the people of God is that which obsesses the wicked world and its peoples. The fear that possesses an unbeliever drives him further and further from God. That which thrives in the heart of the believer draws him nearer and nearer to God. How did the Old Testament saints gain their salvation and acquire the privileges of the Passover (Christ)? Though the Redeemer had yet to suffer at Calvary, the deed was as good as done, for God had mandated the same. These were purchased by the same Blood of the Lamb as were you and I. God uses the fear instilled in the heart of the wicked of the land to prepare the way for His people to take hold of the Promised Land. *Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established.* (Ex 15:17) The Mountain of God is the destiny of all who are received by Grace. The Sanctuary of the Lord is not made by human hands, but by the Hand of God. (This may disappoint some of the empire builders of our day in evangelism).

The LORD shall reign for ever and ever. For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with his horsemen into the sea, and the LORD brought again the waters of the sea upon them; but the children of Israel went on dry land in the midst of the sea. (Ex 15:18-19) Lucifer, too, fell like lightning from Heaven along with his angels. He was cast down in the same way as his type and symbol, personified in Pharaoh, went down into the depths of the Sea.

And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. (Ex 15:20-21) Antiphonal singing being an ancient and traditional trademark of Anglicanism, I lay claim that Moses was an Anglican (smile)! Miriam and the ladies answer to the Son of Moses in the same way hymns were sung in the Reformation Church of England. When we join our own voices of ascent to truth and praise, the greater is the faith made whole.

So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. (Ex 15:22) Who led Israel in this direction? It was that Pillar of Cloud by Day and Fire by Night (Jesus Christ). So why were they led to a place where there was no water? Because God never fails to provide, and He desires His people to know this by faith! *And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah.* (Ex 15:23) You will recall from our study of the Book of Ruth that the women of Bethlehem called Naomi by her name (Pleasant) but she scolded them and

told them to call her Mara (Bitter), for the Lord had dealt bitterly with her. The water will always be bitter (Marah) when we are not in the Way of the Lord. Impure waters must be made pure. The Water of Life does just that! *And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? 25 And he cried unto the LORD; and the LORD shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them.* (Ex 15:24-25) It was the Lord Himself, not Moses who had brought the Children to this place. Yet, they find a man to murmur against when, in truth, it is the Lord against whom they raise their voices. The same is true today of ministers who preach courageously the whole counsel of God rather than the choice cuts of meat. The voices of the people will rise against that minister, but are really raised against God.

That Sweet Tree prefigures the Cross of Christ, in my opinion. Read what Dr. Gill says: “. . . whether these bitter waters are considered as an emblem of the bitter curses of the law, for that bitter thing sin, which makes work for bitter repentance; and for which the law writes bitter things against the sinner, which, if not prevented, would issue in the bitterness of death; so that a sensible sinner can have nothing to do with it, nor can it yield him any peace or comfort: but Christ, the tree of life, being made under the law, and immersed in sufferings, the penalty of it, and made a curse, the law is fulfilled, the curse and wrath of God removed, the sinner can look upon it with pleasure and obey it with delight: or whether these may be thought to represent the afflictions of God’s people, comparable to water for their multitude, and for their overflowing and overwhelming nature, and to bitter ones, being grievous to the flesh; especially when God hides his face and they are thought to be in wrath: but these are sweetened through the presence of Christ, the shedding abroad of his love in the heart, the gracious promises he makes and applies, and especially through his bitter sufferings and death, and the fruits and effects thereof, which support, refresh, and cheer” Gill, John (2012-01-29). Gill’s Bible Commentary.

The passage today ends with a promise that is given to all of faith: *And said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee. And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees: and they encamped there by the waters.* (Ex 15:26-27) Twelve is a number of perfection. That perfection, or completeness, was illustrated by the selection of the Twelve Apostles. Obedience to the Commandments of God dispenses with the plagues and diseases of the world. God gave them not as shackles, but as healing anchors of the soul. The diseases of promiscuity are not found among those who keep the Commandment on not committing adultery. The body is made healthy by the 7th day of rest. The confused heart is settled by the belief in One God and not a multitude of gods – all of whom demand perfect obedience. Society and government is made perfect by keeping God’s Commandments against lying, stealing, coveting, etc. God gave us His Law for our good and not our hurt.