

EXODUS 15:1-21 PRAISING GOD WITH SONG

After God has done something for His people, what is the logical response? Of course, the only response and best response is praise and worship and giving glory to God. That is actually the reason we exist and it is automatic to desire to give Him thanks and praise when he has done something special for us. How would we not want to do that? After God delivered the Israelites when they were seemingly trapped at the Red Sea, Moses and the Israelites could not help but give God praise by writing and singing a song of praise about what God did in His deliverance and how great He is in His glorious nature and character.

This song gives us a great chance to continue to offer Him praise as we read and study this song of majestic praise. We want to learn from this song how to improve our own worship of the Lord with a high level of praise. We are told in Colossians 3:16 to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. The Creator made us that way. The ability to sing and react to music is part of being human. It is very important in our lives as Christians, as it is a means in which we connect with God. In fact, in the Bible we see a lot of singing, especially in the book of Psalms, where a whole book is dedicated to the subject.

There is much to learn about worship, as we all are desiring to enhance our praise to God. We can become frustrated because that ultimate worship of God is so elusive. We know we are supposed to do it, but much of the time, we just can't seem to get a handle on it. One thing for certain is that the songs are to take our minds off ourselves and to be totally focused upon our Lord. Songs of worship are to give us a glimpse of who God is and what He has done. We are to be faithful witnesses to that.

This song we look at today is thoroughly God centered and is a great model and example for worship. Let's let God's inspired Word move us today to expand our thoughts on this powerful, awesome God who is worthy of our praise.

1. GOD'S POWERFUL VICTORY VV 1-5

This chapter is the bridge that leaves behind the first half of the book dealing with the Egyptians and the second half of the book which features the desert wanderings. It is a hymnic interlude in the midst of the story of deliverance. This song became the core of Israel's expression of faith. It was influential and a centerpiece of Jewish worship. The first five verses are an affirmation of personal faith in God. They are a statement of personal testimony in that God is not an abstraction, nor the god of their ancestors, but is called my God. He is a God to be known personally. This song had great meaning to the individuals as they participated.

A. GLORIOUS TRIUMPH

V 1

The main theme of the song about God's victory is introduced in verse 1. It was all the work of the Lord.

They saw Him work on their behalf and get overwhelming victory. Although Moses wrote this, the rest of the nation sang it. Can you imagine two million people singing a song together celebrating this victory? This was hugely relevant to each one as they sang.

B. THEIR OWN GOD

V 2

This verse was quoted word for word later on in scripture.

Psalm 118:14, Isa 12:2

This became very personal as the people reflected upon the meaning of these words relating to what God had done for them. God was my strength, my song, my salvation.

1. Strength
2. Song
3. Salvation

God is the source of all these and He is to be known personally. If He cannot be known personally, then the world is a dark place, but He takes an extreme interest in us and there is nothing that can be against us.

C. THEIR FATHER'S GOD

V 2

This has to refer to God's covenant relationship with the patriarchs. God is faithful in His promises of old. He never forgets what He says He will do.

Deut 4:37

D. A MAN OF WAR

V 3

If there is in this world an enemy like Satan, as Martin Luther wrote in "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" and if sin and evil are hateful to God, then He must wage war against them. The Lord is mighty in battle and He conquers the enemy. He is called Lord Sabaoth, the Lord of armies.

Exodus 14:14, Deut 1:30, Isa 42:13, Rev 19:11

The divine warrior imagery ties together the crossing of the Red Sea and the battle with chaos. God intervenes in human history and fights for His people

E. DESTROYING OF THE ENEMY

VV 4-5

God conquers the enemies of righteousness. God is opposed to that which defies His created order, such as what Pharaoh did. He overcomes with ease.

2. GOD'S WEAPONS DESCRIBED

VV 6-10

The focus here, is God's working and intervention as we look at the second stanza.

A. RIGHT HAND

6

The right hand stands for power. He is a God of might. His power is glorious and it was put on magnificent display before these worshippers.

B. MAJESTY

7

He is great in His excellence. In displaying His wrath, He is majestic or excellent in throwing His opponents down. His anger consumes them like fire eats up stubble.

C. BREATH OF HIS NOSTRILS

8-10

The breath of His nostrils represents the wind that blew back the waters and congealed them so they stood like a wall. When the soldiers from Egypt thought to catch up with the Jews God simply breathed and the waters returned and drowned the Egyptian army.

3. PURE PRAISE

VV 11-13

This section extols the character of God.

A. NONE LIKE GOD

11

Who is like God? Of course the Egyptians had many gods, and

by the plagues God showed how He defeated them all. Of course there are no other gods that exist but as far as the Egyptians and other nations were concerned those man made gods were what they worshipped. The pagans accepted a multiplicity of gods. God's defeat of Egypt is God's defeat of their gods.
Numbers 38:4, Deut 32:23-39, Micah 7:18

B. GLORIOUS IN HOLINESS 11

Isa 6:3

God is another order of being, different than any other in this universe. This is the otherness of God. It speaks of His transcendence. He is holy other. He is another kind of being altogether. God alone is holy.

C. AWESOME IN GLORY

His holiness is His glory.

Psalm 66:1-3

D. WORKING WONDERS

Wonders of powers and wonders of grace

They are out of the course of nature. These are wonders we don't deserve or expect.

E. POWER 12

This was His transcendent power.

F. MERCY 13

By God's mercy the people were led forth out of the bondage of Egypt and the perils of the sea. God had mercy to deliver them.

This is His unfailing love.

G. REDEEMER

God redeemed His people. He brought them out of their bondage, which represented our bondage to sin.

The Israelites real problem was not so much slavery, but was because they didn't know God, and as sinful human beings, were alienated from Him. They needed to be redeemed.

H. GUIDANCE

God had to issue in a shepherd's care because of their great need.

He is the one who can guide them to the solution of their problem

I. STRENGTH

It is only by His strength that they can get to the goal, God's holy habitation.

4. YAHWEH LEADS HIS PEOPLE HOME 14-19

A. ENEMIES FEAR 14-16

Just as Egypt sank, so in the future, God's enemies would be conquered. Whoever would oppose God had no hope.

The news of the Exodus spread everywhere and fear spread.

Philistia, Edom, Moab, Canaan (Deut 2:4, Num 22:3)

Josh 2:9

These nations knew that the true God was more powerful than the gods they trusted in. There was much to fear.

B. DWELLING PLACE 16-17

The entire experience of deliverance had been built upon

God's promise to return His people to the "Promised Land."

God would bring them to His sanctuary. One thought would

be the Promised Land.. Another thought would be the tabernacle.

Another dwelling place is the eternal state and the presence of God.

The conclusion to be drawn is that God is the King of the

Universe and will always reign. This is His eternal reign.

God is sovereign and eternal.

5. SONG OF MIRIAM 20-21

This could mean an antiphonal singing with the women repeating

the verse after the men. Miriam might have formed a special choir of Jewish women who assisted her as she repeated the first words of the song. They expressed their joyful enthusiasm.

Psalm 106:11-12

This is a repeated celebration of God's deliverance, of which God's people must be reminded continually.

"We, today, have a high calling. We participate in an act of God that is far greater than the Exodus, for it is God's climactic act of deliverance. Focusing our attention in worship relentlessly on God is not mundane nor tedious. Rather it places the focus where it ought to be.....We sing in an effort to take us away from what we think and draw us toward what we ought to think, feel, experience.

Our songs, are like the songs of the Bible, reminders of who God is and what he has done."

Peter Enns