

## Exodus 15

**Read Exodus 15:1-21:** The bible is full of *big pictures* and *little pictures*. The little pictures are the actual events. The big ideas are the over-riding theme discovered in Christ. This is a monumental event in history.

These verses should be classified as a psalm of praise to God. The highest praises do not come from the status quo. They come from horrific conditions where God intervened. This is why we need to be pressed and to ask God for help. That is our sweet wine; not our constant *whine*. The children of Israel were in a life-or-death situation where they seemed to be trapped. Pharaoh's chariots and army had them cornered between the mountains and the Red Sea. This deliverance was the peak of the *honeymoon between God and Israel*. The bible is full of compelling rescues from God.

Here are Psalms that praise God for great deliverances — good for reading, reflection, or use in worship:

- Psalm 18 (17 in some Bibles) — thanksgiving for rescue from enemies and death
- Psalm 20 — victory petition and confidence in God's saving help
- Psalm 21 — thanksgiving for the king's triumph as God's deliverance
- Psalm 30 — thanksgiving for recovery from near-death / lifting from the pit
- Psalm 32 — joy over forgiveness and relief after confession (deliverance from guilt)
- Psalm 34 — praise for deliverance from fear and trouble ("The LORD delivered me from all my fears")
- Psalm 40 — thanksgiving for being lifted from a pit and set on a rock
- Psalm 54 — plea and confidence for rescue from enemies, ending in thankfulness
- Psalm 56 — trust and praise despite persecution; recounts being rescued
- Psalm 57 — cry for mercy and praise for God's steadfast love in danger
- Psalm 59 — deliverance from violent enemies, with praise for God's strength
- Psalm 66 — communal praise celebrating God's awesome deeds and deliverance
- Psalm 68 — triumphant song celebrating God's victorious, rescuing power
- Psalm 91 — assurance of God's protection in peril (often used after deliverance)
- Psalm 107 — thanksgiving for being delivered from various dangers (sea, captivity, illness)
- Psalm 118 — thanksgiving and the victorious refrain "His steadfast love endures forever"
- Psalm 126 — joy and praise after restoration and return from exile

Interestingly, the children of Israel were already grumbling about lacking water three days later. In fact, they grumbled and complained for the entire 40 years in the desert. That is more of an endless *whine* than a sweet wine. Did they grumble because of the conditions, or did the conditions just reveal their ingratitude?

<sup>38</sup> “This is he who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, the one who received the living oracles to give to us, <sup>39</sup> whom our fathers would not obey, but rejected. And in their hearts they turned back to Egypt, <sup>40</sup> saying to Aaron, ‘Make us gods to go before us; as for this Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ <sup>41</sup> And they made a calf in those days, offered sacrifices to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. <sup>42</sup> Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets: ‘Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? <sup>43</sup> You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch, And the star of your god Remphan, Images which you made to worship; And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.’ (Acts 7)

God used this supernatural Red Sea event to notify all the nations on earth that there is only one God; and he is with Israel. Egypt had more gods than anyone; but they were just cartoon characters. The nations on earth definitely took notice of this deliverance. Moreover, God owns the firstborn of every man and animal. Pharaoh started killing all of the Hebrew males at birth. Pharaoh plays the part of Satan who comes to kill, steal and destroy. Then God killed all of Pharaoh’s first-born children. When God is ready, he will deal with your taunting intimidators. God is killing many birds with one stone.

*and said to the men: “I know that the LORD has given you the land, that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land are fainthearted because of you. <sup>10</sup> For 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 the two kings of the Amorites who were on the other side of the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. <sup>11</sup> And as soon as we heard these things, our hearts melted; neither did there remain anymore courage in anyone because of you, for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath. (Joshua 2)*

*Behold, I have received a command to bless; He has blessed, and I cannot reverse it. <sup>21</sup> “He has not observed iniquity in Jacob, Nor has He seen wickedness in Israel. The LORD his God is with him, And the shout of a King is among them. <sup>22</sup> God brings them out of Egypt; He has strength like a wild ox. <sup>23</sup> “For there is no sorcery against Jacob, Nor any divination against Israel. It now must be said of Jacob And of Israel, ‘Oh, what God has done!’ <sup>24</sup> Look, a people rises like a lioness, And lifts itself up like a lion; It shall not lie down until it devours the prey, And drinks the blood of the slain.” (Numbers 23)*

This is a larger-than-life event for all times. There is a lot of imagery that follows this exodus story.

*10 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, <sup>2</sup> all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, <sup>3</sup> all ate the same spiritual food, <sup>4</sup> and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. <sup>5</sup> But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. <sup>6</sup> Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. <sup>7</sup> And do not become idolaters as were some of them. As it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.” <sup>8</sup> Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; <sup>9</sup> nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; <sup>10</sup> nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. <sup>11</sup> Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. (1 Corinthians 10:1-11)*

How was the crossing of the Red Sea comparable to a person being baptized? The whole story is like a metaphor. We can visualize that Moses represents a shepherd leading the flock of Israel to the land of abundance and blessings. That is a picture of God delivering and leading his flock away from the old life of worldly abuses and sin. We have to let go of our past and follow God to a more heavenly home. The escape route for Israel was through The Red Sea. Baptism is a picture of the old life drowning; and the new God-led person emerging out of the water to never return to the dark and abusive world behind.

**Read Exodus 15:22-27:** God allowed the people to experience shortages and limited outside experiences for a reason. He brings us into situations of doubt and fear to see if we abandon our hope in his care, custody, and control. Faith is keeping calm, knowing that the circumstances are irrelevant with God.

*“Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers. <sup>2</sup> And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. (Deuteronomy 8)*

The Jews started grumbling as soon as they got short on water. He wanted them to pray. They would have gotten their water without complaining. Keep these things in mind when *the wheels fall off of your little red wagon*. We have two choices; pray or worry. Only one works. Faith is moving forward despite your doubts and fears because God has your back. When somebody cuts you off in traffic they are merely providing a *heart dipstick* for you to check your fluids.

We bring our bitterness of spirit; and God transforms it into sweetness. Another analogy of the Christian life is in the wine making process. We all get crushed in life. What comes out when your plans get smashed? Bitterness and cursing...or sweetness. The tests and trials do not create bitterness. They just reveal what is lurking down deeper inside of us.