



**HICKORY GROVE**  
BAPTIST CHURCH

Song to the Redeemer

September 7, 2025

Exodus 15:1-21

Clint Pressley

**15** *Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD:*

*"I will sing to the LORD,  
for he is highly exalted.*

*Both horse and driver  
he has hurled into the sea.*

<sup>2</sup> *"The LORD is my strength and my defense;  
he has become my salvation.*

*He is my God, and I will praise him,  
my father's God, and I will exalt him.*

<sup>3</sup> *The LORD is a warrior;  
the LORD is his name.*

<sup>4</sup> *Pharaoh's chariots and his army  
he has hurled into the sea.*

*The best of Pharaoh's officers  
are drowned in the Red Sea.*

<sup>5</sup> *The deep waters have covered them;  
they sank to the depths like a stone.*

<sup>6</sup> *Your right hand, LORD,  
was majestic in power.*

*Your right hand, LORD,  
shattered the enemy.*

<sup>7</sup> *"In the greatness of your majesty  
you threw down those who opposed you.*

*You unleashed your burning anger;  
it consumed them like stubble.*

<sup>8</sup> *By the blast of your nostrils  
the waters piled up.*

*The surging waters stood up like a wall;*

*the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea.*

<sup>9</sup>*The enemy boasted,  
‘I will pursue, I will overtake them.  
I will divide the spoils;  
I will gorge myself on them.  
I will draw my sword  
and my hand will destroy them.’*

<sup>10</sup>*But you blew with your breath,  
and the sea covered them.  
They sank like lead  
in the mighty waters.*

<sup>11</sup>*Who among the gods  
is like you, LORD?  
Who is like you—  
majestic in holiness,  
awesome in glory,  
working wonders?*

<sup>12</sup>*“You stretch out your right hand,  
and the earth swallows your enemies.*

<sup>13</sup>*In your unfailing love you will lead  
the people you have redeemed.  
In your strength you will guide them  
to your holy dwelling.*

<sup>14</sup>*The nations will hear and tremble;  
anguish will grip the people of Philistia.*

<sup>15</sup>*The chiefs of Edom will be terrified,  
the leaders of Moab will be seized with trembling,  
the people of Canaan will melt away;*

<sup>16</sup>*terror and dread will fall on them.  
By the power of your arm  
they will be as still as a stone—  
until your people pass by, LORD,  
until the people you bought pass by.*

<sup>17</sup>*You will bring them in and plant them  
on the mountain of your inheritance—  
the place, LORD, you made for your dwelling,  
the sanctuary, Lord, your hands established.*

<sup>18</sup>*“The LORD reigns  
for ever and ever.”*

<sup>19</sup>*When Pharaoh’s horses, chariots and horsemen went into the sea, the LORD brought the waters of the sea back over them, but the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground. <sup>20</sup>Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron’s sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing. <sup>21</sup>Miriam sang to them:*

*“Sing to the LORD,  
for he is highly exalted.  
Both horse and driver  
he has hurled into the sea.”*

*(Pastor Prays)*

A lot of you will know the name Mel Tillis. Mel Tillis was a country music singer from years ago. In fact, he was a very successful country music singer. He was born in 1930 in Tampa, Florida, and sometime during his childhood, maybe right before he became a teenager, he contracted a bad case of malaria. That bad case of malaria strangely caused a speech impediment, causing him to stutter for the rest of his life. In fact, Mel Tillis had a very hard time putting two words together or even creating a short sentence. But somewhere along the way, Mel Tillis figured out that although he couldn't talk very well, he could sing really well. And he could take a sentence that he couldn't speak and sing it. Now, I don't know why the Lord brought that to mind when I started thinking about Moses and his song right here in chapter 15. Maybe it was because early on in Moses' life, in Exodus chapter 3, when God calls him to go and speak to the people, do you remember all of those excuses that he offered up to the Lord? And one of those excuses was, I don't talk very well. Now, maybe Moses didn't talk very well, but evidently, he could sing. Here in chapter 15 of Exodus is the very first song in the Bible, and it starts a tradition that will run through the entire Bible.

Now, if chapter 15 is the same information as chapter 14, what is the difference? Well, chapter 14 would be understood as prose, straightforward language. In Chapter 15, you would read that as poetry. Chapter 14 would be like an encyclopedia. Chapter 15 would be like a hymnal. Chapter 14 would be like what you see on the nightly news. Chapter 15 is going to be a musical. Chapter 14 would be *The History of Alexander Hamilton* by Ron Chernow, and Chapter 15 is going to be the Broadway musical *Hamilton*. Chapter 15 is to be sung.

There are all kinds of songs throughout the Bible. That's why we have a choir and an orchestra. That's why we spend half of our time on Sundays singing. When you open up the Bible, and you flip past Exodus 15, you get into the story of God's people. You get to the book of Numbers. In chapter 21, you'll find the people singing the praise of water. In Deuteronomy 32, Moses, right before he dies, he sings about going into the Promised Land. In Judges 5 is the song of Deborah

that she sings after a terrible killing of someone. Hannah sings in 1 Samuel. David sings in 2 Samuel. Then all of the Psalms are sung. When you get to the Song of Solomon, there you find a PG-13 version of a song. You have a song written about love and marriage. If you open up Isaiah 26, there you have the song about a new Jerusalem. In Ezra 3, the people sing when they build the second temple. Luke chapter 1 opens up with Mary's song. We know it as the Magnificat. There in Luke chapter 2, the angels break out singing glory to God in the highest when the Son of God is born. In Acts chapter 16, you find Paul and Silas chained in a prison at midnight singing hymns. By the time you get to the end of the book, in Revelation chapter 5, there is a new song that God puts in our hearts. In Revelation 15, you have the song of Moses. We sang it already this morning. Olivia mentioned it this morning. Revelation 15 is the song of Moses that points to the song of the Lamb. We are a people that sing. It reminds us that saved people are filled with gratitude, and we sing to the Lord. So in Exodus chapter 15, this is a song that is by the redeemed, it is sung to the Redeemer, and it is about redemption. That gives me the sermon theme this morning. This is what the sermon is about.

### **The Redeemed Sing to the Redeemer about Redemption**

And that's what I want you to do. All right, so let's go through the passage. I want you to jump back with me to chapter 15. Let's walk through the song and then come back and maybe use it to answer the question, why do we sing? Join me there in chapter 15.

Chapter 15 opens up with Moses, his brother Aaron, and his sister Miriam. Now think about that. Moses is 80 years old. Aaron is 83 years old. Miriam is in her 90s. If you thought the Gaithers' Homecoming was an old bunch there, you've got some seniors right here that are opening up in song. If you're an older gentleman or gentlewoman, you're not too old to sing; you ought to be singing. So, we open up with Moses and the people of Israel. Notice this is congregational; they sang to the Lord. We do that when God does something marvelous and ordinary speech won't do. We've got to sing about it. So, verse 1 is the opening, and verse 21 is the closing. They are the exact same wording. Verse 1 is one bookend, and verse 21 is another bookend. We call that an inclusio. Let me just read verse 1.

*"I will sing to the LORD,  
for he is highly exalted.*

*Both horse and driver*

*he has hurled into the sea.*

Now come down the page all the way to verse 21, and Miriam sang,

*“Sing to the LORD,*

*for he is highly exalted.*

*Both horse and driver*

*he has hurled into the sea.”*

Those two bookends, that is what this song is about. It's the glorious deeds of God as he put judgment on the Egyptians and saved his people. So let's break it all down, verses one, two, and three. What you have there is just a string of the attributes of God. He calls the men and women to sing, the children to sing, and everybody in the congregation to sing. This is a congregational song. This is not when we sit and watch somebody perform. It is when we sing this together.

And what do we sing about? Well, look at verses one and two. We look at the power of God. He's my strength. He's my song. He's my salvation. He's my Father's God. I will exalt Him. The Lord is a man of war. There's a whole lot right there. Notice the personal pronouns, my, my, my. In order for this to mean anything to you, it must be personalized. If you take Christianity as a religion, you will exceed all of those truths. You believe that God is a creator, he created us in His image, and you believe that you are a sinner separated from God. You believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man, that he lived perfectly, died on the cross to take the wrath of God away, and that God then raised Him from the dead three days later. When you believe he's ascended into heaven, all of that truth is in a creed, and you say, Yes, I believe that creed is true, but until that truth becomes yours personally, until you turn from your sin and put your faith in Christ, you can't share what Moses is saying here.

This is written in such a way that Moses, when he worshiped, never mentions himself. In all twenty-one verses, when you read it all, you'll never hear Moses talk about himself. You know what he talked about? God. We need to make sure that in our worship, it is not about us, it is about Him. Notice that this God is not just my God; he is my Father's God. He is a covenant-keeping God. Verse 3 says, 3 The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is his name. Yahweh fights for me.

And so then, verses 1, 2, and 3 are sort of the prelude, then you get into the body of the story. It starts in verse 4 and goes down. Now, this is sung as a testimony starting in verse 4. We just heard the story of what happened. Well, Pharaoh's chariots and his army were cast into the sea. The officers sank in the sea. The floods covered them. They went down. It's interesting to me that Moses held up the staff of God in his right hand, and there is God with him, empowering him to do that. You know what's interesting to me? So, if you go and read chapter 14, it's the east wind that blew on the sea. It divided the sea, and the waters piled up. We are told poetically that it wasn't just the east wind. Verse 8 says that it's at the blast of your nostrils. It's like riding a bicycle and having a gnat go up your nose; you don't want to think about it, so you just breathe through your nose. There is the minutest display of divine energy that God did. It's told in a language to give us a picture. All God did was just blow through His nose, and the sea exploded open. There is this poetic version of the power of God. You will find it again in verse 10. Moses says that he just exhaled and that one, the minutest display of divine energy, he just breathed out, and the sea parted. The song tells us about the power of God.

If you look up at verse 7, look at the word stubble. The Egyptians turned into stubble. Those of you who have been following along, you remember that when Moses told Pharaoh, I want the people to go, let them go and Pharaoh says, look, the people are lazy. They're supposed to be making bricks. Let's take the straw away from them, so the people had to go and get their own straw, and what they found was stubble. And now that's coming back on them. The Egyptians are stubble.

Then there's a refrain when you get down to verse 11. It's a rhetorical question. We sang rhetorical questions today. Who is like you? And the obvious answer is nobody. That you are incomparable. There is no God like ours. There is no gospel like ours. There is no story like the gospel. There is no hope like the hope you find in Jesus.

So those are all the questions. And then verse 14 starts the future. We start singing about the future. And look at the future. It's broken down from verse 14 following. The people in verse 14, that's the people in the land. That's not the Israelites. That's the people who are in the Promised Land. The people have heard, and they tremble. Now, notice the names. The way those names are structured is the sequence of events when they go into the Promised Land. It's going to unfold like this. First, Philistia will fall, then the Edomites will fall, then the Moabites

will fall, and then the Canaanites will fall. It goes just like that. They are singing about the future and how God will provide in the future.

And then what you have in verses 16, 17, and 18, they are looking forward to the dwelling place with God. Here in the Old Testament, it speaks of eternity. That's what you have in verse 18, that the Lord will reign forever and ever, in eternity. That's the song. And then verse 19 is a summary. 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.

And so, Miriam has heard this song. Miriam's over 90. That morning, she got up, and she was feeling good. That's what it says in the Living Bible. In verse 20 it says, *<sup>20</sup> Then Miriam the prophet, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women followed her, with timbrels and dancing.* You guys know that Olivier, when he sings, when he leads worship, he throws himself into it this morning. Do you know he has some very small cymbals, tambourines, that he can put on his ankles and lead worship with? I've been asking him, please break them out on a Sunday morning at some point. So here is Miriam, she breaks out the tambourines, all the women break out the tambourines, and they finish out the day by singing back to the men.

So, you have the men singing, the women singing, the children singing, and they're singing about the power of God. You see, the truth is, the redeemed sing to the Redeemer about redemption. Why do we sing? I'd like to give you a few reasons. Let's make this the point of application. Why would you sing? Well, I'll give you the first one. You'll find it right there in verse 1 and verse 21. When you put those two together, you find out that...

### **God commands us to sing**

Verse 1 and verse 21, they are brackets, they are parentheses, they are the inclusio. And you find, in the middle of that, everybody should sing; men, women, and children. I mean, when you read the Bible, the Exodus is the most important event in the Bible, all the way up to the cross. And the natural response for every person who has experienced the grace of God is to sing. And if you sit here on a Sunday morning with your arms folded and you don't sing, maybe you don't have anything to sing about. So we sing to Him. We sing about Him. We sing about

who God is. We sing about what He has done. We sing about what He will do. That's what we did today already. So with the choir leaders in it, that's what we sing. Why do we do that? Paul speaks about this in Colossians 3:16. Paul says, this is why you sing, <sup>16</sup> *Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.*

In verse 1 and verse 21, we find out that God commands us to sing. Do you have something to sing about? Has God redeemed you by what Christ has done for you? Are you a son or a daughter of God? If so, you have something to sing about. God commands us to sing. That's one reason to sing. I'm going to give you a second reason. You'll find it there, in the passage, in verse 1. I'm just going to say it like this. We sing because God wins. We sing because in every battle...

### **God wins**

And if you are on God's side, try to get him on your side; if you are on God's side, you win. What does verse 1 say? I will sing to the Lord because he has triumphed gloriously. He's done so over our enemies. He's done so over Israel's enemies. He has done so over our worst enemy, death, hell, and Satan. Brothers, we find the gospel here. You have been exited out of your sin. You've been exited out of the punishment that you so deserve, and that punishment fell on Christ, our Passover Lamb. And not only has your sin been paid for, you have won because Christ won.

What did Paul say? It's a great passage. Paul writes for us in Colossians 2:14-15, <sup>14</sup> *having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.* <sup>15</sup> *And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.* He has disarmed the rulers and authorities. He put them to open shame, triumphing over them in Jesus at the cross. What do you get victory over at the cross? You get victory over your own sin. Sin doesn't have to win. You don't have to be addicted to something. You can get victory over that. You can get victory over your own shame, your own anger, your own bitterness. You can get victory over that at the cross. You can sing again because of what God has done for you at the cross. Look, some of you sitting in this congregation right now, even though you are here at 8 o'clock on a Sunday morning, you have contemplated something drastic. You don't have to do that. You could be

flirting with adultery, maybe secretly thinking about divorce. You've rationalized it in your mind, but you've come today, and you've sung the song of Moses, and you've been reminded that there is victory in Christ at the cross. Go to the cross of Jesus and see all your sins paid for. Maybe somebody here is contemplating something like suicide because they feel so defeated. I'm here this morning to put a song back in your heart, the song of Moses that said, God has won. Come and see the victory. Hear the song of the redeemed. Why do we sing? We sing because God commands us. We sing because God wins. Let me give you a third thing, number 3. We sing because...

### **God empowers us**

I should have said strengthened. It's a better way to say it, but God empowers us. Do you see it in verse 2? Moses says, The Lord, Yahweh, is my strength and my song. He makes me able, he makes me sing. Haven't you been there? Haven't you been there on the absolute bottom? I mean, being wrung out in your soul, totally dead, dog tired, can't take another step, and a song comes on, and it does something. It fills you with power. What did Paul say? Let the Word of God richly dwell in your heart. And it happens through a song. Brother or sister, God is your strength. Why do you sing? You have strength from God at the power of the cross. You go to the cross, and there's the power not only to forgive you of your sin, but to forgive others. You have the strength to do that because of the cross. Look, you have the power to endure. You go there and stand at the cross, and you think about Jesus enduring the shame, Jesus enduring the judgment, Jesus taking all of the abandonment from His Father for you. Think about the resurrection power. What kind of power did it take for God to raise a physical human body of Jesus out of the tomb? That power is yours. You've got the power to get up. God's power that raised Jesus from the dead will raise you. This is what Paul said. Paul said, In my weakness, He is made strong. He will strengthen you, and when He does, you sing. Why do we sing? I'll give you a fourth reason we sing. We sing because God saves.

### **God saves**

What a great truth. The truth of the Bible is that God saved. Do you see it in verse 2, all of those personal pronouns? Let me read it to you. <sup>2</sup> *"The LORD is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him.*

He is your God, and he's saved you. We use the word, my, because we believe that each individual must, individually, put their faith in Christ to be saved. You are not saved because you are here with other people. You are saved because you were convicted of your sin and you turned, by faith, to what Christ has done for you and believed.

But we also believe it's not just personal; that once you get saved, you stay at home. We believe you come together. It's congregational. There is one unifying factor that makes us come together. That is that Jesus Christ lived perfectly, died on the cross in the place of my sin and yours. God raised Him from the dead. And because we believe that we are akin to one another. The unifying factor in this church is not that we're all from the same unifying place; the unifying factor is that we all were once dead in our sin, and we now have been made alive in Christ. This God is a covenant-keeping God. You'll notice in verse 2, this is my father's God, my father's - Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We sing because God saves, but that's not all the reason we sing. I'll give you a fifth reason we sing, number 5. We sing because...

### **God intervenes**

Verses 3, 4, 5, and 6 are describing what God did. That the Lord in verse 3, is a warrior. The Lord is a man of war. This is what Isaiah saw in Isaiah chapter 6, *6 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne.* And he goes on to say, I saw the Lord, and the Lord of hosts is his name. The word Lord of hosts is the God of armies. Why is that important? We believe God fights for us. We believe that He protects us. We believe that He provides for us. We believe that He intervenes. This is why we pray; because we believe that God is going to do something. We pray for people that are lost. We think God can save them. We pray for the change to happen. We believe that God can do that. We pray for God to discipline us and teach us. And so much of what God does in our lives is to remind us that this is not your home. We sing because God intervenes. I'm going to give you another reason to sing, number 6.

### **God saves through judgement**

I got this idea from a man named Jim Hamilton. He also is a friend of mine, a professor at Southern Seminary. He wrote a book that is not for children, but I would dare you to read it.

The name of it is *God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment*. It's a thick book. It takes all the passages of judgment in the Bible and says, this is how God saves. God gets glory in saving people. He does so through judgment. That's what God did in the Exodus, and especially in the Red Sea, through that, God is glorified. God's glory and salvation saved His people by judging the Egyptians. That's what this passage is about, from verse 7 through verse 10. And that right there is, for us, a template. It's an Old Testament signal of the New Testament gospel. Here's what I mean. God gets glory by saving you. And the way He has saved you is through His judgment falling on Christ at the cross. And the only way you are saved is that you trust that Jesus Christ did that for you. And if Christ died for you, if you are saved by God's grace, then you sing. Why do we sing? I'll give you another reason. We sing because...

### **God loves us**

Did you see that in verse 13? What an Old Testament picture. Verse 13, <sup>13</sup>*In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling.* That word, steadfast love, is the old Hebrew word that means mercy. It's the unfailing, sustaining, enlivening, covenant, nourishing, soul-satisfying love of God. You should sing this week, even if you are prone to depression, you sing because God loves you. You are loved by God. It's a reason to sing. If that's not enough, here's another reason to sing. We sing because...

### **God redeems us**

Isn't that what verse 13 says? God redeems us. He saw that He would get glory by taking something that is so valuable, the blood of Jesus, and using that to purchase our souls. Like, He literally bought us, and the currency is the blood of Christ. We were in a worse condition than the Israelites were in. When they were in Egyptian slavery, we were slaves to our sin. Our condition was worse. We were not only slaves to sin, but we were also offensive to God, and yet this is grace that God would look at His enemies, who are slaves in sin, and come and save us. And he would do so by the price of the blood of Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God. When you understand grace, you sing. I'll give you one last one, and we'll close with a song. It's in verses 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18, number nine. We sing because...

## **God receives us**

There are three biblical themes that conclude this song. In verse 16, we are told that God has created a people. We know that in Christ, God has created a people. We are akin to one another because of the blood of Jesus. Also, in verse 17, we find out that God takes His people to His eternal, holy dwelling place. Now, they're going to go into the Promised Land. That is only a picture of going to heaven. We understand as Christians, on a higher and holy level, that to be a part of the body is to be with Christ. And not only that, in verse 18, we sing because God reigns supreme and eternal over all things. The Lord will reign forever and ever. And because of that, Revelation closes with us sitting around the throne singing to God. You see, the redeemed sing to the Redeemer about redemption. As we conclude today, the time of preaching, and go into our invitation, I want you to think with me now, maybe by bowing your heads and closing your eyes with me, in a moment of prayer, as we conclude, are you, are you among the redeemed? Have you surrendered your life to the goodness of God found in Jesus? Or there are some of you here who would say, Yeah, I'm already a Christian. Then let me ask you a question. Are you ready to sing the song of the redeemed?

*(Pastor prays)*