

# Exodus 15 Commentary

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Summary Chart of The Book of Exodus									
<b>DELIVERANCE FROM OPPRESSION</b>						<b>PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP</b>			
Redemption from Egypt Ex 1:1-18:27						Revelation from God Ex 19:1-40:38			
Getting Israel Out of Egypt						Getting Egypt Out of Israel!			
<b>Narration</b>						<b>Legislation</b>			
Birth of Moses Ex 1-2	Call of Moses Ex 3-6	Conflict with Pharaoh Ex 7-10	Exodus from Egypt Ex 11-12	Red Sea Crossed Ex 13-15	Journey To Sinai Ex 16-18	Law Given Ex 19-24	Tent Plan Ex 25-31	Idol Worship Ex 32-34	Tent Built Ex 35-40
<b>Subjection</b>			<b>Redemption</b>			<b>Instruction</b>			
Suffering and Liberation of People of God			Guidance of God			Worship of God			
Moses and Burdens of Israel		Pharaoh and Plagues Upon Egypt		Red Sea Deliverance	Wilderness Provision	Sinai Instructions			

<b>Bondage and Oppression</b>				<b>Deliverance and Provision</b>		<b>Law Pattern and Construction</b>			
<b>Israel in Egypt</b> Ex 1:1-13:16				<b>Israel to Sinai</b> Ex 13:17-18:27		<b>Israel at Sinai</b> Ex 19:1-40:38			
<b>God's People</b> <b>Enduring</b> <b>Bondage</b>				<b>God's Grace</b> <b>Revealed</b> <b>in Redemption</b>		<b>God's Glory</b> <b>Manifested</b> <b>in Worship</b>			
<b>Egypt</b> <b>430 Years</b> (15% of Exodus)				<b>Wilderness</b> <b>2 Months</b> (30% of Exodus)		<b>Mt Sinai</b> <b>10 Months</b> (55% of Exodus)			
<b>From</b> <b>Groaning</b>									<b>To</b> <b>Glory!</b>

[Jensen's Survey of the Old Testament - online](#)

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[Click another Exodus from Egypt](#)

[Click for Events during the Sojourn at Kadesh-Barnea](#)

<b>GENESIS</b>	<b>EXODUS</b>
human effort and failure	divine power and triumph
word of promise	work of fulfillment
a people chosen	a people called
God's electing mercy	God's electing manner
revelation of nationality	realization of nationality

**SUMMARY OF THE PENTATEUCH**  
(from Believer's Study Bible)

**Exodus 15:1 Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and said, "I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea.**

NET Exodus 15:1 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD. They said, "I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously, the horse and its rider he has thrown into the sea.

LXE Exodus 15:1 Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song to God, and spoke, saying, Let us sing to the Lord, for he is very greatly glorified: horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.

NLT Exodus 15:1 Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD: "I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; he has hurled both horse and rider into the sea.

KJV Exodus 15:1 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.

ESV Exodus 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.

NIV Exodus 15:1 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: "I will sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea.

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

CSB Exodus 15:1 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD. They said: I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; He has thrown the horse and its rider into the sea.

NKJ Exodus 15:1 Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the LORD, and spoke, saying: "I will sing to

the LORD, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!

NRS Exodus 15:1 Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: "I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.

YLT Exodus 15:1 Then singeth Moses and the sons of Israel this song to Jehovah, and they speak, saying: -- 'I sing to Jehovah, For triumphing He hath triumphed; The horse and its rider He hath thrown into the sea.

- **Then:** Jdg 5:1-31 2Sa 22:1-51 Ps 106:12 Ps 107:8,15,21,22 Isa 12:1-6 Isa 51:10,11 Rev 15:3
- **For:** Ex 15:21 14:17,18,27 18:11 Col 2:15

## **A PROPER RESPONSE TO YAHWEH FOR HIS DELIVERANCE**

As you read this song in Ex 15:1-19, you will notice that not one mention of Moses or Aaron, but the spotlight is totally on Jehovah as it should be!

**Then** - When is **then**? This word marks sequence or progression and in this context follows the experience of Jehovah's deliverance through the Red Sea and the statement that they feared and believed in the LORD (Ex 14:31). What is striking is that Moses follows **deliverance** with a song to **Deliverer**. He did not say "Did you see what happened when I raised and lowered by staff, deliverance for you, death for the Egyptians!" In a sense Moses *pointed his staff* directly at Jehovah as if to say look to Him! The thought occurred "What a great way to begin the day. In the Word and then in a Song of praise to the LORD." We see a similar pattern of **deliverance** followed by a **song of praise** -- Deborah and Barak in Jdg 5:1-31+, Hannah's Song after the Birth of Samuel (1 Sa 2:1-10), David in 2 Sa 22:1-51, Mary in Lk 1:46-55, Zecharias in Lk 1:68-79.

The psalmist gives us a brief "commentary: on Ex 14:31 and Ex 15:1 = "Then they believed His words. They sang His praise." (Ps 106:12) Spurgeon has an interesting comment on Ps 106:12

They believed the promise when they saw it fulfilled, but not till then. This is mentioned, not to their credit, but to their shame. Those who do not believe the Lord's word till they see it performed are not believers at all. Who would not believe when the fact stares them in the face? The Egyptians would have done as much as this. They sang his praise. How could they do otherwise? Their song was very excellent, and is the type of the song of heaven; but sweet as it was, it was quite as short, and when it was ended they fell to murmuring. "They sang his praise, "but "they soon forgot his works." Between Israel singing and Israel sinning there was scarce a step. Their song was good while it lasted, but it was no sooner begun than over.

Recall Exodus 14:31 "When Israel saw the great power which the LORD had used against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD, and **they believed in the LORD and in His servant Moses**" -

Joe Temple says "That is written very clearly to indicate to us that Moses had a place of very high esteem in the eyes and the minds of the people. They feared the Lord. They believed the Lord and His servant, Moses. There is a sense in which these verses are telling us that the people put Moses on the same level with God, and it would have been a very simple, small step from that to beginning to worship and deify Moses, but it is interesting to notice that Moses gives all of the glory to God. **There is no reference in this hymn to anything that Moses had done.** There is no reference to any of the bravery or any of the brilliance or any of the logic of Moses. All of the glory goes to God, so one of the most impressive things about Moses, one of the most impressive points in our study of the life of Moses, was that Moses was a mature believer. What was that mark of maturity? The ultimate test of maturity, I think, is pointed out in the Scripture in various ways and here is one illustration of it: The ultimate test of maturity is whether or not a man can give all of the glory to God. ([Life of Moses](#))

**Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to the LORD** - So in response to their reverential fear and belief in Jehovah, the new nation joins Moses in a **song** of praise to Jehovah. It is notable that this entire song does not mention or extol Moses, but focuses solely on Jehovah and His greatness, especially His great power in delivering the Israelites from Egypt.

**Guzik**- One great principles of worship is that it is unto the LORD, not unto man. When we worship God in song, our audience is the LORD Himself and not the people around us.

It is interesting that this is the first recorded son in the Bible and is also the last recorded in Revelation 15 (although we will sing of Jehovah's greatness and glory throughout eternity!!!)...

And **they sang the song of Moses**, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations! 4 "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU, FOR YOUR RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED." (Revelation 15:3-4<sub>±</sub>)

**Comment:** John Phillips compares and contrasts the song of Moses in Exodus 15 with the one in Revelation 15 writing "The song of Moses was sung at the **Red Sea**, the song of the Lamb is sung at the crystal sea ("sea of glass" - Rev 15:2); the song of Moses was a song of triumph over Egypt, the song of the Lamb is a song of triumph over Babylon; the song of Moses told how God brought His people out, the song of the Lamb tells how God brings His people in; the song of Moses was the first song in Scripture, the song of the Lamb is the last. The song of Moses commemorated the execution of the foe, the expectation of the saints, and the exaltation of the Lord; the song of the Lamb deals with the same three themes." (Exploring Revelation)

The song of Moses celebrated Israel's deliverance from Egypt whereas the song of Moses and of the Lamb celebrates the ultimate deliverance of God's people from the power of Sin, Satan and this evil world system!

Play [Paul Wilbur's beautiful version of the Song of Moses](#) (based on the words in Revelation 15)

**John Currid** - So the church in covenant will at the end times sing hymns of adoration before the throne of God. One of those hymns will be the Song of the Sea from Exodus 15. And note that the subject matter is the same in Exodus and in Revelation: the glorification of God. He is worthy of the church's honour and praise because of who he is, and because of his great redemptive work. Amen and amen.

Parallels between Israel at the sea and the church at the sea are striking. The general theological thrust of the two episodes is similar as well: as Israel moves from a scene of redemption to communion at the sea and on to inheritance of the land of promise, so does the church. The church has been redeemed by the blood of Christ; it communes at the sea in Revelation 15 and, finally, it receives an eternal inheritance that is imperishable and will never fade away (1 Peter 1:4).

The psalmist gives us a brief commentary on the Song of Moses

And He brought forth His people (ISRAEL) with joy, His chosen ones with a joyful shout. (Ps 105:43)

**Comment** - This passage celebrates the joy of the Lord in His acts of deliverance. Phillips writes "Stand for a moment with Israel on the shores of the Red Sea. What do you hear? You hear the people sing! The Egyptian army has been swept away, and never again will Egypt hold Israel captive. "Thus the LORD saved Israel.... Then sang Moses and the children of Israel" (Exodus 14; 15)." "Such "gladness," as the Bible describes, is not a mere fleshly emotion—a worked-up excitement and so effervescent that it quickly evaporates. It is a gladness from, and in, the Lord." (Lockyer) Unfortunately and sadly the joy of the Israelites lasted at most only 3 days (cf Ex 15:22ff).

**And said, "I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted** - The Lord is praised for His redemption. Notice the **for** (term of explanation) which gives us the reason to sing. And the reason is because "He has triumphed gloriously." (NLT) His great accomplishment over a great human foe, serves to emphasize His greatness and glory over all creation. The Hebrew verb used here (and again in Miriam's repetition in Ex 15:21) for **hurled** ([ramah](#)) meant to throw or even to shoot an arrow. The Septuagint translates hurled with the verb *ripto* which Jesus used in Lk 17:2 to describe "a millstone were hung around his neck and he **were thrown** into the sea, than that he would cause one of these little ones to stumble."

**The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea** - Note that Jehovah's defeat of Israel's enemy is repeatedly exclaimed and extolled (Read Ex 15:1, 4-5, 7-10, 12, 19). The translation "hurled" gives a great picture for hurl means to throw or propel with great force, this word even picturing the chariots and riders tumbling down as the weight of the water and turbulence of the waves engulfed them! This grabs your attention!

**THOUGHT** - There is a message for all of us who have redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. We need to sing songs that remind us of the victory of Jehovah-Jesus over our strong, oppressive enemies - Sin, Satan and Seduction of this passing world. We are not to focus on the darkness and oppression in which we were once enslaved but on our ONCE FOR ALL TIME DELIVERANCE from our mortal enemies. Unlike the Egyptians who the Israelites would never again see, our mortal enemies remain to harass and seduce us, and so our need is to remember that they are UTTERLY DEFEATED ENEMIES and we no longer have to obey them. This is simply another way of saying what Paul said in Romans 6:11-14<sup>±</sup> (where he focused on Sin but applicable to all our enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil) -

"Even so **consider** ([present imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. 12 Therefore **do not let sin reign** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, 13 and **do not go on presenting** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but **present** ([aorist imperative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

**Comment** - Notice the command "**Consider**," which is a call to do this continually, to continually recall to mind

that in Christ, we have victory over Sin (as well as the godless world and the devil). Then based on this truth, our death to Sin and our new life in Christ, enabled by His Spirit in us, we are to say "no" to the seductive temptations and instead continually, daily present ourselves to God as His instruments. And I would suggest that this mindset is energized by being in His Word each morning and then singing a song (hymn, spiritual song) like Moses' song and recalling that our mortal enemies have been forever defeated at the Cross of Jesus Christ. I suggest making this a daily practice because we forget so easily and so quickly even as we see Israel do in this same chapter. Their song is followed by their sulking! Exodus 15:22-27.

**Play this catchy tune with a great video on the Red Sea deliverance for Israel and death for Egypt.** This would be great to show on full screen to your entire family and would allow you to explain some of the Scriptural background of the Greatest Deliverance in the History of the World which would in turn allow you to discuss the greatest deliverance in all eternity, the deliverance from sin, Satan, this godless world and eternal death, the **glorious Cross of Jesus Christ!**

- [The Horse And Rider \(I Will Sing unto the Lord\) Exodus 15](#)

The prophet Isaiah alludes to **Israel's past redemption** from Egypt in his description of **Israel's future redemption**, one that will not come until the end of the [Great Tribulation](#) when Messiah returns and establishes **Zion** as His capital and earthly habitation for 1000 years. And so we read...

Was it not You (JEHOVAH) Who dried up the sea, The waters of the great deep; Who made the depths of the sea a pathway For the **redeemed** to cross over? So the **ransomed** (Heb = [padah](#) same verb used in Passover - Ex 13:13, 15; Lxx = [lutroo](#) used in 1 Pe 1:18+ and Titus 2:14+ of the ransom payment!) of the LORD will return (PROPHETIC PROMISE TO ISRAEL NOT YET FULFILLED) And **come with joyful shouting to Zion**, And everlasting **joy** will be on their heads. They will obtain **gladness and joy**, And sorrow and sighing will flee away. (Isaiah 51:10,11)

**John MacArthur** comments that Jehovah "had delivered Israel in the past and is to do so permanently in the future before the nations can be destroyed (Isa 51:14), so they have no need to fear oppressors. The blessing of restored Israel will be evidenced in the joy of Isa 51:11." (Note we see a similar reaction of joy in Israel when the ransomed of the LORD return to Zion in the [Millennium](#) in Isaiah 35:10+ and Isa 61:7).

**Barry Horner** writes "There will be a reversal of former dispersal and desolation. The wilderness will become like Eden, the desert will become like the garden of the Lord, discomfort will yield to gladness and singing. The scattered will return to Zion with joy, while sorrow and sighing will vanish (Isaiah 51:3, 11). Then the inhabitants will be told by the Lord, "You are My people" (Isaiah 51:3, 11, 16). So evangelists will proclaim to the future heirs of Zion, "Your God reigns!" Isa 52:7-8). Then the Lord will roar from Zion in declaration of His being a refuge for His people, while they will be reassured of their security under His dominion (Joel 3:16-17, 21). Zion will become a place of worship, instruction, and outreach to the nations (Mic 4:2-3). For this reason, "Jerusalem will be called the Faithful City, the mountain of the LORD of Hosts, and the Holy Mountain" (Zech 8:3).

See [related note on timbrel and dancing below](#).

**NET Note** - This chapter is a song of praise sung by Moses and the people right after the deliverance from the Sea. The song itself is vv. 1b–18; it falls into three sections – praise to God (1b–3), the cause for the praise (4–13), and the conclusion (14–18). The point of the first section is that God's saving acts inspire praise from his people; the second is that God's powerful acts deliver his people from the forces of evil; and the third section is that God's demonstrations of his sovereignty inspire confidence in him by his people. So the Victory Song is very much like the other declarative praise psalms – the resolve to praise, the power of God, the victory over the enemies, the incomparability of God in his redemption, and the fear of the people.

**Life Application Study Bible** - Music played an important part in Israel's worship and celebration. Singing was an expression of love and thanks, and it was a creative way to pass down oral traditions. Some say this song of Moses is the oldest recorded song in the world. It was a festive epic poem celebrating God's victory, lifting the hearts and voices of the people outward and upward. After having been delivered from great danger, they sang with joy! Psalms and hymns can be great ways to express relief, praise, and thanks when you have been through trouble.

**Tony Merida** - We have no melody for these songs, but we have the words. That shows us how important the lyrics are in music. Here they were narrating God's work: His mercy and His judgment. This is important. It is not just "mood music." It is a good model for reminding yourself of God's redeeming grace. Songs help us remember. Songs are portable theology. Everyone should sing from their heart to the Savior for the great deliverance they have received.

**Spurgeon** - Note, that they were singing, singing a very loud and triumphant song; and you would have thought that they would have kept on singing for the next forty years. It was such a triumph, such a deliverance, God's arm was made so bare before their eyes, that you would have thought that their jubilation would have lasted throughout a lifetime, at the least. On the contrary, it lasted a very little while. Yet what a song it was that they sang! "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." What a song of triumph that is which is sung by souls saved from sin, and death, and hell, by the great atoning sacrifice of Christ! Oh,

when we first realize that we are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, we do, indeed, “feel like singing all the time”, for our sins are washed away, and we have a notion that we shall always keep on singing till we join in the song of the glorified in heaven.

**Matthew Henry** - We may observe respecting this song, that it is,

(1.) An ancient song, the most ancient that we know of.

(2.) A most admirable composition, the style lofty and magnificent, the images lively and proper, and the whole very moving.

(3.) It is a holy song, consecrated to the honour of God, and intended to exalt his name and celebrate his praise, and his only, not in the least to magnify any man: holiness to the Lord is engraved on it, and to him they made melody in the singing of it.

(4.) It is a typical song. The triumphs of the gospel church, in the downfall of its enemies, are expressed in the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb put together, which are said to be sung upon a sea of glass, as this was upon the Red Sea, Revelation 15:2-3

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**G Campbell Morgan** - Then sang Moses and the children of Israel. Ex. 15.1.

That was natural, inevitable. There are moods of the soul that can only be expressed in poetry and in music. They are the great moods, whether of joy or of sorrow, of gleam or of gloom. This was a moment of high experience. The hour was full of the sense of the greatness of life. The shackles were gone, the enemies were destroyed; freedom was theirs, and opportunities were before them. This sense of the greatness of life was created by the sense of the greatness of God. What could they do other than sing? In such experiences prose becomes useless, poetry is the only method of expression; monotone is insufficient, harmony is necessary. An examination of the song will show that it was a glorious celebration of their King, on the part of this newborn nation. It had its backward and its forward look, and in each case the supreme fact was God. He had triumphed gloriously. All the power opposed to Him, and so to them, had proved weak in His mighty grasp. Moreover, He would fulfil all His purposes, bringing them in and planting them in the mountain of His inheritance. When, looking back, God is seen, and forward, His purposes and power are recognized, the soul can sing, even though the threatening dukes of Edom, men of Moab, and inhabitants of Canaan are all about it. Such moments of high vision and glorious praise are full of value, even though presently there may be much of darkness and declension. Whenever they come, let us avail ourselves of them to the full.

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### **Exodus 15:1–2,13–18 Our Strength And Song**

The Lord shall reign forever and ever. —Exodus 15:18

Often called “The March King,” composer and band director John Philip Sousa created music that has been played by bands around the world for more than a hundred years. As Loras John Schissel, music historian and conductor of the Virginia Grand Military Band, said, “Sousa is to marches what Beethoven is to symphonies.” Sousa understood the power of music to motivate, encourage, and inspire people.

In Old Testament times, the people of Israel were often inspired to compose and sing songs to celebrate God’s help during times of need. When the Lord saved His people from certain destruction by Pharaoh’s army, “Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord . . . ‘I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea! The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation’” (Ex. 15:1-2).

Music has the power to lift our spirits by reminding us of God’s faithfulness in the past. When we’re discouraged, we can sing songs and hymns that raise our eyes from the challenging circumstances we face to see the power and presence of the Lord. We are reminded that He is our strength, our song, and our salvation.

Trust in Him, ye saints, forever—  
He is faithful, changing never;  
Neither force nor guile can sever  
Those He loves from Him.  
—Kelly

Songs of praise raise our eyes to see God’s faithfulness.

INSIGHT: Moses’ song after the Israelites had passed through the Red Sea and were delivered from the pursuing Egyptians has two perspectives—one looking back and one looking forward. In the first verses, Moses reflects on what God has done to deliver His people (vv. 1-2). In the later verses, Moses looks forward to what God will do to establish His people in their new land (vv. 13-18). ([Our Daily Bread](#), Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

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### **Exodus 15:1-21 One More Miracle**

I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously! —Exodus 15:1

If you are looking for a praise and worship pattern, look no further than Exodus 15.

There you find the Israelites heaping honor on God. The people were just hours removed from one of the greatest rescues in history. The Lord had protected them from the rampaging Egyptians, and their praises reflected the renewed trust in God that this event brought them.

It's appropriate to pour out our unbridled praise on God when we see Him work in great and miraculous ways. But those aren't the only times He deserves our adoration. Too often we wait for God to perform a big answer to prayer before we feel like singing His praises.

But think about this: God doesn't owe us any miracles. He doesn't need to do anything to prove His greatness. He has already given us an incredible display of His power in His creation. He has made the ultimate sacrifice to purchase our redemption. Through His power, He has conducted the most miraculous transaction known to mankind—He brought us from spiritual death to spiritual life.

Waiting for a miracle? God's done plenty of them already. Recalling what He has done and echoing the praise in Exodus 15, let's give God our unconditional worship. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Sing praise to God who reigns above,  
The God of all creation,  
The God of power, the God of love,  
The God of our salvation.  
—Schutz

Praise flows naturally from a grateful heart.

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### Exodus 15:1-18 Celebration Of Praise

You've probably never been to a worship service quite like the one the Israelites held after they reached the safe side of the Red Sea.

The people had just seen God save them from certain, watery death. They had come within an eyelash of being pushed into the sea by the charging forces of Pharaoh's army. Relentlessly, the charioted soldiers had chased them down (Ex. 14:5, 6, 7, 8, 9). In panic, the children of Israel had cried out for help (Ex. 14:10). (ED: WHILE THIS IS TRUE, NOT THAT IMMEDIATELY BEGAN TO GRUMBLE AGAINST MOSES IN Ex 14:11!)

The Lord parted the sea, allowing the people to cross (Ex. 14:16,21,22). But when the Egyptians rode onto the seabed, God caused the waters to cascade down on them (Ex. 14:28).

That's when the celebration began! Joyously, the people praised God for His strength and salvation (Ex. 15:2), His power (Ex. 15:6), His greatness (Ex. 15:7), His holiness (Ex. 15:11), His mercy, redemption, and guidance (Ex. 15:13), and His eternal reign over them (Ex. 15:18). They poured out their hearts in worship to the God of their salvation.

Look over the attributes for which the Israelites praised God. Review how His character has touched your life. Find ways to honor Him in worship. The God who parted the sea is the God who makes a way for you. Give Him your celebration of praise! —Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When we think of the power of God,  
Of His wonderful works in His Word,  
We can't help but rejoice in His Son,  
That the gospel of grace we have heard.  
--Hess

God's great power deserves our grateful praise.

**Exodus 15:2 "The LORD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; This is my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will extol Him.**

- **my strength:** Ps 18:1,2 Ps 27:1 Ps 28:8 Ps 59:17 Ps 62:6,7 Ps 118:14 Hab 3:17-19 Php 4:13
- **song:** De 10:21 Ps 22:3 109:1 140:7 Rev 15:3
- **my salvation:** Ex 14:13 2Sa 22:51 Ps 68:20 Isa 12:2 45:17 49:6 Jer 3:23 Lu 1:77 Lu 2:30 Joh 4:22 Ac 4:12 Rev 19:1
- **my God:** Ex 4:22 Ge 17:7 Ps 22:10 Jer 31:33 Jer 32:38 Zec 13:9
- an habitation: Ex 40:34 Ge 28:21,22 2Sa 7:5 1Ki 8:13,27 Ps 132:5 Isa 66:1 2Co 5:19 Eph 2:22 Col 2:9
- **my father's God:** Ex 3:15,16
- **extol him:** 2Sa 22:47 Ps 18:46 30:1 34:3 99:5,9 118:28 145:1 Isa 25:1 Joh 5:23 Php 2:11 Rev 5:9-14

**MY STRENGTH, SONG, SALVATION,**

## GOD, FATHER'S GOD

**The LORD is my strength and song** - Observe the personal possession emphasized by the repetition of "my" - "**my strength and song...my salvation...my God...my father's God.**" He begins with literally "My strength and song is Yahweh." In other words it is not just an attribute of Yahweh but it is Yahweh Himself. **This would be difficult to grasp or believe if it were not the Word of Truth** If Yahweh is **my strength**, what does that say about my own natural strength? My natural strength is frail, faint, fleeting (I am 74 and this is very real to me! )

**THOUGHT** - Oh, to grasp just a fringe of the meaning of this truth (cf Job 26:14!) Moses and the Israelites had seen it in the greatest manifestation of God's redemptive strength in the OT surpassed only by the Cross of Christ! The NT applications are surly manifold but well summed up by Paul "I can do all things through Him Who strengthens me." (Php 4:13+) We need to pray for ourselves and others to experientially live out our short time on earth in the truth that "**the LORD is my strength**," pleading with God for example using Paul's words in Ephesians that the Father "would grant you (us), according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man.**" (Eph 3:16+). And his words in Colossians 1:9-12+ asking "that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11 **strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might**, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light."

While it was not labeled a song, the closing words of **Habakkuk** sound like a song of praise...

Though the fig tree should not blossom And there be no fruit on the vines, Though the yield of the olive should fail And the fields produce no food, Though the flock should be cut off from the fold And there be no cattle in the stalls, 18 **Yet** (WHAT A DRAMATIC TERM OF CONTRAST!) I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. 19 **The Lord GOD is my strength**, And He has made my feet like hinds' feet, And makes me walk on my high places. For the choir director, on my stringed instruments. (Hab 3:17-19+)

**Spurgeon** asked "How strong is a believer? I say it with reverence, he is as strong as God—**The Lord is my strength.**'

In Ps 18:1 David says "I love You, **O LORD, my strength.**"

In Ps 28:7 David affirmed "**The LORD is my strength.**"

"**You are my strength**" (Ps 31:4).

In Ps 59:17 David says "**O my strength**, I will sing praise to Thee."

In Ps 62:7 David calls God "**The Rock of my strength.**"

The psalmist says "**Thou are the God of my strength.**" (Ps 43:2)

Ps 118:14 says "**The LORD is my strength.**"

Isaiah 49:5 appears to be a prophecy of Messiah. Listen to what He says "**My God is My strength!**" Amazing! I cannot grasp this truth!

In a prophecy of future blessings on the nation of Israel Isaiah 12:2 says "I will trust and not be afraid; For the **LORD GOD is my strength** and song, And He has become my salvation."

Jeremiah says "**O LORD, my strength** and my stronghold, And my refuge in the day of distress, " (Je 16:19)

**Guzik** - When we let God be our **strength**, He will also be our **song**. We will sing because of the victory won by the great strength of the LORD. We will have a singing joy in our life because His strength will not let us down.

**NET Note on song** - Most scholars posit another meaning for the word. A meaning of "power" fits the line fairly well, forming a hendiadys with strength – "strength and power" becoming "strong power." Similar lines are in Isa 12:2 and Ps 118:14. Others suggest "protection" or "glory." However, there is nothing substantially wrong with "my song" in the line – only that it would be a nicer match if it had something to do with strength.

**And He has become my salvation** (Heb = [yeshua](#) see Ex 14:13+) - This praise echoes Moses' words to the people in Exodus 14:13 "Do not fear! Stand by and see **the salvation of the LORD** which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever." In context, in my opinion, this salvation refers primarily to **physical** deliverance as opposed to **spiritual** deliverance (as usually meant in the NT uses of "salvation.")

**This is my God, and I will praise Him** - This truth will ultimately be fulfilled for the believing **remnant** of Israel in the last days when they cry out to the Lamb of God, Yeshua, their Deliverer (see Zech 12:10-14+). At that time Jehovah promises the afflicted nation of Israel (see Time of Jacob's Trouble) "I will bring the third part (OF THE NATION OF ISRAEL) through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are **My people**,' And they will say, **The LORD is**

**my God.**”(Zec 13:9+) This will correspond with the fulfillment of the "New Covenant" first given to Judah and Israel, (read Jer 31:31-34+).

The phrase "**my God**" was first used by Jacob after he had wrestled with God and declared "the LORD will be my God." (Ge 28:21, cf Ge 28:20). This use in Exodus is the only one. All 4 uses in Deuteronomy are Moses referring to God as "my God." Take a moment and go through some of these references below and see who referred to God as "my God." Interesting!

Phrase "**My God**" - 151x in 140v - Gen. 28:21; Exod. 15:2; Num. 22:18; Deut. 4:5; Deut. 18:16; Deut. 26:3; Deut. 26:14; Jos. 9:23; Jos. 14:8; Jos. 14:9; Ruth 1:16; 2 Sam. 22:3; 2 Sam. 22:7; 2 Sam. 22:22; 2 Sam. 22:30; 2 Sam. 24:24; 1 Ki. 3:7; 1 Ki. 5:4; 1 Ki. 5:5; 1 Ki. 8:28; 1 Ki. 17:20; 1 Ki. 17:21; 1 Chr. 11:19; 1 Chr. 17:25; 1 Chr. 21:17; 1 Chr. 22:7; 1 Chr. 28:20; 1 Chr. 29:2; 1 Chr. 29:3; 1 Chr. 29:17; 2 Chr. 2:4; 2 Chr. 6:19; 2 Chr. 6:40; 2 Chr. 18:13; Ezr. 7:28; Ezr. 9:5; Ezr. 9:6; Neh. 2:8; Neh. 2:12; Neh. 2:18; Neh. 5:19; Neh. 6:14; Neh. 7:5; Neh. 13:14; Neh. 13:22; Neh. 13:29; Neh. 13:31; Ps. 3:7; Ps. 5:2; Ps. 7:1; Ps. 7:3; Ps. 13:3; Ps. 18:2; Ps. 18:6; Ps. 18:21; Ps. 18:28; Ps. 18:29; Ps. 22:1; Ps. 22:2; Ps. 22:10; Ps. 25:2; Ps. 30:2; Ps. 30:12; Ps. 31:14; Ps. 35:23; Ps. 35:24; Ps. 38:15; Ps. 38:21; Ps. 40:5; Ps. 40:8; Ps. 40:17; Ps. 42:6; Ps. 42:11; Ps. 43:4; Ps. 43:5; Ps. 59:1; Ps. 59:10; Ps. 63:1; Ps. 68:24; Ps. 69:3; Ps. 71:4; Ps. 71:12; Ps. 71:22; Ps. 83:13; Ps. 84:3; Ps. 84:10; Ps. 86:2; Ps. 86:12; Ps. 89:26; Ps. 91:2; Ps. 94:22; Ps. 102:24; Ps. 104:1; Ps. 104:33; Ps. 109:26; Ps. 118:28; Ps. 119:115; Ps. 140:6; Ps. 143:10; Ps. 145:1; Ps. 146:2; Prov. 30:9; Isa. 7:13; Isa. 25:1; Isa. 40:27; Isa. 44:17; Isa. 49:4; Isa. 49:5; Isa. 57:21; Isa. 61:10; Jer. 31:18; Dan. 4:8; Dan. 6:22; Dan. 9:4; Dan. 9:18; Dan. 9:19; Dan. 9:20; Hos. 2:23; Hos. 8:2; Hos. 9:8; Hos. 9:17; Joel 1:13; Jon. 2:6; Mic. 7:7; Hab. 1:12; Zech. 11:4; Zech. 13:9; Zech. 14:5; Matt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34; Jn. 20:17; Jn. 20:28; Rom. 1:8; 1 Co. 1:4; 2 Co. 12:21; Phil. 1:3; Phil. 4:19; Phlm. 1:4; Rev. 3:2; Rev. 3:12

**My father's God, and I will extol Him - My father's God** refers to the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob), so this is not a "new" God, but the same God Who had revealed Himself to the patriarchs and cut an everlasting covenant with Abraham. **Extol** (navah) occurs only here and may mean "beautify, adorn" with praises.

**J Ligon Duncan** - Now, remember this is an important assertion for the children of Israel because he is connecting the worship of the God of Israel with the worship of the patriarchs all the way back to Abraham. This is not some new god who has never been heard of before. This is the same one true God who revealed Himself to Abraham and Isaiah and to Jacob and now to us here at the Exodus and these realities are followed up with this doxology, this praise of the God of the Exodus. "He's the same God our forefathers worshiped and I'm going to worship Him too," Moses says.

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## THE SONG OF MOSES Exodus 15:1, 2 - James Smith (Handfuls of Purpose)

This is the first song on record, and blessed be God, it is a song of salvation. Henceforth and for ever singing shall have a chief place in the service of God. The sentimental songs of the world are deceitful nymphs which steal away the adoration and praise that should rise only to God. Salvation and song, like the Siamese twins, go together With the work of Luther, Wesley, and Moody came streams of new songs of praise. "Then sang Moses this song" (v. 1). The causes lie behind. Let us look back and consider this song as—

### I. A Song of Redemption.

They had been redeemed by blood out of Egypt, as a house of bondage. Delivered by the great power of God. All true praise has its source in the redeeming power of Christ's Cross. Out of the depths of His infinite love and mercy comes this key-note of our first song unto God, and we shall sing in the same key in Heaven. "Unto Him who hath loved us, and washed us, and redeemed us to God by His own blood" (Rev. 1:5).

### II. A Song of Victory.

In looking back they saw their enemies buried in the depths of the sea, where all our sins are cast. Our sins, like blood-thirsty Egyptians, were hotly pursuing us, and when there was no hand to help us He made bare His arm and wrought for us a great deliverance. Ours is a victory over sin, over the world, over death and the grave. He "giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57). They saw them again no more.

### III. A Song of Praise.

"Moses sung this song unto the Lord." This was no mere exhibition of musical skill, but a pouring forth of the heart's gratitude and thankfulness unto God. He had led them out, He had brought them through, He had overwhelmed their united foe. He deserves the praise, and He shall have it, and no stranger shall intermeddle with it. Trust Him at all times, and pour out your heart before Him.

### IV. A Song of Testimony.

Notice the "my's" in verse 2. There is a clear and decided ring about this. "The Lord is my Shepherd." When a certain young lady said, "I wish I could trust my mother's God," she was bearing a good testimony both to her mother and her mother's God, although she herself had no personal acquaintance with Him. The sweetest music of earth is like the croaking of frogs compared with the deep, sweet melody of a heart at peace in God. "My God, I will praise Thee" (Psa. 118:28).

## V. A Song of Dedication.

"I will prepare Him an habitation" (v. 2). Moses decided to build Him a house, a resting-place among the people. This is natural, if God has taken us in, surely we should take Him in. If He has given us a habitation in Himself we ought to provide Him a habitation in our hearts. Are we not the "habitation of God through the Spirit?" (Eph. 2:22). Is it not His intense desire to "dwell in us and walk in us?" (2 Cor. 6:16). Did not Jesus say, "If a man love Me we will come and make our abode with him?" (John 14:23). He has gone to prepare a place for us, let us now prepare a place for Him, and let that place be the throne of your heart.

## VI. A United Song.

Then sang Moses and the children of Israel. "They differed in many things, but they agreed in ascribing salvation to the Lord." "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so" (Psa. 107:2) and do so. There may be as many different shades of Christians as there were colours in Joseph's coat, but the sleeve need not say to the collar, "I have no need of you." All one in Christ, saved by the same blood, justified by the same God, and sanctified by the same Spirit, singing the same song. Let us praise God.

## VII. A Song on the Other Side of the Sea. After the Egyptians had been overwhelmed in the deep

The destruction of the wicked will not hinder the song of the saved. The rushing together of the waves of judgment seem to send up a deep and solemn Hallelujah. In the Revelation (chap. 15:3) we hear the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb blending in one. On the other side we, too, shall sing the new song with a fresh and fuller meaning. A song that shall ring through the highest Heaven and down through the eternal ages with gathering power and sweetness. "PRAISE YE THE LORD!"

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## God Is At Work

He is my God, and I will praise Him. — Exodus 15:2

Today's Scripture: Exodus 14:26–15:2

Jack and Trisha were driving to the hospital late one night for the birth of their second child when the unexpected happened. Trisha began to deliver the baby! Jack called 911 and Cherie White, an emergency dispatcher, was able to talk Jack through the delivery. But the baby wouldn't breathe. So Cherie then instructed Jack how to give emergency breathing, which he had to do for 6 anxious minutes. Finally the newborn took a breath and cried. When asked later how they all got through the ordeal and remained calm, Cherie responded, "I'm glad God works midnights!"

I love to hear media reports in which God gets the glory He deserves for something good that has happened. In the Bible reading for today, it's obvious that God should get the credit for parting the Red Sea to help His people escape from Pharaoh, even though Moses was the one who raised his rod (Ex. 14:26-27). All the Israelites and Moses gathered together and sang the Lord's praises: "Who is like You, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" (15:11).

When something good happens, the Lord deserves the credit, for He is the source of all that is good. Give Him the glory. Aren't you glad He works midnights? By: Anne Cetas ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

What may seem like coincidence  
As we live out our story  
Is God at work behind the scenes—  
So give Him all the glory.  
—Sper

Seeing God at work puts a song in our heart.

## Exodus 15:3 "The LORD is a warrior; The LORD is His name.

- **LORD is a warrior**- Ps 24:8 Ps 45:3 Rev 19:11-21
- **name** - Ex 3:13,15 6:3,6 Ps 83:18 Isa 42:8

**The LORD is a warrior** - ESV = "The LORD is a man of war." This is consummated in the Revelation when Jesus Christ returns (Rev 19:11-13+), John recording "From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. 16And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." (Rev 19:15-16+).

**Thompson** - Here is a "Lord is" statement that some people do not like. Many people want a passive-love God, not an active-warring God.

God is a **warrior** and people need to live in fear of this fact. If God decides to go on the offensive against someone or some nation, they are doomed. God had many unconventional weapons available for Him to use.

**NET Note** - "**Warrior**" is now the preferred translation since "man of war" is more commonly known today as a warrior. The expression indicates that Yahweh is one who understands how to fight and defeat the enemy. The word "war" modifies "man" to reveal that Yahweh is a warrior. Other passages use similar descriptions: Isa 42:13 has "man of wars"; Ps 24:8 has "mighty man of battle."

**John Trapp** on the **LORD is a warrior** - Yea, he alone is a whole army of men, van and rear both. {Isa 52:12} He sends the sword; {Eze 14:17} musters the men; {Isa 13:4} orders the ammunition; {Jer 50:25} gives the victory

**The LORD is His name** - The Israelites came to understand something of Who God is that even the beloved patriarchs did not see. And so we read Ex 6:3, 6 - Notice how the Israelites would come to see God as Jehovah (see the "I will" promises below)...

"I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name, LORD, I did not make Myself known to them....6"Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and **I will** bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and **I will** deliver you from their bondage (THE PASSOVER). **I will** also redeem you with an outstretched arm (THE RED REDEMPTION) and with great judgments."

**NET Note** - "Yahweh is his name." As throughout, the name "Yahweh" is rendered as "the LORD" in the translation, as is typically done in English translations.

**Exodus 15:4 "Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; And the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea.**

- Ex 14:13-28
- **the choicest of his officers** - Ex 14:7

**Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; And the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea**- The best commentary on Scripture is Scripture so read Ex 14:13-28

**The choicest of his officers** - Literally "the choice of his officers" which means in essence his "choice officers," the best of the bunch. They are gone.

**Illustration**: An old fashioned, country preacher enrolled in a less than conservative OT history class. The professor said Israel did not go through the Red sea but the Sea of Reeds and it was really only a swamp. The water, he said, was about 3 inches deep. That old preacher shouted, "Glory to God! Thank you Jesus!" The prof. Asked him why he was so excited and he said, "I can't wait to get back and preach what you just taught. God worked a greater miracle than me and my people ever realized. He drowned the whole Egyptian army IN THREE INCHES OF WATER! Glory to God! Thank you Jesus!" That old preacher had the right idea. Wherever it was, the body of water was big enough to drown an army. And we who believe in God and the Bible know He could part the Atlantic Ocean if He wanted to. Note: Some say this was caused by a tornado or natural, violent wind. Any fool knows no natural wind will hold two walls of water, pushing in two opposite directions. This was a wind from the hand of God.

**Exodus 15:5 "The deeps cover them; They went down into the depths like a stone.**

- **The deeps cover them** - Ex 14:28 Eze 27:34 Jon 2:2 Mic 7:19 Mt 18:6
- **they** - Ne 9:11 Jer 51:63,64 Rev 18:21

**The deeps cover them** - "The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen." (Ex 14:28)

**They went down into the depths like a stone**- Chariots do not float like boats! George Bush adds that these words are "strikingly expressive of the utter and remediless overthrow of the enemy. So completely were they plunged into the depth of the sea, that they could not rise to the surface, being probably for the most part encumbered with heavy armor, which would effectually prevent their rising or floating; while the guilt of their sins weighed still more heavily upon them."

**Exodus 15:6 "Your right hand, O LORD, is majestic in power, Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.**

- **right hand** - Ex 15:11 1 Ch 29:11,12 Ps 17:7 44:3 60:5 74:11 77:10 89:8-13 Ps 98:1 118:15,16 Isa 51:9 52:10 Mt 6:13
- **shatters the enemy** - Ps 2:9 Isa 30:14 Jer 13:14 Rev 2:27

**Your right hand, O LORD, is majestic in power - Is majestic** ([adar](#)) is a verb in the passive sense (as in this verse) means to be magnified. The this root connotes that which is superior to something else, and, therefore, that which **is majestic**. This same verb is used in Ex 15:11 for "majestic in holiness." Through the mighty deeds of the Lord against the armies and gods of Egypt, it was shown that there was no other god like the Lord. He was superior above all gods and nations in power and in holiness. The Septuagint translation says "Thy right hand, O God, has been glorified ([doxazo](#)) in strength."

**George Bush on right hand** - Another form of expression for God's omnipotence. The right hand, being naturally the strongest from being most employed, is used by an apt metaphor for the highest degree of power. It is to be remarked moreover, that the verb in the original is in the future—'shall dash in pieces'—a remark which applies in fact to most of the verbs throughout the hymn. The phraseology is so constructed as to carry with it the implication that what had happened on this occasion to the enemies of God would happen in like manner in all future time, as far as utter discomfiture and signal perdition was concerned.

This verse recalls the fearful words of Hebrews 10:31+

It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

It is interesting that it was **Moses** who sang this **song** and Moses who wrote the words of the "**song**" (psalm) that asks the question...

Who understands the power of Your anger And Your fury, according to the fear that is due You? (Psa 90:11)

**Spurgeon** comments - Moses saw men dying all around him: he lived among funerals, and was overwhelmed at the terrible results of the divine displeasure. He felt that none could measure the might of the Lord's wrath. **Even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath.** Good men dread that wrath beyond conception, but they never ascribe too much terror to it: bad men are dreadfully convulsed when they awake to a sense of it, but their horror is not greater than it had need be, for it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God. Holy Scripture when it depicts God's wrath against sin never uses an hyperbole; it would be impossible to exaggerate it. Whatever feelings of pious awe and holy trembling may move the tender heart, it is never too much moved; apart from other considerations the great truth of the divine anger, when most powerfully felt, never impresses the mind with a solemnity in excess of the legitimate result of such a contemplation. What the power of God's anger is in hell, and what it would be on earth, were it not in mercy restrained, no man living can rightly conceive. Modern thinkers rail at Milton and Dante, Bunyan and Baxter, for their terrible imagery; but the truth is that no vision of poet, or denunciation of holy seer, can ever reach to the dread height of this great argument, much less go beyond it. The wrath to come has its horrors rather diminished than enhanced in description by the dark lines of human fancy; it baffles words, it leaves imagination far behind. Beware ye that forget God lest he tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver. God is terrible out of his holy places. Remember Sodom and Gomorrah! Remember Korah and his company! Mark well the graves of lust in the wilderness! Nay, rather bethink ye of the place where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched. Who is able to stand against this justly angry God? Who will dare to rush upon the bosses of his buckler, or tempt the edge of his sword? Be it ours to submit ourselves as dying sinners to this eternal God, who can, even at this moment, command us to the dust, and thence to hell.

**Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy - Shatters** describes a violent breaking of the power of an enemy. The **Septuagint** uses the verb [thrauo](#) which means literally to shatter or to break in pieces as one does to pottery. This picture recalls the prophecy of the Messiah Who will one day come against the nations and kings of the earth who take their stand against God. Psalm 2:9 warns them "'You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.'" And in an even more dramatic picture one thinks of the Stone (the returning Messiah) in Daniel 2:34-35+ =

"You (KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR) continued looking until a **STONE** was cut out without hands, and **IT** struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold **were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors**; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the **STONE** that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth (the [Messianic Kingdom](#))."

**Exodus 15:7 "And in the greatness of Your excellence You overthrow those who rise up against You; You send forth Your burning anger, and it consumes them as chaff.**

- **the greatness** - Ex 9:16 De 33:26 Ps 68:33 148:13 Isa 5:16 Jer 10:6
- **overthrow those who-** Isa 37:17,23,29,36,38 Mic 4:11 Na 1:9-12 Zec 2:8 14:3,8 Ac 9:4
- **consumes them** - Ps 59:13 Ps 83:13 Isa 5:24 47:14 Na 1:10 Mal 4:1 Mt 3:12

**And in the greatness of Your excellence You overthrow those who rise up against You-**

**You send forth Your burning anger, and it consumes them as chaff** - "Like a dreadful projectile, thou didst direct thy wrath against the

foes of Israel, scattering desolation and death." (Bush)

**Exodus 15:8 "At the blast of Your nostrils the waters were piled up, The flowing waters stood up like a heap; The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea.**

- **blast** - Ex 14:21 2Sa 22:16 Job 4:9 Isa 11:4 37:7 2Th 2:8
- **the floods** - Ex 14:22 Ps 78:13 Hab 3:10

**At the blast of Your nostrils the waters were piled up-** Blast is **Ruach** meaning breath, wind, and has basic sense of "air in motion." **Ruach** was used in Ex 10:13 of blowing in the locust plague and then removing them (Ex 10:19). This is an **anthropomorphic description** of the words in Exodus 14:21+ when "the LORD swept the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, so the waters were divided." And then in Exodus 14:26+ "the LORD said to Moses, '**Stretch** out your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen."

Note that **nostrils** is **aph** which is translated (NAS) as nose or nostrils some 24x and and anger over 200x from the fact that when we become angry our nostrils begin to flare or as Bush says "the effect of anger in inflating the nostrils." So one could paraphrase this description as "the breath of Your anger!" This is a frightening depiction. Job has a similar frightening description

"By the breath of God they perish, And **by the blast (Ruach) of His anger (aph)** they come to an end." (Job 4:9)

Amos 4:13 reminds us that it is the LORD God "Who forms mountains and creates the wind." In Ge 8:1 God remembered Noah and "caused a **wind** to pass over the earth and the water subsided." God "brings out the **wind** from His **storehouses**." (Jer 10:13)

The blast of Yahweh will be seen in the end times against the man of sin...

Then that lawless one (ANTICHRIST) will be revealed whom the **Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth** and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; (2 Th 2:8)

**The flowing waters stood up like a heap**- Heap describes the walls of water through which Israel traversed. The waters, which are naturally fluid, were supernaturally standing up as though they were in a heap, like a mound of earth piled up.

Psalms 78:13 He divided the sea and caused them to pass through, And **He made the waters stand up like a heap**

**The deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea**- Likewise, the flowing waters deep in the ocean solidified – as though they were turned to ice

**Congealed** (qapa) means to curdle, to congeal; to become settled, stagnant. It refers to something standing still or slowing down its movement, becoming thick. Here it is used of God's congealing the waters of the Red Sea so the Israelites could cross on dry land. The **Septuagint** uses the verb **pegnumi** which means to make firm or stable by fixing in a place. To make solid (esp of liquids), so used of curdling milk or congealed blood.

**Exodus 15:9 "The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; My desire shall be gratified against them; I will draw out my sword, my hand will destroy them.'**

- **I will pursue** - Ge 49:27 Jdg 5:30 1Ki 19:2 20:10 Isa 10:8-13 36:20 53:12 Hab 3:14 Lu 11:22
- **destroy** - Ex 14:5,9

**Bruckner** - The descriptive narrative (vv. 9–10) tells how the enemy boasted in six ways (a triad of parallels). We hear the Egyptian's pride as they boasted of pursuing, overtaking, dividing, gorging, and drawing their swords and destroying.

**John Trapp** - They made account all was their own, but were soon **confuted**, as were likewise Sisera and Sennacherib. Where the beginning of a business is confidence, the end is confusion.

**Bush** - The destruction of the Egyptians was more remarkable by reason of the pride and insolence which they displayed, and their strong assurance of success. The contrast between the confidence and elation of the pursuit, and the shame and ignominy of their overthrow, is made very impressive. They will not only pursue, but they will overtake, and if they overtake they have no question but they shall overcome, and obtain such a decisive victory as to divide the spoil. Thus it is that men are often never more confident and presumptuous than when they stand upon the very brink of ruin.

**The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; My desire shall be gratified against them-** W. C. Kaiser observes the staccato phrases that almost imitate the heavy, breathless heaving of the Egyptians as, with what reserve of strength they have left, they vow, "**I will..., I will..., I will...**"

**NET Note on My desire** - The form is נַפְשִׁי (nafshi, "my soul" [05315](#)). But this word refers to the whole person, the body and the soul, or better, a bundle of appetites in a body. It therefore can figuratively refer to the desires or appetites (Dt 12:15; 14:26; 23:24). Here, with the verb "to be full" means "to be satisfied"; the whole expression might indicate "I will be **sated** with them" or "I will gorge myself." The greedy appetite was to destroy.

**Bush** - The sentence expresses not only an intense **desire**, but a ruthless determination, of vengeance. The mere infliction of summary punishment upon a fugitive people who had quitted his dominions in opposition to his will, is not sufficient to satisfy the rage and vindictiveness of his spirit. He would give them up to slaughter and glut his implacable malice upon them. He is goaded on by a savage thirst of blood, and by the ordinary retributions of Providence has in the issue blood given him to the full. (AKA - PAYBACK IN FULL!)

**I will draw out my sword, my hand will destroy them**-The Septuagint renders by "my hand shall have dominion" (κυριευσει χειρ μου,) or lord it. **Bruckner** ο n **I will draw (riq) my sword**, literally means, "I will clear the field of battle with my sword" by killing everyone." **NET Note on destroy** - The verb is שָׁרַף (yarash), which in the Hiphil means "to dispossess" or "root out." The meaning "destroy" is a general interpretation.

#### Exodus 15:10 "You blew with Your wind, the sea covered them; They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

- **You blew** - Ex 14:21 Ge 8:1 Ps 74:13,14 135:7 147:18 Isa 11:15 Jer 10:13 Am 4:13 Mt 8:27
- **the sea covered them** - Ex 14:28 De 11:4
- **They sank like lead** - Ex 15:5

**You blew with Your wind, the sea covered them; They sank like lead in the mighty waters**- See comments on Exodus 15:8. "It was a wind raised by special divine intervention, not by the ordinary operation of nature. It was God's wind distinctly and preeminently; such a wind as caused the waters to accumulate and remain for a time stationary, or as the sacred text expresses it, 'to be congealed in the heart of the sea.'" (Bush)

**NET Note on sank** - The verb may have the idea of sinking with a gurgling sound, like water going into a whirlpool.

#### Exodus 15:11 "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?"

- **Who is like You among the gods**- Dt 3:24 33:26 1Sa 2:2 2Sa 7:22 1Ki 8:23 Ps 35:10 77:19 86:8 Ps 89:6-8 Isa 40:18,25 Jer 10:6,16 49:19
- **majestic in holiness** - Lev 19:2 Ps 89:18 145:17 Isa 6:3 30:11 57:15 1Pe 1:15,16 Rev 4:8
- **Awesome in praises** - Ps 66:5 77:14 89:5,7 90:11 119:120 Isa 64:2,3 Jer 10:7 Lu 12:5 Heb 12:28,29 Rev 15:4 19:1-6

**Who is like You among the gods, O LORD?** - Heb. באֱלִים ba-ēlim, among the mighties, among the potentates.

**Who is like You - Bush** writes "In these words the superiority is affirmed of the true God over all earthly princes and potentates, and over all the false and factitious gods of Egypt. A contrast is presented between the omnipotence of the former and the impotence of the latter. What were the mightiest of men whose breath was in their nostrils; what were all the animal and reptile divinities to which that besotted people offered adoration, that they should be so much as named in comparison with the great and glorious God of the Hebrews, the Being of beings, the infinite, the almighty, the eternal!"

**Majestic in holiness** - Bush explains "Heb. נִאֲדָר בַּקֳּדֹשׁ nedar bakkodesh. Gr. θεοδόξασμενος εν ἁγίοις, glorified in the holy ones, i. e. among the saints and angels; or, in the holy things; i. e. in holiness. God is glorious in that holiness and immaculate purity which constitute his perfection. It is an attribute which especially elicits the praises of the angelic hosts in heaven, Is. 6:3, and which shone conspicuous on the present occasion. His holiness, his hatred of sin, his wrath against obstinate transgressors, never appeared more resplendently glorious than in the destruction of Pharaoh in the Red Sea. The unsanctified heart may not respond to this character of the divine holiness, but to the soul which has been enlightened from above and gifted with a spiritual perception of the things of God, nothing appears so truly, so transcendently glorious, as this perfection of the immaculate Jehovah. It is, in fact, the crowning glory of the Godhead, and if it do not so appear to us, we have reason to be concerned at its relations to our character and destiny."

**Awesome in praises** - Bush - "Fearful in praises. Heb. נֹרָא תְהִלּוֹת nora tehilloth, terrible, awful, reverend, as to praises, i. e. in his praise worthy manifestations of himself. Thus the Apostle, Philip. 4:8, 'If there be any praise;' i. e. any thing praise worthy. Even in those displays of his perfections, which are matter of joyful praise to his people, he is dreadful and terrible to his enemies; and the consideration of this fact should chasten and solemnize the tone of all our laudatory ascriptions. Though, we honor him with praises on our tongues, we should do it with an humble awe upon our spirits."

**Working wonders** - "The stanza concludes addressing praise directly to the Lord in the form of a question (v. 11). It uses a triad of praise to express the unbelievable deliverance the worshiper has experienced." (Bruckner)

**Bush on Working wonders** - Doing wonders. Heb. *עשה פלא* *oseh pelë*, *doing that which is wonderful*. Gr. *ποιων τερατα*, *doing signs or prodigies*. On the import of the original term *עשה פלא* *pelë*, see Note on Jdg. 13:18, from which it will appear that it denotes that which is preeminently marvellous or miraculously wonderful. How justly the poet ascribes this character to Jehovah, the whole scope of the inspired history is a continued proof. Indeed the entire series of providential dispensations in the world is a tissue of works of wonder. But the children of Israel in their present circumstances **would naturally have their eye more especially upon that succession of miraculous judgments which had visited and desolated the land of Egypt, and so prepared the way for their deliverance.** We find a striking echo to the sentiment of this passage in the parallel language of Job 5:9

Who does great and unsearchable things, Wonders without number.

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## WHO IS LIKE YOU?

### GOD ANSWERS....

You may know that there is no one like ([kemo](#)) Me in all the earth. - Exodus 9:14+

The Hebrew word for "like" is [kemo](#) and is used in multiple descriptions of Jehovah. Take a moment to meditate on the greatness of Jehovah, for indeed, **WHO IS LIKE HIM?...**

Exodus 15:11+ "Who is like ([kemo](#)) You among the gods, O LORD? Who is like ([kemo](#)) You, majestic in holiness, Awesome in praises, working wonders?"

2 Samuel 7:22 "For this reason You are great, O Lord GOD; for there is none like ([kemo](#)) You, and there is no God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

1 Kings 8:23 He said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like ([kemo](#)) You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart,

1 Chronicles 17:20 "O LORD, there is none like ([kemo](#)) You, nor is there any God besides You, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

2 Chronicles 6:14 He said, "O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no god like ([kemo](#)) You in heaven or on earth, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart;

Psalms 35:10 All my bones will say, "LORD, who is like ([kemo](#)) You, Who delivers the afflicted from him who is too strong for him, And the afflicted and the needy from him who robs him?"

Psalms 71:19 For Your righteousness, O God, reaches to the heavens, You who have done great things; O God, who is like ([kemo](#)) You?

Psalms 86:8 There is no one like ([kemo](#)) You among the gods, O Lord, Nor are there any works like Yours.

Psalms 89:8 O LORD God of hosts, who is like ([kemo](#)) You, O mighty LORD? Your faithfulness also surrounds You.

Isaiah 44:7 'Who is like ([kemo](#)) Me? Let him proclaim and declare it; Yes, let him recount it to Me in order, From the time that I established the ancient nation. And let them declare to them the things that are coming And the events that are going to take place.

Isaiah 46:9 "Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like ([kemo](#)) Me,

Jeremiah 10:6-7 There is none like ([kemo](#)) You, O LORD; You are great, and great is Your Name in might. 7 Who would not fear You, O King of the nations? Indeed it is Your due! For among all the wise men of the nations And in all their kingdoms, There is none like ([kemo](#)) You.

Micah 7:18+ Who is a God like ([kemo](#)) You, who pardons iniquity And passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in unchanging love.

**SUGGESTION** - After [meditating on the preceding passages](#), now take a moment to Praise our great God, for **Who is like Him?** Play the song (link below) "**Who is Like You**" to help you praise...

**Our God majestic in holiness,  
awesome in praises,  
working wonders.**

In Jesus' mighty Name. Amen

- **Play and praise our Great and Mighty God** as you sing along to the words of [Who is Like You](#)

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### The Perfect Sentence

Who is like You, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? —Exodus 15:11

Today's Scripture: Exodus 3:13-18

As a young girl writing in my diary, my secret ambition was to compose the perfect sentence. I wondered what it would look and sound like. Perhaps it would include a strong verb and colorful adjectives.

My pursuit of the perfect sentence will never be satisfied, but I have found a statement of perfection in Exodus 3:14. When the Lord God called Moses from the burning bush, He told him that he had been chosen to bring His people out of bondage in Egypt (v.10). Moses, who was anxious about this responsibility, wondered what to say if the Israelites doubted him and asked who he was representing.

The Lord replied, "I AM WHO I AM" (v.14). By using His unique name, He offered Moses a glimpse of the nature of His eternal existence in one sentence. You might say it's a statement of perfection!

Bible commentator G. Bush writes this about God's description of Himself: "He, in distinction from all others, is the one only true God, the God who really is . . . . The eternal, self-existent, and immutable Being; the only being who can say that He always will be what He always has been."

God says, "I AM WHO I AM." He and His name are perfect. In reverence we are to bow before Him. By: Anne Cetas [Our Daily Bread](#). Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

For Further Study At the name of Jesus, every knee will one day bow. To learn about His name read [The Amazing Prophecy Of Names](#)

Looking for perfection? Look to Jesus.

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### Exodus 15:12 "You stretched out Your right hand, The earth swallowed them.

- **You stretched out** - Ex 15:6

**You stretched out Your right hand, The earth swallowed them** - "The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen." "This is nothing more than a poetical hyperbole, varying or rather strengthening the prior description of the Egyptians being overwhelmed in the mighty waters. They were so completely submerged and sunk to the bottom of the sea, that they might be said to be swallowed up by its deep abysses." (Bush)

**Guzik on Your right hand** - Obviously, this is the use of anthropomorphism, understanding something about God by using a human figure of speech, even though it does not literally apply. This idea of the right hand is used in the Scriptures more than fifty times, including these passages:

- Psalm 45:4: God's right hand teaches us
- Psalm 48:10: God's right hand is full of righteousness
- Psalm 77:10: Remembrance of the years of the right hand of the Most High
- Psalm 110:1: The Father invites the Son to sit at His right hand
- Habakkuk 2:16: The cup of God's judgment is held in His right hand
- Ephesians 1:20: Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father

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### Exodus 15:13 "In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; In Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation.

- Thou - Ge 19:16 Eph 2:4
- led - Ps 77:14,15,20 78:52,53 80:1 106:9 Isa 63:12,13 Jer 2:6
- guided - 1Pe 1:5
- holy - Ps 78:54

**DESCRIPTION OF JOURNEY  
TO THE PROMISED LAND**

Now the song begins to look into the near future and fulfillment of the land grant of the Abrahamic Covenant.

We move from the destruction of the Egyptians, to the deliverance of the Israelites.

**In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed-** As Bush says "The poet here passes, by a sudden but natural transition, from the destruction of the Egyptians to the deliverance of the Israelites. This is very appropriate, as it places the two grand aspects of the event in strong and immediate contrast, the one that of justice, the other of mercy. How impressively are both presented before the mind in this transcendent song. While on the one hand thousands of wretched beings who knew not God, but had mocked him with their idolatries and provoked him with their rebellion, had been suddenly hurled into the embraces of death, they on the other had been graciously exempted from harm, rescued from bondage, restored to freedom! Great and manifold indeed were the mercies of God to his chosen, and richly were they worthy of the highest celebration.

**In Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation - Bush** - Heb. נחלת nehalta. The original in its legitimate sense signifies to guide gently, softly, and with care, as a good shepherd does his flock. It is the word used by the prophet, Is. 40:11, 'He shall gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young.' Very pertinent to this are the words of the Psalmist, Ps. 77:20, 'Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.' The phrase in the present instance is indeed rendered in the past, 'thou hast guided,' as if their destination had been actually reached, yet the meaning obviously is, that they were now being guided, that they were on the way which led toward the land of promise where they were to dwell, and where God was to dwell with them. Whether any thing more definite and precise than a peculiar residence or indwelling in the land of Canaan in general be intended, it is not perhaps possible to determine. This is called God's habitation simply because it was Israel's habitation, among whom he had engaged to tabernacle or dwell.

#### Exodus 15:14 "The peoples have heard, they tremble; Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia.

- **The peoples have heard** - Nu 14:14 Nu 22:5 De 2:4,5 Jos 2:9,10 Josh 9:24 Ps 48:6
- **inhabitants of Philistia** - Isa 14:29,31

Exodus 15:14-16 deal with the reaction of the Gentile nations to Jehovah's deliverance of the nation of Israel at the Red Sea.

**The peoples have heard, they tremble** - In a sense this is a prophecy because Moses did not send a youtube video of Israel crossing the Red Sea and the Egyptians being drowned in the Red Sea. The Gentile nations had not yet heard but they would hear in the future. What is interesting is that some 40 years would pass before the nation of Israel would enter the Promised Land, but even after some 4 decades, the news of Israel's victory over the powerful Egyptians was still widely and well known!

Joshua alludes to the Gentiles trembling...

Joshua 2:9; 10 and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. 10 "For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.

Joshua 5:1, Now it came about when all the kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea, **heard how the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan before the sons of Israel until they had crossed**, that their hearts melted, and there was no spirit in them any longer because of the sons of Israel.

Joshua 9:24 (Describing the ruse of the Gibeonites) So they answered Joshua and said, "Because it was certainly told your servants that the LORD your God had commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land before you; therefore we feared greatly for our lives because of you, and have done this thing.

**Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia** - Recall that Philistia would have been in the initial roadway had the LORD not turned Israel around = "God did not lead them by the way of **the land of the Philistines**, even though it was near; for God said, "The people might change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt." (Ex 13:17).

**Bush** says Philistia was "not of the prophetically accursed seed of Canaan, nor are they enumerated among the nations devoted to extermination, whose territory God assigned to the Hebrews. But they maintained a hostile attitude towards the Israelites, with whom they had many battles, and after a long series of struggles they were finally effectually subdued by David."

**Bush** - The very tidings of such a tremendous overthrow of the Egyptians would go so far towards terrifying and disheartening their other enemies, that it would render the conquest of them comparatively easy. Their spirits would sink at the idea of grappling with such a power as evidently fought for Israel, and this secret misgiving, though it might not entirely preclude resistance, would yet so far weaken it, as to make them very little formidable in their warfare. That this was a true prediction we see at once by referring to the subsequent history.

**Exodus 15:15 "Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them; All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.**

- **chiefs of Edom**- Ge 36:40 Nu 20:14-21 De 2:4 1Ch 1:51-54
- **Moab** - Nu 22:3-5 Hab 3:7
- **all the** - Jos 2:11 5:1
- **melted** - De 20:8 Jos 2:9 \*marg: Jos 14:8 1Sa 14:16 2Sa 17:10 Ps 68:2 Isa 13:7 19:1 Eze 21:7 Na 2:10

All of these national reactions are what would transpire in the future. **Currid** - All four nations were to become notorious enemies of Israel. **Philistia** was located in the coastal plain of Palestine, and the Philistines often fought with Israel during the early centuries of her existence (e.g., Jdg. 13–15; 1 Sam. 4–7). The **Edomites** were descended from Esau, and they populated the area of southern Transjordan. They struggled with Israel in order not to let her pass through their territory (Nu 20:1-29). **Moab**, in central Transjordan, was the home of the descendants of Lot. Balak was one of the kings of **Moab** during the conquest period, and he strongly resisted Israel (Nu 22:1-41). The **Canaanites**, of course, inhabited the land of promise, and many of them were destroyed by the Hebrew invasion of Palestine.

**Bush** observes that "Throughout the whole context the gradations of distress are strikingly marked. First, there is to be **fear** among the people; then **sorrow** is to overtake the inhabitants of Palestine; next, the princes of Edom are to be **amazed or painfully disturbed**; then the Moabites shall **tremble with terror**; and, finally, the hearts of Canaan shall **melt away** with overwhelming dread of the coming disasters."

**Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed** - NET = "Then the chiefs of Edom will be terrified."

**The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them** - NET = "trembling will seize the leaders of Moab."

**All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away** - NET = "the inhabitants of Canaan will shake."

**Bush** on **melted away** - Heb. נמגו namogu; a term to be understood rather of the mental despondency, the sinking away of courage and hope, than of the physical wasting and consumption of the Canaanites before the victorious arms of Israel. How accurately this depicts the result that actually occurred is evident from the parallel language, Josh. 2:9–11

and said to the men, "I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the terror of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before you. 10 "For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed. 11 "When we heard it, our hearts melted and no courage remained in any man any longer because of you; for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above and on earth beneath.

**Exodus 15:16 "Terror and dread fall upon them; By the greatness of Your arm they are motionless as stone; Until Your people pass over, O LORD, Until the people pass over whom You have purchased.**

- **Terror and dread** - De 2:25 11:25 Jos 2:9
- still - Ex 11:7 1Sa 2:9 25:37
- which thou - Ex 19:5,6 De 32:6,9 2Sa 7:23 Ps 74:2 Isa 43:1-3 51:10 Jer 31:11 Ac 20:28 Tit 2:14 1Pe 2:9 2Pe 2:1

**Terror and dread fall upon them** - "A dreadful fear." "This is but an expansion of the sentiment of the last clause of the preceding verse. They should be so utterly overcome with consternation that their energies should be paralyzed, and they should be unable to offer any effectual resistance. But let not Israel forget that 'it was not their own arm which would get them the victory.' It was to be by the greatness of God's arm, by the direct intervention of his power, that the inhabitants were thus to be rendered impotent in their alarm." (Bush)

**By the greatness of Your arm they are motionless as stone**- **Arm** again is an anthropomorphic expression for what God did by His great power. **Bush** - "Gr. ἀπολιθωθητων, let them be turned into stones, equivalent to the English phrase of being petrified with fear, grief, astonishment, &c."

**Until Your people pass over, O LORD** - Bush - "That is, till the Israelites pass over the desert and the limits of the land of Canaan, and enter upon their inheritance. The Jordan, however, is probably more especially intended, as the spirit of prophecy pervades the poem. Thus the Chal. 'Until the people, O Lord, shall have passed over Arnon and the Jordan.' This was only a less miracle than the passage of the Red Sea, inasmuch as the channel is narrower, and the transit unattended by the destruction of enemies."

**Until the people pass over whom You have purchased**- Currid notes that "The verb 'to **purchase**' sometimes bears the sense of originating/creating (see Gen. 4:1; 14:19, 22; Deut. 32:6). This meaning supports the idea that the crossing of the Red Sea is a re-creation event.

**Bruckner on purchased** - The richest Hebrew word in this culminating praise is translated in the phrase, "the people you bought" ([qanah](#)). The Hebrew means "acquired by some effort." It can mean "created" or "gave birth to," both requiring strenuous effort by the Creator or begetter (see also Exod. 4:22; Num. 11:2). It can also mean "acquired through cost" (such as the loss of life in Egypt) or through labor (as in the Lord's many interventions). All of the meanings are relevant in the Exodus story, which is the primary basis for our understanding of the word. In Exodus 20 the Lord uses a homonym (qanna') when he says "I am a jealous God" ('el-qanna' see the discussion at 20:5). The Lord who had gone to so much trouble to redeem the people would not easily let them go.

**NET on purchased** - The verb קָנָה ([qanah](#)) here is the verb "acquire, purchase," and probably not the homonym "to create, make" (see Gen 4:1; Deut 32:6; and Prov 8:22).

**Bush on purchased** - Heb. קָנָה [qanah](#), hast gotten, acquired, become possessed of. The original signifies to obtain either by purchase, by generation, or by any other mode of acquisition, but more especially the former. Thus, Deut. 32:6, 'Is not he thy father that hath bought thee?' Ps. 74:2, 'Remember thy congregation which thou hast purchased of old;' and the Apostle, 2 Pet. 2:1, speaks of such as 'deny the Lord that bought them.' Chal. 'Which thou hast redeemed.' Gr. ἐκτήσω, which thou hast possessed.

**Exodus 15:17 "You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, The place, O LORD, which You have made for Your dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established."**

- **plant** - Ps 44:2 78:54,55 80:8 Isa 5:1-4 Jer 2:21 32:41
- **mountain** - Ps 78:54,68,69 Jer 31:23

### ISRAEL WAS BROUGHT OUT TO BE BROUGHT IN!

Now the prophetic words of the song go even further into the future, going past the events of the book of Joshua and even Judges and moving to the time of the kings of Israel, for the sanctuary was not built until the time of Solomon.

**Bush** - This glorious beginning of God's favor to them was of such a nature, as to afford an earnest of the full accomplishment of all his purposed mercy. If notwithstanding their unworthiness and all the difficulties that lay in the way of their escape, he had thus with a high hand brought them out of Egypt, might they not be assured that he would bring them into Canaan? For having so begun would he not make an end?

**You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance**- This speaks of Mt Zion (a few commentators suggest this is Mt Sinai but I disagree because of the verb **plant them** -- they were at Mt Sinai for only a short time and were hardly "planted" there) where God's dwelling would eventually reside.

**Bush** - The picture of **plant** means that Jehovah would "give them a settled and firmly fixed inheritance; a metaphor taken from trees which when their roots are struck deeply into the earth cannot without the greatest difficulty be plucked up. It predicts, therefore, a permanent and stable mode of life, in opposition to the roving and migratory habits of a people who are ever on the move. See the similitude beautifully expanded, Ps. 80:8-16,"

**NET Note** - The "mountain" and the "place" would be wherever Yahweh met with his people. It here refers to Canaan, the land promised to the patriarchs.

**The place, O LORD, which You have made for Your dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established**- Notice the verb is past tense -- **which Your hands have established** -- in reference to the future Temple, so certain was the erection of His sanctuary.

**Exodus 15:18 "The LORD shall reign forever and ever."**

- Ps 10:16 29:10 146:10 Isa 57:15 Da 2:44 4:3 7:14,27 Mt 6:13 Rev 11:15-17

**Spurgeon** writes that "It is obvious, then, from the plentiful allusions to this song in holy scripture, that it is full of deep spiritual significance. It teaches us not only to praise God concerning the literal overthrow of Egypt, but to praise him concerning the overthrow of all the powers of evil, and the final deliverance of all the chosen."

**The LORD shall reign forever and ever** - "This sublime pean is here concluded with a burst of rapturous exultation in view of God's universal and everlasting dominion. Though they had seen an end of Pharaoh's reign, and were assured of the final extinction of those hostile powers with which they would yet have to contend, there was no period to be put to the ever-during reign of the blessed and only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords. This appears to have been a sort of chorus in which all the people joined." (Bush)

**Guzik** - After such a great victory we can sense that Israel really believed this, and they were really ready to let the LORD reign over them. This state of victory and surrender did not last very long.. Yet, the enduring truth remains—the LORD shall reign forever and ever.

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## Our Strength And Song

The Lord shall reign forever and ever. — Exodus 15:18

Today's Scripture & Insight: Exodus 15:1–2,13–18

Often called “The March King,” composer and band director John Philip Sousa created music that has been played by bands around the world for more than a hundred years. As Loras John Schissel, music historian and conductor of the Virginia Grand Military Band, said, “Sousa is to marches what Beethoven is to symphonies.” Sousa understood the power of music to motivate, encourage, and inspire people.

In Old Testament times, the people of Israel were often inspired to compose and sing songs to celebrate God's help during times of need. When the Lord saved His people from certain destruction by Pharaoh's army, “Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord . . . ‘I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea! The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation’” (Ex. 15:1-2).

Music has the power to lift our spirits by reminding us of God's faithfulness in the past. When we're discouraged, we can sing songs and hymns that raise our eyes from the challenging circumstances we face to see the power and presence of the Lord. We are reminded that He is our strength, our song, and our salvation. By: David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Trust in Him, ye saints, forever—  
He is faithful, changing never;  
Neither force nor guile can sever  
Those He loves from Him.  
—Kelly

Songs of praise raise our eyes to see God's faithfulness.

**Exodus 15:19 For the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, and the LORD brought back the waters of the sea on them, but the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea.**

- horse - Ex 14:23 Pr 21:31
- brought - Ex 14:28,29 Heb 11:29

**For the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, and the LORD brought back the waters of the sea on them, but the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea** - The narrative resumes by repeating the notice that the Lord defeated Pharaoh's chariots and horsemen as at the end of Exodus 14:28–29.

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## Exodus 15:19-27 Life After Miracles

On the other side of every miraculous intervention by God on our behalf, there is a road of faith to travel. Whether God's power has touched our health, finances, or family relationships, we must not only praise and thank the Lord but obey Him as well.

After God opened the Red Sea for His people, then released the waters to overwhelm Pharaoh's pursuing army, there was a great celebration of praise to the Lord (Exodus 15:1-21). But then it was time to move on in the journey toward the land of promise. "So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur" (Ex. 15:22). There they traveled for 3 days without finding water, and they began to complain.

In the divine plan, supernatural intervention is not an end in itself, but it is a means of teaching us that we can always trust and obey the leadership of Almighty God. Will we listen to His voice and obey His Word? If He leads us through the sea, will He not also guide us to a well?

The stunning events recorded in Exodus show that it's possible to experience God's power yet remain spiritually unchanged. To keep that from happening to us, let's use the sweet memory of yesterday's miracle to encourage a bigger step of faith today. —David C. McCasland (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.)

Sometimes we see a miracle,  
And faith in God revives;  
Yet we should see God's gracious hand

At work throughout our lives.

—Hess

The God who delivered us yesterday is worthy of our obedience today.

**Exodus 15:20 Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took the timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dancing.**

- prophetess - Jud 4:4 1Sa 10:5 2Ki 22:14 Lu 2:36 Ac 21:9 1Co 11:5 14:34
- sister - Ex 2:4 Nu 12:1 20:1 26:59 Mic 6:4
- a timbrel - {Toph,} in Arabic called {duff} or {diff,} and in Spanish {adduffa,} is the {tabret} used in the East; being a thin, broad, wooden hoop, with parchment extended over one side of it, to which small pieces of brass, tin, etc., are attached, which make a jingling noise: it is held up with one hand and beaten upon with the other, and is precisely the same as the tambourine.
- all the - Jud 11:34 21:21 1Sa 18:6 2Sa 6:5,14,16 Ps 68:11,25 81:2 149:3 Ps 150:4

## MIRIAM THE PROPHETESS

**Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister** - Guzik says that from "Numbers 26:59 seems to indicate that Moses had only one sister. We do know that it was his sister who supervised the launching of the basket onto the Nile River to preserve his life (Exodus 2:4) and arranged the hiring of Moses' mother as his nurse. Based on Numbers 26:59, we can say this was probably—almost certainly—Miriam. She was the older sister of Moses."

**Bush** - Gr. Μαριαμ, Mariam; Lat. 'Maria;' Eng. 'Mary'—all the same name. She is called the sister of Aaron rather than of Aaron and Moses together, simply for brevity's sake, from Aaron's being her elder brother, and from her having lived with him in Egypt while Moses was absent in Midian.

**Currid** - Only four other women in the Old Testament bear that epithet: Deborah (Judg. 4:4), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), Noadiah (Neh. 6:14) and the unnamed wife of Isaiah (Isa. 8:3). The position and duty of a prophetess are the same as those of a prophet—that is, as one who is authorized to speak for another (see Micah 6:4). Thus Miriam had a favoured status in the nation of Israel. Her prophetic function (along with Aaron's) was later to lead to great problems (Num. 12:1–2).

### Related Resource:

- [What is a prophetess? Does the Bible mention any prophetesses?](#)

### took the timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dancing -

The **timbrel** is mention in Ps 150:4 = "Praise Him with **timbrel and dancing**; Praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe." The enumeration of instruments in Ps 150:3-5 with which to accompany this praise—the timbrel and lyre—alludes to the span of praise offered to God throughout the OT, from "the lyre and the pipe" first mentioned in Ge 4:21 and the "dancing... timbrel and lyre" of Ps 149:3 (cf. Miriam and women of Israel, Ex 15:20); to the "cymbals, harps and lyres" that accompanied the praise of the restored exiles (cf. Ezra 3:10; Neh 12:27). These instructions for joyful praise will be fully carried out during the rejoicing in the [Messianic Kingdom](#) (cf. Isa 35:10+; Ex 51:11).

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### Question: "[Who was Miriam in the Bible?](#)"

Answer: Miriam in the Bible is Moses' older sister. She is called "Miriam the prophetess" in Exodus 15:20. She plays an important role in several episodes of Moses' life and in the exodus of Israel from Egypt.

Miriam is the sister who watches over her baby brother Moses among the bulrushes on the banks of the Nile. Their mother had hidden Moses in a basket on the river bank to protect him from Pharaoh's decree to throw all Hebrew baby boys into the river (Exodus 1:22—2:4). As Miriam watches, Pharaoh's daughter discovers and pities Moses, and Miriam quickly intervenes to ask if the Egyptian princess would like a Hebrew woman to nurse the child for her. The princess agrees, and Miriam quickly gets their mother. Pharaoh's daughter commands Moses' biological mother to nurse him and bring him back to her when he is older. By the grace of God, Miriam helps save the infant Moses (Exodus 2:5–10).

Miriam had another brother, Aaron. Their parents, Amram and Jochebed (Exodus 6:20), were both from the Levite tribe of Israel (Exodus 2:1). Together, God uses Moses, Miriam, and Aaron to lead the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt to the Promised Land in Canaan (Micah 6:4). After miraculously crossing the Red Sea on dry ground and seeing the Egyptian army overthrown in the sea, Miriam leads the

women with a tambourine in worshipping God with song and dance (Exodus 15:20–22). The words to Miriam's song are recorded in verse 21: "Sing to the Lord, / for he is highly exalted. / Both horse and driver / he has hurled into the sea." In this same passage, she is given the title "prophetess," the first of only a handful of women in Scripture identified that way. Others called a "prophetess" are Deborah (Judges 4:4), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), Isaiah's wife (Isaiah 8:3), Anna (Luke 2:36), and Philip's four daughters (Acts 21:9).

Unfortunately, Miriam later falls into a spirit of complaining. Both Miriam and Aaron criticize Moses for marrying a Cushite or Ethiopian woman, but Miriam is listed first (Numbers 12:1) so it is likely she instigated the complaint. While the complaint was ostensibly against Moses' wife, the discontent ran deeper: "Has the Lord spoken only through Moses?" they asked. "Hasn't he also spoken through us?" (Numbers 12:2). In her criticism, Miriam was questioning the Lord's wisdom in choosing Moses as the leader.

God was angry that Miriam and Aaron were so willing to speak against the servant He had chosen. The Lord struck Miriam with leprosy. Aaron, realizing the foolishness of their words, repented of his sin, and Moses, ever the intercessor, prayed on behalf of his sister: "Moses cried out to the Lord, 'Please, God, heal her!'" (Numbers 12:13). After a week-long quarantine, Miriam was healed and rejoined the camp. As Miriam's leprosy convicted Aaron of the foolish words they had spoken against God's chosen servant, it should also remind us not to judge those around us or live in jealousy when God has given a specific call to someone else (see Titus 3:1–15; James 1:26; 4:11–12; Ephesians 4:31; Philippians 4:8). Miriam had an opportunity to show the people of Israel what it meant to live in love as a servant of God without complaining, and, for most of her life, she did; but she failed in the matter of Moses' wife. We, too, have opportunities to show the grumblers and complainers around us what it is to be a servant of Jesus Christ. Let us draw them to Jesus through our love and servanthood and not be drawn away from Him ourselves.

Our next encounter with Miriam is at the end of the 40-year desert wandering. Because of their grumbling and lack of faith in God, the first generation of Israelites to leave captivity was not allowed to enter the Promised Land. This included the prophetess Miriam. Most of the older generation had already died in the wilderness when Israel comes back to Kadesh, where they had started their wanderings. It's here that Miriam dies and is buried (Numbers 20:1). Hers was a life of responsibility and service, of God's calling and providence, yet it also reminds us that no one is too important to receive God's discipline for personal sin (see 1 Corinthians 10:12). (Source: [Gotquestions.org](http://Gotquestions.org))

**Exodus 15:21 Miriam answered them, "Sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and his rider He has hurled into the sea."**

- answered - 1Sa 18:7 2Ch 5:13 Ps 24:7-10 134:1-3
- Sing ye - Ex 15:1 Jud 5:3 Isa 5:1-30 Rev 7:10-12 5:9 14:3 15:3 19:1-6

### **MIRIAM'S SONG A REFRAIN TO MOSES' SONG**

**Miriam answered them, "Sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted; The horse and his rider He has hurled into the sea-** Bush "The whole song was probably, as suggested above, sung alternately by the men and women ranged into two bands, and by Miriam's 'answering' the men (for the original for 'them' is masculine) is meant, undoubtedly, that she was precentrix, or leader of the choir to the women, as Moses was to the men; or, as the words immediately following, 'Sing ye to the Lord, &c.' appear to indicate that which formed the 'answer of Miriam' and her companions, it is not unlikely that these words constituted a kind of chorus which was repeated at the end of each of the preceding verses, as in Ps. 136, the words, 'For his mercy endureth for ever,' are repeated throughout the whole psalm."

**Currid** - Because the song is an answer/response to the men, then the women were singing antiphonally with the men. The content of the song is exactly the same as verse 1 of the chapter, the opening of the first stanza of the Song of Moses. Apparently this passage served as a refrain to the larger hymn.

**Bruckner** - The two songs work together to provide verse and refrain as well as call and response....Miriam and all the women lead the singing and dancing in celebration of the Lord's victory and their salvation from the Egyptian army (see also Jdg. 11:34; 1 Sa 18:6).

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#### **Exodus 15:21-22 Living in the Valleys by Dr. Woodrow Kroll**

And Miriam answered them: "Sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!" So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water.

Mountaintops are great places. As you stand on some lofty peak it seems as if you can see forever. But most people don't live on mountains. The demands of reality require that life is generally lived in the valleys.

The Israelites had just come through one of the high points of their nation's history--a mountaintop experience. Pursued by Pharaoh's army, they crossed the Red Sea with dry sandals and then saw the waters rush together again upon their enemy's horses and chariots. With

tremendous joy, they sang God's praise. Then they hit the valley--from the fresh air of the mountaintop to the dry, oppressive air of the wilderness. For three days they traveled without finding water. Compared to the mountaintops, the valleys are real spiritual challenges.

But that's the way real life is. Spiritual mountaintops are wonderful. You feel particularly close to God during your devotional time; you return from a weekend retreat knowing the living Lord has met with you in a special way; you come home from church after the pastor's sermon has met a deep spiritual need in your life. You revel in the warmth of these marvelous mountaintop experiences.

But that's not where you live. You live in the valley, where there are dirty dishes to wash, lawns to mow and children to raise. Often real life isn't much fun.

Fortunately, Israel discovered, as will you, that God is with you both on the mountain and in the valley. He never leaves you, never allows you out of His loving care. We all appreciate those times when we encounter God in a special way, but we know that God is also with us when we sink to spiritual lows and feel a little dry. The God you meet in the good times is the same God who meets you in the hard times.

The God who dwells on the mountains also inhabits the valleys.

**Exodus 15:22 Then Moses led 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.**

- wilderness of Shur - This lay on the eastern shore of the Heroopolitic gulf of the Red Sea, and is still called the desert of Shur, according to Dr. Shaw. Ge 16:7 25:18 1Sa 15:7
- three days - Ex 3:18

## A NO WATER TEST

**Warren Wiersbe** - "Let us be as watchful after the victory as before the battle," wrote saintly Andrew Bonar. It's possible to win the battle and yet lose the victory, which is what the Jews did as they left the Red Sea and began to march toward Mount Sinai. They forgot that life is a pilgrimage during which we must learn new lessons and fight new battles. One great victory doesn't settle everything; we need challenging new experiences that will help us mature and glorify God. Yes, life is a school, and the Lord knows just when to give us an examination.

One pastor entitles this section "The Steps to Sinai - Thou Shalt Not Belly-Ache!" Or how to live by sight and not by faith. They go from wonderful worship to without water and their hearts show a major shift in attitude. They were wonderfully "without water" as they crossed the Red Sea (on dry ground) and now are woefully without water three days out from the Red Sea. Recall the words of the proverb that "The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps." (Pr 16:9) And so as we study Israel's wilderness journey and apply these truths to our wilderness journey, we need to be aware of the truth that the sovereign God of the universe Who Alone sees the beginning from the end is the same God Who orders our steps and our stops! Sometimes we don't like either one, and we are tempted to grumble like Israel. We all need to remember the words of warning from Paul in First Corinthians...

All ate the same spiritual food; 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. 5 Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. 6 Now these things happened as **examples** (Greek = [tupos](#) = "types") for us, so that (PURPOSE) we would not crave evil things as they also craved. 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY." 8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. 9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. 10 **Nor grumble, as some of them did**, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 **Now these things happened to them as an example** (Greek = [tupos](#) = "types") , **and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.** 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. (1 Cor 10:3-12)

It should be noted that this next section beginning in Exodus 15:22-27 would have been better placed at the beginning of chapter 16. In short there is a relatively poor chapter division between Exodus 15 and 16 as the first major section of the story ends with the Song of Moses (and Miriam) in Exodus 15:21. And in Exodus 15:22 we read about the beginning of Israel's pilgrimage through the wilderness, the so-called "wilderness wanderings."

**Pastor Alan Carr** introduces this next section with these words - Very often learning lessons is a bitter experience. Yet, while this is true, it is also true that experience is the best teacher. You can tell a child repeatedly that fire, the stove, etc is hot, but they never really get it until they have been burned. When this happens, they can relate to what hot means. It is a lesson they will never forget as long as they live, but it was a bitter lesson to have to learn. Unfortunately, we all seem to possess this same characteristic. We have to be burned before we can learn! It may be that someone here tonight is going through a time of trial. If so, in these verses, you will learn some good lessons if you will allow the Lord to teach them to you. If everything in your life is sailing along smoothly, then look out! One day so, you will come to your

own Marah. When this happens, you may need the lessons we can learn right here....I suppose they, like a lot of people in our day assume that once you sign up to follow the Lord, everything is going to be perfect and that there will be no bumps in the road. Unfortunately, this is just faulty thinking! According to God's Word, life is a mixture of good and bad - Job 14:1; Job 5:7; Eccl. 2:17; 23. While this outlook may seem depressing, we are also aware that life has its wonderful moments as well. ([Lessons Learned at Life's Bitter Pools](#) - Exodus 15:22-27)

**Bruckner** writes "The next major section of Exodus is the journey from the sea to Sinai. It begins inauspiciously in Ex 15:22 and continues through Exodus 16 and 17. During this journey the people encounter difficulties finding water and food. The Lord uses these opportunities to build new faith and trust. The NIV says God "**tested**" them, translating a word (*nasah*, Ex 15:25) that means "trained" or "proved." The Lord proved that the people could learn to follow God's instruction for their own well-being. The training, which was not easy, could be described as "trial runs." In the narratives, however, the people did not pass or fail the "tests." They learned more about, and proved their trust in, the Lord. The texts give little negative comment about their grumbling apart from describing it as grumbling. Moses was impatient with them at the Wilderness of Sin, but the Lord responded with patience. This was not the case in the book of Numbers, when the people faced the same difficulties, complained, and suffered God's impatience with them over lessons they should have learned in Exodus. The various "trial runs" in Ex 15:22–17:7 focus on water and food. Enemy attacks on the Israelites, during which the Lord provides for their protection, precede and follow these "tests" (Ex 14:10–21; Ex 17:8–16; see outline below). Within the brackets of that protection, the text describes these water and food trials. Each episode of trial follows this pattern: (1) the people grumble against Moses; (2) the Lord tells Moses he will find out whether they can follow instructions he gives them in their trial; (3) the Lord gives the instructions; (4) the Lord provides the water or food. (Exodus Commentary)

**John Currid** - George Coats remarks: 'A form-critical study of the relevant texts reveals that the murmuring motif is not designed to express a disgruntled complaint. Quite the contrary, it describes an open rebellion ... In the wilderness theme the murmuring motif characterizes a basic tradition about the rebellion of Israel.' The biblical author sees this rebellion in direct contrast to the grace and favour that Yahweh has bestowed upon the people. This episode is also to be seen by way of antithesis to the preceding scene of joyful singing. And what a contrast it is! This section is carefully written and crafted. It employs elaborate word-plays that anchor the entire section to the main idea, which is that **the Israelites are living by sight and not by faith**. The Hebrews are required to depend totally upon God for their sustenance and means.

**Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea** - Moses led them out in an eastward direction. A more accurate translation than "**Moses led**" would be something like the ESV which renders it "Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea." The **NET Note** explains that "The verb form (**led**) is unusual; the normal expression is with the Qal, which expresses that they journeyed. But here the Hiphil is used to underscore that **Moses caused them to journey** – and he is following God (ED: NOT STATED HERE BUT IMPLIED). So the point is that God was leading Israel to the bitter water." **John Currid** agrees writing that "The style of the initial phrase of this verse is unusual. It employs a Hiphil verb (causative), meaning, literally, '**Moses caused Israel to set out.**' It may be that the Hebrews were lax, or slow, in departing from the Red Sea region—perhaps they were merely basking in the glory of victory over the Egyptians. In any event, the prophet is described as having been the catalyst, or prime mover, in Israel's decampment and setting out."

**And they went out into the wilderness of Shur** - Shur means wall in Hebrew. There is no mention here of the pillar leading them. Moses led them, but he led them an unusual way. Into the Wilderness of Shur was outside the major trade route along the sea.

**And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water** - This is an amazing "time phrase." Why do I say that? Because we see that within 3 days the Israelites seemed to have developed major short term memory loss (that's what I am supposed to have at age 74 but not these people who were definitely younger -- for they lived another 40 years in the wilderness!) One writer also points out that 3 days is the maximum time the human body can go without water in the desert heat. Finally, the mention of three days into the desert may be a deliberate allusion to Moses' demand to Pharaoh that Israel be allowed go three days into the wilderness to worship (Ex 5:3, Ex 8:27, cf also three days of darkness in Ex 10:22-23). "Here, three days in, they find bitter water and complain – not worship."

**Wiersbe** - Uppermost in the minds of the Israelites wasn't how to please God but "What shall we eat?" and "What shall we drink?" According to Jesus, these questions reveal an anxious heart, not a trusting heart (Matt. 6:21, 25–33), and this can lead to all kinds of problems. God was testing His people, not because He didn't know their hearts, but because they didn't know their own hearts. People often say, "Well, I know my own heart," but they forget that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9)

**Spurgeon** quips that "The Egyptians found enough **water**, and even too much of it, for they were drowned in the sea, but the well-beloved Israelites had no **water** at all. So is it with the wicked man; he often has enough of wealth, and too much of it, till he is drowned in sensual delights and perishes in floods of prosperity."

**NET Note** - The first event of the Israelites' desert experience is a failure, for they murmur against Yahweh and are given a stern warning – and the provision of sweet water. The event teaches that God is able to turn bitter water into sweet water for his people, and he promises to do such things if they obey. He can provide for them in the desert – he did not bring them into the desert to let them die. But there is a deeper level to this story – the healing of the water is incidental to the healing of the people, their lack of trust. The passage is arranged in a neat chiasm, starting with a journey (A), ending with the culmination of the journey (A'); developing to bitter water (B), resolving to sweet water (B'); complaints by the people (C), leading to the instructions for the people (C'); and the central turning point is the wonder miracle (D).

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**Steven Cole** - As we see in (Exod. 14:1-4), the Lord specifically directed Moses to take Israel to a place where a large body of water was in front of them and the Egyptian army was bearing down behind them. **They were trapped.** Why would God do that? **So that Israel would see their own utter weakness along with God's power and provision when He parted the sea and delivered them from Pharaoh's army.**

So, they learned their lesson, right? In Exodus 15:22, after the miraculous deliverance at the Red Sea, Israel went three days into the wilderness and found no water. **Surely they knew that if they trusted God, He could provide water, right?** But instead they grumbled. They hadn't yet learned to trust in the Lord. In Exodus 16, the people complained about being in the wilderness with no food and threatened to return to Egypt. But God provided manna. In Exodus 17, again they needed water. But rather than trusting the Lord who had already miraculously delivered them and provided water and food, they grumbled. Then (Ex 17:8), Amalek fought against Israel. Why were they having all these problems? Weren't they God's chosen people? Weren't they the ones through whom God's promise to Abraham and His purpose would be fulfilled? Wasn't God leading them? Then why did He allow all of these problems? **Because God's way is to take His people on the scenic route because His purpose is to build a people who trust in Him for His glory. But we don't trust Him as we should until we see our weakness and His faithful power and provision.**

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### **THE HEALING TREE Exodus 15:22–25 - James Smith (Handfuls of Purpose)**

There is sometimes not much between our songs and our sorrows. In verse 1 they sing a new song unto the Lord; in verse 24 they murmur against Him. Immediately after Christ had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit He was assailed by the tempting devil. The Marahs and the Elims are not far apart (v. 27). After the joyful song of victory comes the bitter experience of Marah. Faith will be tried, faith must be tried. God forbid that the bitter things of life should only stir up within us the murmuring heart of unbelief. As long as the pillar cloud of His presence is with us every unpalatable cup can be sweetened. There is a power in the "Tree of Life," the Cross of Christ, sufficient to transform and transfigure all the Marahs in our everyday life.

But we have here a very great and real need. "They could not drink of the waters, for they were bitter" (v. 23). The people murmured, saying, "What shall we drink? Where shall we find satisfaction? Who shall show us the good?" Here is the language of needy, disappointed souls. Their name is legion. Moses does not join the murmurers, but "cries unto the Lord." Happy, victorious soul, who has learned to pray instead of to grumble. Now see how the remedy is provided, how God in wisdom and mercy and power meets all their need. Have we not here in type the Gospel of the Cross? It was—

**I. A Tree.** "The Lord showed him a tree" (v. 25). There was a tree in the garden of Eden, but defended by a sword of flame. The fruit of this tree of life man could not pluck. There is another tree that was first laid on Christ, then Christ was nailed to it. "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24). The fruit of this tree of life is now within the reach of all.

**II. A Tree Pointed Out by the Lord.** "The Lord showed him a tree" (v. 25). No man could have found this tree had not the Lord revealed it. Jesus Christ is the gift and revelation of God. "The only begotten of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John 1:18). "Jesus Christ set forth to be a propitiation for our sins" (Rom. 3:25). The Father pointed Him out at Jordan, when He said, "This is My beloved Son." "No man knoweth the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Father will reveal Him" (Matt. 11:27).

**III. A Tree Revealed in Answer to Prayer.** "Moses cried unto the Lord, and He showed him a tree" (v. 25). The Lord Jesus Christ has been revealed by God in answer to the deep cry of human need. For the outcast and desolate Hagar the well was pointed out (Gen. 21:19). It was when Abraham had the knife uplifted over the beloved Isaac that God showed him a ram in the thicket (Gen. 22:13). It is to sin smitten, soul-convicted sinners Christ the Saviour is revealed. "What must I do to be saved?" He showed me Jesus.

**IV. A Tree Near at Hand.** From the construction of the words we infer that it was growing or lying near by. God's remedies are always at hand. The tree of life is not afar off, "the Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth" (Rom. 10:8). But, alas, it is so often true that there is one standing among you whom ye know not. We think of Mary saying, "Tell me where thou hast laid Him," knowing not that this was He. And of the man who was born blind to whom Jesus said, "It is He that talketh with thee".

**V. A Tree Accepted and Applied.** Moses took the tree and "cast it into the waters" (v. 25). The divinely appointed remedy must be brought into contact with the polluted and bitter waters of life. Man does not need to provide the cure, he has but to take it and apply it. The poor, withered woman touched Him and was healed. The healing power is not in our faith, but in the Christ whom we trust. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God" (John 1:12).

**VI. A Tree that Made Bitter Sweet.** "The waters were made sweet" (v. 25). The unwholesome mass was changed. The waters that could do no good were immediately made useful. Let Christ in and the bitter pool of the heart will be sweetened and its waters made to gladden the souls of others. The power of Christ's Cross transforms all trials into blessings. This is a tree that will not rot. When the shepherds came and saw the Babe in the manger "they returned, glorifying and praising God" (Luke 2:20). They went back to their work with lives sweetened with the power of the glorious Gospel.

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### **C. H. McINTOSH -- Exodus 15:22.**

It is when we get into wilderness experience, that we are put to the test as to the real measure of our acquaintance with God, and with our own hearts. There is a freshness and an exuberance of joy connected with the opening of our Christian career, which very soon receives a

check from the keen blast of the desert; and then, unless there is a deep sense of what God is to us, above and beyond everything else, we are apt to break down, and "in our hearts, turn back again into Egypt." The discipline of the wilderness is needful, not to furnish us with a title to Canaan, but to make us acquainted with God and with our own hearts; to enable us to enter into the power of our relationship, and to enlarge our capacity for the enjoyment of Canaan when we actually get there.

**Exodus 15:23** When they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore it was named Marah.

- **Marah** - Nu 33:8
- **Marah** - Ru 1:20

Bitter Waters at Marah

## A BITTER WATER TEST WORSE THAN NO WATER <> BITTER WATER!

This is actually the second test after leaving Israel, their first test having occurred at the edge of the Red Sea as the Egyptian army hemmed them in! Now we have a second test of their faith and here it is actually called a test!

**And when they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore it was named Marah-** Put yourself in their sandals. Someone at the front of the caravan yells "I see shimmers of sunlight on water! There's water up ahead!" And they hurry to get there and find it is even worse than no water, for it is bitter water! Now this must have seemed to the Israelites as almost like a cruel joke to finally come to water but find it undrinkable.

**Adrian Rogers** - Now, God led them to this place of bitterness by His providence. They were not there by mistake. They were not there by happenstance. They were not there because of bad luck. They were not there because they could not read a map. The way that they got to this place was by the providence of God, for they were led by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. They were exactly in the place that God wanted them, by His unfailing providence.

**Currid** - This is a good example of the writer of Exodus' penchant for using plays on words. The name of the location, 'Marah', is the Hebrew word for 'bitter'. So the name of the site reflects the noteworthy event now taking place there.

**Marah** (04785)(**marah** from verb **marar**) is the name of the spring of bitter water in the Sinai peninsula. It aptly describes the water the Israelites found in the Desert of Shur, three days after they escaped from the Egyptians at the Red Sea (Exo. 15:22-26). In its only other appearances in the OT, the name is used twice in the itinerary list of the wilderness wanderings in Num. 33:8f, clearly referring to the Exo. 15 passage.

**Bitter** (04751)(**mar**) is an adjective most often used figuratively to express the emotional response to a destructive, heart-crushing situation. It is used in a literal sense - bitter grape clusters (Dt. 32:32); bitter water (Ex 15:23); food in general (Pr 27:7). Although an adjective, mar can function alone as the noun bitterness (Isa. 38:15, 17) or as an adverb, bitterly (Isa 33:7, Ezek 27:30, Zeph 1:14). Mar can describe results of continued fighting (2 Sa 2:26). Figuratively modifies Esau's cry (Ge 27:34; Esther 4:1; Ezek 27:30); bitterness of death (1 Sa 15:32); or to describe a person discontented (1 Sa 22:2); provoked (2 Sa 17:8); anguished (Ezek. 27:31); ruthless (Hab. 1:6). Naomi's name for herself (Ru 1:20).

**Victor Hamilton** gives a good survey of the figurative uses - Some of these situations are: (1) in the case of a woman, barrenness and sterility, 1 Samuel 1:10; (2) an unfulfilled death-wish, Job 3:20; (3) family turmoil, Genesis 27:34; (4) the exploitation and deprivation of minority peoples, Esther 4:1; (5) personal suffering and hardship, Job 7:11; Job 10:1; Isaiah 38:15; (6) a hostile and precarious situation, Psalm 64:3 [H 4]; grief over the apostasy of believers, Jeremiah 2:19; (7) the Lord's judgment on unbelievers, Zeph. 1:14; (8) discontentment with lacklustre leadership, 1 Samuel 22:2; (9) the thought of death, 1 Samuel 15:32; (10) the crumbling of dreams and aspiration, Ezekiel 27:30, 31. ([TWOT](#) online version)

**Baker** - One instance of this word that deserves special attention is the "bitter water," that determined the legal status of a woman accused of infidelity (Nu 5:18, 19, 23, 24, 27). This was holy water that was combined with dust from the Tabernacle floor and ink (see Num. 5:17, 23) and then was ingested by the accused. This water was literally "bitter" and would produce "bitterness" or punishment if the woman were guilty." (Complete Word Study Dictionary – Old Testament)

**Mar** - 38x in 35v - bitter(15), bitter thing(1), bitterly(4), bitterness(11), discontented\*(1), embittered(1), fierce(1), fierce\*(2), great bitterness(1), greatly distressed(1). -- Gen. 27:34; Exod. 15:23; Num. 5:18; Num. 5:19; Num. 5:23; Num. 5:24; Num. 5:27; Jdg. 18:25; Ru 1:20, 1 Sam. 1:10; 1 Sam. 15:32; 1 Sam. 22:2; 2 Sam. 2:26; 2 Sam.

17:8; Est. 4:1; Job 3:20; Job 7:11; Job 10:1; Job 21:25; Ps. 64:3; Prov. 5:4; Prov. 27:7; Prov. 31:6; Eccl. 7:26; Isa. 5:20; Isa. 33:7; Isa. 38:15; Isa. 38:17; Jer. 2:19; Jer. 4:18; Ezek. 3:14; Ezek. 27:30; Ezek. 27:31; Amos 8:10; Hab. 1:6; Zeph. 1:14

#### Related Resources:

- [What is Marah in the Bible?](#)
- [What is the meaning of bitter water in the Bible?](#)
- [What does it mean that God is Jehovah-Rapha?](#)

If we are on the mountain, then praise Him for His blessings!

If we are in the valley, then praise Him for His faithfulness.

-- Pastor Alan Carr

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**Robert Rayburn** - Water, of course, is always a matter of life and death, but nowhere more so than in the dehydrating heat of the desert. [Durham, 213] I remember being arrested by the comment of General Charles Gordon on this episode of Israel's history. General Gordon, if you remember, was the hero and martyr of Khartoum, one of the great military figures of Victorian Britain. Gordon was a devout Christian and a very interesting figure, a man who played important roles in the military history of both China and Africa, and, along the way, identified, in the environs of Jerusalem, one of the possible sites of the Lord's crucifixion, known still today to archaeology as "Gordon's Calvary." If you remember, Charlton Heston played him in the epic movie *Khartoum*. Anyway, it was this Charles Gordon who said that, in his view, Israel's grumbling for water was a small sin, and would be thought so by anyone who knew the desert. [In Trench's biography, 130]

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**Joseph Parker** - Hast thou come, my friend, in thy wilderness way, to the place of bitter waters? Canst thou not drink of the stream, even though thy thirst be burning and thy strength be wasted? Know thou, there is a tree the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations! A tree? Truly so; but a tree as yet without a leaf,—a tree bare as the frosts and the winds of the winter can make it,—the great, grim, dear, sad, wondrous cross of the Son of God! Some have sought to touch the wells of life with other trees, but have only aggravated the disease which they sought to cure. By the grace of heaven, others have been enabled to apply the Cross to the bitter wells of their sin and grief, and behold the waters have become clear as the crystal river which flows fast by the throne of God!

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**What is your Marah?**— a wayward child, an unsympathetic companion, an ungodly home, crushed hopes, physical infirmity, an empty life and heart? Each heart knows its own bitterness. There are right and wrong ways of facing life's Marahs. At Marah, Moses needed water as much as Israel, but as the people murmured, he prayed. True speech is prayer not complaint. The danger is that bitter waters make us bitter. It is only as we believe that such waters are in the plan of God and are permitted for spiritual enrichment of our life, that, like Jesus, we, too, can become noble in suffering. We greatly err if we regard all chastening as being deserved. Some of the saintliest of souls are the deepest sufferers. There is a vast difference between chastisement and correction by punishment. Chasten is associated with "chaste," meaning "pure," and divine chastening results in beauty and purity of character. God only chastens those He loves.

"For You have tried us, O God;

You have refined us as silver is refined."

Psalm 66:10

Every joy or trial

Falleth from above,

Traced upon our dial

By the Sun of Love.

(From [Like a River Glorious](#))

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#### Exodus 15:24 So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

- Ex 14:11 16:2,8,9 17:3,4 Nu 11:1-6 14:1-4 16:11,41 17:10 Nu 20:2-5 21:5 1Co 10:10 Php 2:14 Jude 1:16
- **What** - Ex 17:3 Ps 78:19,20 Mt 6:25

### ISRAEL'S FIRST EPISODE OF GRUMBLING

Sadly this would not be the last episode of **grumbling** - see Ex 16:2, 7, 8, 17:3, Nu 14:2, 27, 29, 36, 16:11, 16:41, 17:5, Josh 9:18

**Spurgeon** makes an interesting (albeit suppositional) comment - "I think, if I had been there, I should have suggested that Moses should use that rod of his. Did he not divide the Red Sea with it? Why not just put his rod into the water, and stir it up, and make it sweet? Oh, yes,

you know, we are always for running to old methods! But God is a Sovereign, and he will work as he pleases.”

**Alan Carr** - They forgot about the plagues, their deliverance, the miracle at the Red Sea. They forgot that up until that time, the Lord had been in absolute control. They forgot that God is Master of life. Both of the good times and the bad. We will cruise through life enjoying the Lord's blessings and many time we will take them for granted! But, just let a difficulty come and we wring our hands, hang our heads in defeat and worry about what to do! We forget that the same God who was in control in the good day is still on the throne in the bad day! He is in charge of all of life - Rom. 8:28! (Ill. The Disciples on the boat, John 6:1-21. They rejoiced in His miracles, but when the storm came, they forgot what they had just seen Him do.) Sounds just like us, doesn't it?...Every experience, whether good or bad, x-rays our heart and reveals us exactly as we are. This bitter time at Marah revealed certain characteristics about the Israelites that they probably would rather have not known. However, I am afraid that we are just as guilty of some of these same things. Let's face it, you can learn a lot about yourself when the bottom falls out of your life! ([Lessons Learned at Life's Bitter Pools](#) - Exodus 15:22-27)

**So** - Term of conclusion. Because the water was bitter.

**Adrian Rogers** - Can you believe it? Can you believe it? I mean, they're saying, "Our God is the true God! Glorious, wonderful, majestic is His name! He's God forever and ever!" And, three days later—not three weeks later, but three days later—they are griping, grouching, complaining, murmuring, criticizing, carping, and finding fault—the same people. It's unbelievable. But, here they are—three days later, they're complaining; they're murmuring. Now, I want to remind you that they were there where they were by the providence of God. Nothing had gone wrong when they got to Marah. They had not sinned. And, when they had got to Marah, God had not failed. They were there in the plan of God, the will of God, and the work of God. And, you could write over it Romans 8:28: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) Now, so, I want to tell you, friend, in the providence of God—the unfailing providence of God—you're often led to a place of bitterness. Do you understand that? Please understand it, today. Don't get the idea that if you become a Christian—that if you come through the Red Sea by the blood of the Lamb—that your problems are behind you. It is simply not so. And, if you get that sort of an idea in your mind, then you're going to think, somehow, that you have sinned or that God has failed when you come to a place of bitterness. They were there by the unfailing providence of God! God had led them there: the pillar of cloud by day, the pillar of fire by night, which represents to us the Holy Spirit.

**Jack Arnold** - The outward grumbling was the inward expression of unbelief. Israel had witnessed the ten supernatural plagues in Egypt, had experienced the miracle of crossing the Red Sea, had the pillar of cloud and fire with them at that very moment, and they grumbled. They had forgotten all the beautiful things God had done for them. Men have such short spiritual memories! The Jews, when they hit this crisis, should have said, "God has sent us here and God will get us out somehow." But instead, they looked to themselves and their own needs, and murmured in unbelief. They panicked; they crumbled; they failed under pressure because they refused to believe God for their needs. They became disillusioned, and took their bitter, soul frustrations out on Moses. Moses was a humble and meek man, but when the sons of Israel said, "What shall we drink?" he could have said, "Where is your song of faith now? Where is Exodus 15:1-19 in your experience?" How did they get into this state of mind? They were running on emotions and not on the Word of God, and, when the chips were down, they crumbled because they had no faith in the promises of God. ([Sermon](#))

**The people grumbled at Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"** - This is the first use of **grumble** in the OT and from this inauspicious beginning the beat will continual reflect a rebellious attitude by the Israelites against their leaders. Note that the question per se would seem to be a fair question. But clearly their attitude was far from genteel!

**Grumbled** (murmured) ([03885](#))(**lun**) is a word that has two meaning that are very different. Here in [Exodus 17:3](#) the meaning is clearly grumble or murmur ([see below](#) for the 15 uses of **lun** translated with the sense of grumble in NAS). One use means to lodge, spend the night, abide ([see those uses here](#)). We are concerned with the meaning to grumble or murmur. **Lûn** in the Niphal, the verb carries the thought of being "obstinate" or "stubborn," from the idea of "remaining" or "persisting" in a negative sense. Hence, there is a resultant definition of "grumbling" or "complaining."

The **Septuagint** translates **lun** with the verb **gogguzo** which means to **murmur**, **mutter**, make complaining remarks or noises under one's breath. **Gogguzo** is an **onomatopoeic** word derived from the sound made when murmuring or muttering in a low and indistinct voice with the idea of complaint.

All	uses	of	lun
- Ex 15:24; Ex 16:2; Ex 16:7; Ex 16:8; Ex 17:3; Nu 14:2; Nu 14:27; Nu 14:29; Nu 14:36; Nu 16:11; Nu 16:41; Nu 17:5; Jos. 9:18; Ps. 59:15			

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**ISRAEL LEARNED SOME LESSONS ABOUT THEMSELVES** - Click full [Sermon by Alan Carr](#)

Life is like a giant laboratory. Every experience, whether good or bad, x-rays our heart and reveals us exactly as we are. This bitter time at Marah revealed certain characteristics about the Israelites that they probably would rather have not known. However, I am afraid that we are just as guilty of some of these same things. Let's face it, you can learn a lot about yourself when the bottom falls out of your life!

**They learned:**

**A. They Were Living For Self -**

They were only concerned with their bodily satisfaction. Forgotten were the great things God had just recently done in their lives. Instead of being caught up in His wonder, glory and worship, they were totally consumed with their personal needs! Does this sound familiar to you? When we get into a tight spot, we seem to forget the greatness of God and our world suddenly gets very small. We tighten the boundaries of our lives until we are the centerpiece and the focus of every thought and motive. We must remember that God doesn't want us living for self and selfish needs. He wants us to live for Him! When we do, He has promised to take care of life's trials - Matt. 6:33!

### **B. They Were Walking By Sight -**

Israel was guilty of looking for satisfaction in the world around them, instead of the God who bought them. Then, when their expectations failed them, they became disappointed with God. How many times have we been guilty of the same thing? We expect something, some job, someone to make us happy and all the time, we never look for joy in the one place where it will always be found - even in the bitter times of life! (cf Neh. 8:10; Luke 10:20; Phil. 4:4) Our duty as believers is to learn to depend on the Lord, completely and totally, for every situation in life. We are to be a people of faith, Ro 1:17. When we step outside of faith and walk by sight, we have left God's best and have entered sin - Ro 14:23.

### **C. They Were Never Satisfied -**

These people, just 3 days before, had seen the Lord destroy the greatest army in the world! They had seen God part a great sea and deliver them. Then they had seen Him take that same sea and use it to defeat their enemies. When these things happened, they opened their mouths and praised the Lord in song. Now they are standing by a pool of bitter water, complaining because the Lord didn't do it their way, in their time! How like us! When we are up on the mountain, we can be so quick to glorify God and even stand publically and give Him thanks. However, just let a little trial come our way and we whine, gripe and complain about the terrible time we are having to go through. Isn't that silly? Sure it is! God's plan for our lives is that we learn to give Him glory in every situation life throws at us. **If we are on the mountain, then praise Him for His blessings! If we are in the valley, then praise Him for His faithfulness. Whatever we face in life, we are to praise His Name** - (Eph. 5:20; 1 Thes. 5:18; Phil. 4:6) (Job and his attitude - Job 1:21) (David - Ps. 34:1)

Illustration - Lady I used to work with. Had a serious bout with cancer. God healed her and all she said about it was, "Thank God, for several months, I didn't have to shave my legs at all!" Now there is an attitude of gratitude!

## **THEY LEARNED SOME LESSONS ABOUT THE LORD**

### **A. He Is Aware Of Our Needs -**

God knew what they would face at Marah. He, Himself had planned their journey. He knew about their need before they did! Ill. Nothing in your life takes God by surprise! He is already in tomorrow and He knows what you will face when you get there, Matt. 6:32. He knows of that sickness you have yet to develop. He knows of your grief while the one you are grieving still lives. He knows about that bill that has yet to be mailed. I am glad I serve a God who knows what I need before I ever need it. He is aware!

### **B. He Is Able To Meet Our Need -**

Moses was commanded to cast a tree into the waters and, when he did, they were made sweet. God, in His wisdom, had already prepared that tree for the meeting of their need. When they arrived, He was ready. He manifested His power as they got what they needed from the Lord.

He is able to meet our need as well! When man was placed on this earth, he had no needs. God placed a perfect man into a perfect world. There, in the garden, Adam had everything he could possibly need. Yet, when man sinned, he became a needy creature. Not only did he need salvation, he also needed the very basic essentials of life itself. When Jesus came and died on Calvary, He repaired everything Adam had destroyed. Through His death on that tree, He was able to make the bitter waters of life sweet again! Through His death on the cross, we find everything we need to have our needs met. When we are in a right relationship with God, through the shed blood of Jesus, we are in a position to have every need of life met by His power. Through the cross of Christ, the bitter waters of life are made sweet again! Through the cross, God is able to meet our need. Not only of salvation, but in every area of life. The cross unlocks His power in our lives.

God is abundantly able to meet any need you face as you go through the bitter times of your life -

Philippians 4:19+ And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 3:20+ Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us,

Psalms 50:10-15 "For every beast of the forest is Mine, The cattle on a thousand hills. 11 "I know every bird of the

mountains, And everything that moves in the field is Mine. 12 "If I were hungry I would not tell you, For the world is Mine, and all it contains. 13 "Shall I eat the flesh of bulls Or drink the blood of male goats? 14 "Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving And pay your vows to the Most High; 15 **Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me.**"

### C. He Has Already Provided For Our Need -

Years before Israel arrived at Marah, God caused a seed to germinate in the very place where they would need it. He looked ahead and prepared a way before a way was ever needed. He does the same for us! Did you ever realize that your need, as frightening as it may be, is only the evidence of God's supply in waiting? (Phil. 4:19+)

**You will never face a need in life that God hasn't already met!**

If that ever sinks in, it will change our lives forever. It will totally destroy worry, doubt and fear. It will liberate us from selfish interests and give us peace about all of life!

### Conclusion -

At Marah, God revealed Himself to Israel as [Jehovah Rapha: \(Jehovah Rophe\) The LORD our Healer](#). **If Israel had never faced this bitter time, they would have never known this aspect of God's character.** Just as Job would have never known that God could restore him unless he first lost everything (Read Job's testimony Job 42:5-6). Just as Lazarus would not have know the joy of life, if he hadn't did. Mary and Martha would not have known that Jesus was the "Resurrection and the Life" (Jn 11:25-26) unless they had first known grief.

What I am saying is that the **Lord uses the bitter episodes of life to reveal himself more fully to His children** When we stand at the bitter waters of our Marah's, and we will, God help us to know that He is on His throne and that He is in control. God help us to look for His hand and His waiting provision. If you are like me, these are lessons which need to be taken to heart tonight. If you are struggling tonight, I beg you to bring it to Jesus. When you take the witches brew of your life, with all of it's goods and bad's, and through in the Cross, it all straightens out! He can make sense of any mess.

**The key is learning not to kick, but to rest in His power and to allow Him to have His way in your life.**

Is there a need that needs to be brought to the cross tonight? If so, then now is the time!

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### Murmuring Exodus 15:24 - James Butler - Sermon Starters

When Israel arrived at Marah on their way to Sinai after their escape from Egypt, they ran into a water problem. This caused them to murmur against Moses. Murmuring seemed to be one of the favorite activities of the Israelites. The book of Exodus especially reports much murmuring from the Israelites. People today are not much different. If a problem arrives, the first thing they often do is murmur and complain rather than act more productively.

#### FIRST—THE REASON FOR THE MURMURING

"The people murmured." The reason the people murmured was because they focused on their circumstances more than on God. That will always cause one to murmur sooner or later, for circumstances in life seldom inspire to joy but are often inspirers of complaining and pessimism. When Paul exhorted the church at Philippi to rejoice, he did not say to "Rejoice in your circumstances" but "Rejoice in the Lord" (Philippines 4:4). Paul was in prison when he wrote this exhortation and he was nor murmuring but praising God because he focused not on his dire circumstances but on his delightful Christ.

#### SECOND—RAPIDITY OF THE MURMURING

"The people murmured." It had only been a few days since the Israelites had been delivered by the miraculous events at the Red Sea. The speed at which they murmured is condemning. The speed at which we complain is also condemning. The praise for blessing is hardly declared out of our mouth before we are murmuring. That says our faith is not very deep. Murmuring dishonors God and criticizes Him for circumstances He ordered for us. We need to be as quick to praise and thank God for blessings as we are to complain to God about our difficult circumstances.

#### THIRD—THE REVILING IN THE MURMURING

"Against Moses." The murmuring especially criticized and discredited Moses. But it was not Moses' fault. Moses was not their problem, rather he led them to a solution. How often people criticize and discredit their benefactors. Oftentimes, the people who have served their country the best are run out of office the quickest. Furthermore, if you have helped someone, do not be surprised if they eventually turn against you. Many who serve the Lord know this experience. Some pastors who have taken a small salary so the church would stay solvent and who have done much for the welfare of the church are often run out by the people, and sometimes the ringleaders of the people against the pastor are those whom the pastor has spent the most time with and helped the most. No one experienced this reviling

more than Jesus Christ. Scripture reports about Christ "He hath done all things well." (Mark 7:37). Yet the people rejected Him and crucified Him. Those who murmur will murmur against the best.

**Exodus 15:25 Then he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree; and he threw it into the waters, and the waters became sweet. There He made for them a statute and regulation, and there He tested them.**

- **cried** - Ex 14:10 17:4 Ps 50:15 91:15 99:6 Jer 15:1
- a tree - 2Ki 2:21 4:41 1Co 1:18
- a statute - Jos 24:21-25
- proved - Ex 16:4 De 8:2,16 13:3 Jud 2:22 3:1,4 Ps 66:10 81:7 Pr 17:3 Jer 9:7 1Pe 1:6,7

## **BITTER CIRCUMSTANCE BIRTHS PRAYER**

Bitter circumstances drove Israel to grumbling and Moses to prayer. Where do they drive us?

**Then he cried out to the LORD** - Moses turns his eyes from the circumstances to the One Who controls circumstances! He did what Israel actually did back when they experienced Egyptian oppression "And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to God." (Ex 2:23) Notice they did not grumble but sighed! And when they signed, they cried! Moses takes this approach and his cry "rose up to God!" The last time this same Hebrew verb was used in Exodus was of Moses in Ex 14:15+ where Yahweh asked him "Why are you **criying out** to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward." It is also notable that the same verb for cry out is used when Israel felt trapped by Pharaoh's army and "became very frightened; so the sons of Israel **cried out** to the LORD." (Ex. 14:10+).

**THOUGHT** - To whom do you cry when the test, pressure, adversity, affliction, trial comes? It's okay to "sigh" but then we need to choose to "cry" to the LORD Who Alone is sovereign over all circumstances in every life! Let me encourage when in the slough of despond, to make the choice (enabled by the Spirit) to [Cry out to Your Heavenly Father!](#)

**Cried out** (06817) (**tσαα**) cry out, to summon. It refers to shouting, complaining loudly, to pleading for relief or justice, calling for help. Uses of tsaag in Exodus - Ex 5:8; Ex 5:15; Ex. 8:12; Ex. 14:10; Ex. 14:15; Ex. 15:25; Exod. 17:4; Exod. 22:23; Exod. 22:27;

The rabbinic midrash speculates that Moses asked God why God created brackish water. God replied, "Instead of asking philosophical questions why don't you do something to make the bitter waters sweet?" (Sarna, "Exodus," p. 413). This is precisely what Moses did.

**And the LORD showed him a tree** - **Currid** notes that the verb **showed** "is from a root which in the Hiphil pattern means 'to teach/instruct'. The noun Torah, or law, is a derivative of that verb. Thus God is directing Moses how to change the nature of the water."

**Wiersbe** on the **tree** - To make "the tree" a picture of the cross of Christ is to go beyond what this passage teaches. Certainly God's children find victory in their trials by identifying with Christ in His death (Rom. 6) and resurrection (Rom. 8), but that isn't the lesson of this passage. The emphasis is on trusting God and obeying Him, knowing that the will of God will never lead us where the grace of God can't keep us. When we experience trials, our complaining is evidence of unbelief, but our obedience is evidence of faith.

**and he threw it into the waters, and the waters became sweet** - Now this an interesting juxtaposition of man's responsibility and God's sovereignty. Clearly God did the sweetening, but because it was clearly Moses who threw in the tree, it served as a visible means of maintaining his leadership.

**Guzik** who I use and respect has this quote (only part is given) - "In his work on the Exodus journey, Buckingham explains how this may have worked. The chemicals in the sap of the broken limb drew the mineral content down to the bottom of the pools, and left only good water on top."

**ED COMMENT:** WHY MUST WE LOOK FOR SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATIONS OF SUPERNATURAL EVENTS? GOD DID IT AND THAT SETTLES IT! IT WAS A MIRACLE AND BY NATURE MIRACLES ARE EVENTS THAT DO NOT JIVE WITH NATURAL LAWS OF SCIENCE. THAT'S WHY THEY ARE CALLED SUPERNATURAL!

**Alan Cole** writes that "Medieval commentators delighted to see here a reference to the cross, by which the bitterest of life's waters is sweetened."

**There He made for them a statute and regulation** - There is no specific statue or regulation given in this verse but if you keep reading the context (Ex 15:26) there is certainly a general principle given that obedience brings blessing and disobedience brings judgment.

**Currid** observes that "The last part of the verse is a parenthesis or an editorial. We are not told of what the pre-Sinaitic law consisted. However, Yahweh apparently tested Israel by that law through the episode of the bitter water. Israel obviously failed the test. The lesson

seems to have been that the Hebrews were totally dependent upon God for their survival. They needed divine guidance and aid, apart from which they would surely perish."

**Jack Arnold** - God put them in the desert with no water so they would learn to trust in Him, for He had promised to meet every need they had in the desert. It is as if God said, "Let's put you out in the desert and find out whether you Jews have a dynamic faith or just emotionalism. Is your faith based on temporary thrills and frills and excitement or is it based on the solid promises of God?" God sent them out to do spiritual combat as their first test in boot camp so as to toughen them up to fight bigger battles later. God sent them into this situation to teach them total dependence upon Him for everything. They were not to rely on themselves but on God. God sends difficult experiences into the Christian's life to teach him not to depend upon himself and carnal means to solve problems but to trust wholly in God for the solution. ([Sermon](#))

**THOUGHT** - Life is often bitter and frustrating for the Christian, but God has brought all experiences to develop faith. When a person lives his Christian life on emotionalism, he soon burns out and becomes bitter when problems and pressures come to him. A person, who has run on shallow and superficial experiences, even in all sincerity, will become bitter when life's pressures are on because he does not have a divine viewpoint towards life. ([Sermon](#))

**Adrian Rogers** - Do you know why God brought them to this place of bitterness? It was a place of test. It was a place where God was going to prove them. That wilderness was God's proving ground. When the Ford people, the Pontiac people, and the Chrysler people, or whomever it is—when they build an automobile, what do they do? They put that automobile out on the proving ground, and they ride it over those rough roads and those potholes. And, they ride it through water; and they ride it through heat; and they ride it through all of these things—hundreds of miles—screeching, turning, twisting, jamming on the breaks, and spinning it around. They want to see: Can it stand the test? Is it safe for the road? They're proving the automobile. They're testing the automobile. Now, God, unknown to them, was testing them. You see, God is a strange teacher. He gives the test first and the lesson afterwards. And, that's what He did to these people. He gave them a test. And, I want you to know how they did on the test? They failed it miserably. They're like the boy who went to his college professor and said, "Professor, I don't believe I deserve this 'F' that you gave me." The professor said, "Son, I don't believe you deserve it either, but it's the lowest grade we had." That's how bad they failed this test! I mean, God was putting them to the test, and, ignominiously, they failed the test that God gave them. And, how did they fail the test? Well, they failed the test by murmuring when trouble came. And, I want to tell you something, friend: When God gets ready to prove you—when God gets ready to test you—He's not going to test you in the good times; because that's not a test. He's not going to test you in the middle of a revival meeting—that's not the test. He's not going to test our church when statistics are up, and it's growing, and people are being baptized, and the budgets, this year, are more than they were last year, and all of that—that's no test. Anybody can serve God in the sunshine. You see, they were leaping, dancing, praising, shouting, singing, and glorifying God when they came out of Egypt through the Red Sea. See. Anybody can shout in the sunshine, but can you sing in the shadows? That's the test. The test is not how you behave when it's victory all around. The test is how do you behave when God brings you to bitterness—when God brings you to Marah, where there's no water. There, the Bible says, God brought them, that He might test them. Now, He didn't test them that He might know what was in their hearts. He already knew what was in their hearts. He wanted them to know what was in their hearts. He wanted them to understand the weakness and the frailty of their human nature, if, indeed, it was there in them

**APPLICATION** - When most Christians come upon a bad situation, they want to bailout. They want to change their environment, change their circumstances, and change their location. However, this is not usually what God wants. God wants Christians to learn to trust Him in the circumstances so they can develop their faith and live as super naturalists. There are no accidents with God. God ordains every situation in life, and He wants us to learn from our experiences. We all have our Marahs, and we are all being tested. Why? Does God hate us? No, because God loves us and wants us to become strong Christian warriors. God takes us through boot-camp experiences to toughen us up to fight future battles. Faith does not develop in easy situations, in success circumstances, but in pressure situations. We must see where the Israelites failed and learn from their failures. Never run from your Marahs. "Do not fear; stand fast and see the deliverance of the Lord." Do not do like the Jews. They grumbled; they expressed unbelief; they became bitter; they blamed Moses; they did everything wrong when they were put into the pressure cooker. Remember, God does have a solution for every problem of life. Throwing the tree into the water symbolizes the applying of the Word of God to experience, or the mixing of the promises of God with faith. It is the application of the Bible to a bitter experience, which makes a bitter experience sweet, because then we get a divine viewpoint on the situation. ([Sermon](#))

**And there He tested them** - Yes, Yahweh tested Israel. And yes He still tests those who belong to Him. But he does not test us to break us but to make us better. For believers today, He tests us so that we will grow more and more like His Son. And we rest assured He will not give us more than we can bear according to 1 Cor 10:13+.

**THOUGHT** - **Tested** (see [nacah/nasah](#) below) is translated in the Septuagint here in Exodus 15:25 (also in Ex 16:4, Ex 17:2, Ex 17:7, Dt 8:2) with the [peirazo](#) a neutral verb that speaks of encountering a trial which can either be a positive test (as used in Hebrews 11:17) or if resisted and/or reacted to can become a temptation (as in Gal 6:1+ = "lest you too be tempted"). If we make the choice to regard the trial/test as from the LORD and for our good (considering it "joy" as James 1:2-4+ describes), then the result is spiritual growth, growth in Christ-likeness. On the other hand if we react like Israel did, and we choose to regard it as onerous, unwanted and unnecessary, we will begin to grumble and fall into sin which can take a variety of shapes and sizes.

**Tested** (05254) (**nacah/nasah**) in most OT uses has idea of testing or proving quality of someone or something and doing so often through adversity or hardship. As the following context makes clear (note "to see," lit., "to know," in 3:4), the purpose of this divine test was to determine if Israel was truly loyal. An examination of parallel passages shows that such divine tests were designed to reveal otherwise hidden character qualities. Testing which shows what someone is really like generally involves difficulty or hardship.

**Nacah/nasah in OT** - 34v - Gen. 22:1; Exod. 15:25; Exod. 16:4; Exod. 17:2; Exod. 17:7; Exod. 20:20; Num. 14:22; Deut. 4:34; Deut. 6:16; Deut. 8:2; Deut. 8:16; Deut. 13:3; Deut. 28:56; Deut. 33:8; Jdg. 2:22; Jdg. 3:1; Jdg. 3:4; Jdg. 6:39; 1 Sam. 17:39; 1 Ki. 10:1; 2 Chr. 9:1; 2 Chr. 32:31; Job 4:2; Ps. 26:2; Ps. 78:18; Ps. 78:41; Ps. 78:56; Ps. 95:9; Ps. 106:14; Eccl. 2:1; Eccl. 7:23; Isa. 7:12; Dan. 1:12; Dan. 1:14

#### Related Resources on Tests:

- Commentary on James 1:2-5
- [Commentary](#) on 1 Peter 6-7
- [Commentary](#) on 1 Corinthians 10:13

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**Wiersbe on test** - The Lord tests us to encourage spiritual growth and bring out the best in us, but the devil tempts us to bring out the worst in us and to encourage spiritual immaturity. The attitude that we take toward our difficulties determines which direction life will go, for what life does to us depends on what life finds in us. If we trust God and obey His Word, we'll pass the test and grow; but if in unbelief we complain and disobey the Lord, we'll fail the test and remain immature (James 1:12–18; Heb. 12:1–11).

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#### F. B. MEYER.

Beside each bitter Marah pool there grows a tree, which, when cast into the waters, makes them palatable and sweet. It is ever so. Poison and antidote, infection and cure, pain and medicine, are always close together. The **word** which saves is nigh even in the mouth and in the heart. We do not always see the "sufficient grace"; but it is there. Too occupied with our disappointment, we have no heart to seek it; but when we cry, it is shown to our weary longing eyes.

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**Herbert Lockyer** - As the cross is called a tree (Acts 5:30; Gal. 3:13), the tree at Marah is a striking prophecy of all the Saviour accomplished at Calvary, which was the culmination of His earthly Marahs. As He died, He refused the offered narcotic to deaden pain. He wanted to be conscious as He drained even the dregs of such a bitter cup. This was why the cross was sweet to Jesus—it was the expression of the Father's eternal will (John 18:11; I Pet. 1:20). He knew that the tree was the only cure for the polluted waters of sin, and, as the carpenter, He fashioned the ark of salvation out of that tree. We often say after some hard test, "If I had known beforehand I could not have endured it." But Jesus knew before He was born that He was to be the tree cast into the waters, and when He appeared among men He walked with a firm step to that tree upon which He was crucified.

The Cross: it takes our guilt away;  
It holds the fainting spirit up;  
It cheers with hope the gloomy day,  
And sweetens ev'ry bitter cup.

When we reach our Marah do we look for the tree? Is grace ours to lay our anguish, all that is sore and sour in life, alongside of Calvary, and experience how all the Saviour endured can rob us of all our bitter feelings and thoughts (Rom. 5:3, 4)? That rugged tree on the hill at Calvary seems to say to us, "How dare you complain about your trials after such undeserved agony and shame?" It is only a sweet resignation to the divine will, whether pleasant or painful, that can enable us to say,

How bitter that cup no heart can conceive,  
Which Jesus drank up, that sinners might live!  
His way was much rougher, and darker than mine:  
Did Jesus thus suffer, and shall I repine?

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#### F B Meyer - Exodus 15:25 The waters were made Sweet.

Our joys and sorrows, like the varied products of nature, lie very close together. One moment we are singing the joyous song of victory on the shores of the Red Sea, and vow we will never again mistrust our God; and then, by a sudden transition, we find ourselves standing beside the Marsh waters of pain and disappointment, inclined to murmur at our lot.

There is, however, a tree, which, when cast into the waters, makes them sweet. It is the tree of the cross. "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree." The cross means the yielding up of the will. Now, it is in proportion as we see God's will in the various events of life, and surrender ourselves either to bear or do it, that we shall find earth's bitter things becoming sweet, and its hard things easy.

**We must yield our will to God.** — The secret of blessedness is in saying “Yes” to the will of God, as it is shown in the circumstances of our lot or the revelations of his Word. It is the will of a Father whose love and wisdom are beyond question.

**We must accept what He permits.** — It may be that our pains emanate from the malevolence or negligence of others; still, if He has permitted them, they are his will for us. By the time they reach us they have become minted with his die, and we must patiently submit.

**We must do all He bids.** — The thread of obedience must always be running through our hands. At all costs to our choice and feeling we must not only have his commands, but keep them. Our Lord perpetually lays stress on obeying his words. This is the spirit of the Cross, and the properties of this tree sweeten earth’s bitterest sorrows. “Disappointments become his appointments.”

**Exodus 15:26 And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I, the LORD, am your healer."**

**Currid** - And he said, ‘If you will certainly listen to the voice of Yahweh your God, and you do the right thing in his eyes, and you listen to his commandments, and you keep all his decrees, then I will not set upon you any of the diseases which I put on Egypt. Because I am Yahweh, the one who heals you.’

- **If you will give earnest heed** - Lev 26:3,13 De 7:12,13,15 Dt 28:1-15
- **Will** - De 12:28 13:18 1Ki 11:33,38 2Ki 22:2 Eze 18:5
- **diseases** - Ex 9:10,11 12:29 De 7:15 28:27,60
- **for I am** - Ex 23:25 2Ki 20:5 Job 5:18 Ps 41:3,4 103:3 147:3 Isa 57:18 Jer 8:22 33:6 Ho 6:1 Jas 5:11-16

## **A CONDITIONAL PROMISE FROM YAHWEH**

**And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of the LORD your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes** - Note the repetition of similar verbs **heed...do...give ear...keep**). The NET version translates it "If you will **diligently obey** the LORD your God, and **do** what is right in his sight, and **pay attention** to his commandments, and **keep** all his statutes (Ex 15:26NET) These four verbs are clearly interrelated and serve to reiterate Yahweh's instructions could be distilled down to obedience will yield blessing and disobedience will yield cursing (**disease...put on the Egyptians**).

**Robert Rayburn** explains - *If they will obey his word, if they will be faithful to him* they will receive his blessing. He will not curse them as he did the Egyptians for their rebellion, but will provide for them according to the riches of his goodness. The contrast with the Egyptians was suggested perhaps not only because Israel had so recently seen God's judgment fall upon them, but because the first of the plagues God had visited upon Egypt also made the water of the Nile undrinkable. He has proved himself to them as the one who is able to save them to the uttermost and provide for them whatever they need. "Obedience to his will, which implied [faith], would be met by God's protecting hand over them." [Ellison, 86] Always there is this alternative: faith and obedience and, with them, God's blessing or unbelief and disobedience, and, with them, God's curse. *So, the point of the phrase "the Lord showed him" in v. 25 is that Israel should learn the great truth that they need instruction and guidance from heaven.* [Cassuto, 184] And, furthermore, that if they follow that instruction they will enjoy God's blessing.....It is apt that the Lord should identify himself as Israel's healer both because some of the plagues the Lord visited upon Egypt involved sickness and death and because, in this instance, he has provided for the physical health and welfare of his people by providing sweet water.

**THOUGHT** - The **test** Israel faced in the wilderness is the same one believers face today: They and we have to listen to the voice of God, do what is right and obey His commandments. This is the pattern for victory when we face bitter circumstances which might otherwise bring discouragement and disillusionment. Listen to God and obey His commandments.

**I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians**- This presumably refers to the diseases Yahweh **put on the Egyptians** in the form of the plagues..

**Currid** - The healing of the waters at Marah serves as a paradigm for a similar event in 2 Kings 2:19–22. In that incident, Elisha purifies bad water by throwing salt into it. Even some of the vocabulary of the two episodes is alike. For example, God proclaims in the later episode in that 'I have healed these waters' (2 Kings 2:21).

Here are some passages (all use the verb *rapha* - heal) that illustrate the consequences of Israel not obeying and experiencing the negative consequences of this conditional promise from Yahweh...

- Deuteronomy 28:27 "The LORD will smite you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors and with the scab and with the itch, from which you cannot be healed.

- Deuteronomy 28:35 "The LORD will strike you on the knees and legs with sore boils, from which you cannot be healed, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.
- Deuteronomy 32:39; "See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand.

**For I, the LORD, am your healer** - Jehovah functioned more as a "Warrior" (Ex 15:3±) in the dispensation of the diseases (plagues) on the Egyptians, but only did so because they (especially Pharaoh) repeatedly refused to hear and heed (obey) His instructions (especially "Let My people go.") But here we see Yahweh become known as [Jehovah Rapha, the God who heals](#). In the present context, if Israel had gone without water much longer (maybe even only one day longer), many Israelites would have died from dehydration. Jehovah stepped in and used His servant Moses to perform a miracle of using a tree to turn bitter water to sweet water, which (1) first of all would "heal" them (prevent them from dying of dehydration) and (2) would serve to remind Israel He was the same God Who had performed miracles in Egypt and at the Red Sea.

Notice also that had this **no water/bitter water trial** not occurred, Israel would not have had this new revelation of [Jehovah Rapha, the God who heals](#). And that is a reminder to all of us that while the test/trial may be bitter, it is always better to go through it in God's will and with His gracious provision, for when we come out on the other side (so to speak) we will have a new, fresh understanding of Who God is, even as Israel came to know God by this great new name.

**Healer** (Physician) ([07495](#))([rapha/rophe](#)) means to heal (both figurative and literal healing), to make whole, to restore to normal (restore health), to cure, to repair. In 1Ki. 18:30 it refers to "**repairing**" the altar of the Jerusalem temple. **Rapha** in its participial form, **rophe** (meaning "one who heals") is the Hebrew word used of **physicians** in Jer. 8:22; Gen. 50:2; 2Chr 16:12; Job 13:4. Rapha is usually translated in the Septuagint with the Greek verb [iaomai](#) ([see discussion below](#)).

**Brown and Kaiser** remark that the root Hebrew **rp'** "fundamentally means "to heal"....The Lord as **rophe'** (rapha) could be supplicated to make infertile wombs fruitful, mend earthquake-torn lands, make poisonous waters wholesome or restore an apostate people....the Hebrew usage of **rp'** (includes ideas) such as "heal, fix, mend, restore, repair, remit, make wholesome/fresh," etc....Thus in [Ex 15:26](#)..."I am the LORD your Healer"...fits quite naturally in a context that recounts (a) the Lord's making undrinkable waters wholesome ([Ex 15:22, 23, 24](#)), and (b) His promise to keep obedient Israel free of all the "sickness" (mahala) he inflicted on Egypt (including, presumably, making the Nile waters undrinkable, along with smiting Egypt's land, people, cattle). Clearly, He was more than Israel's "Great Physician," in twentieth-century, Western terms. Rather, He was the Restorer, the One Who made them whole. Thus one of the reasons why I translate *yhwh rope 'eka* as "the LORD your Healer" is that "Healer" conveys a wider ranger of meanings than do the terms physician, doctor, Arzt (German), or medecin (French). ([Israel's Divine Healer](#))

**Rapha/rophe** - 62v - Gen. 20:17; Gen. 50:2; Exod. 15:26; Exod. 21:19; Lev. 13:18; Lev. 13:37; Lev. 14:3; Lev. 14:48; Num. 12:13; Deut. 28:27; Deut. 28:35; Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 6:3; 1 Ki. 18:30; 2 Ki. 2:21; 2 Ki. 2:22; 2 Ki. 8:29; 2 Ki. 9:15; 2 Ki. 20:5; 2 Ki. 20:8; 2 Chr. 7:14; 2 Chr. 16:12; 2 Chr. 22:6; 2 Chr. 30:20; Job 5:18; Job 13:4; Ps. 6:2; Ps. 30:2; Ps. 41:4; Ps. 60:2; Ps. 103:3; Ps. 107:20; Ps. 147:3; Eccl. 3:3; Isa. 6:10; Isa. 19:22; Isa. 30:26; Isa. 53:5; Isa. 57:18; Isa. 57:19; Jer. 3:22; Jer. 6:14; Jer. 8:11; Jer. 8:22; Jer. 15:18; Jer. 17:14; Jer. 19:11; Jer. 30:17; Jer. 33:6; Jer. 51:8; Jer. 51:9; Lam. 2:13; Ezek. 34:4; Ezek. 47:8; Ezek. 47:9; Ezek. 47:11; Hos. 5:13; Hos. 6:1; Hos. 7:1; Hos. 11:3; Hos. 14:4; Zech. 11:16

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**How should we respond when we find ourselves drinking from the waters of Marah?** Ken Hemphill in his excellent book [which I highly recommend] *The Names of God* answers with the following practical suggestions:

**"First, listen earnestly to the voice of God. What is God trying to say to you in your present circumstances?**

Sometimes we tend to hear God clearly when we are on the mountaintop of spiritual victory. When we get to Marah, we must tune our ears attentively to the voice of the Lord. Ask yourself what God is saying through your circumstances. What does God want to do in your life? What have you learned about God from these events?

**Second, do what is right.** In other words, behave righteously. Instead of responding by grumbling & complaining when you find yourself at Marah, do what is right. You can overcome your circumstances by focusing on the reliability of the nature of God. Because He never changes, you can know that He is loving & trustworthy & will meet your every need.

**Third, obey God's commands.** When you find yourself with bitter waters, look to see if there are areas of disobedience in your life. Our desire to obey Him emerges from the fact that we know His character. Thus our obedience is the response of joyous confidence."

**Exodus 15:27** Then they came to Elim where there were twelve springs of water and seventy date palms, and they camped there beside the waters.

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- **Elim** - Nu 33:9 Isa 12:3 Eze 47:12 Rev 7:17 22:2

Elim to the NW of the Red Marker  
Click to Enlarge

Date Palm

## TIME OF REFRESHING FOLLOWING A TIME OF TESTING

While God had brought them into no water/bitter water tests, now He gives them relief, and He does the same in our lives after our tests. Remember, you are either in a test, coming out of a test or getting ready to go into a test!

**Then they came to Elim where there were twelve springs of water and seventy [date palms](#), and they camped there beside the waters** - This is quite a "waterlogged" journey for Israel - through much water (Red Sea), to no water, to bitter water, to 12 springs of water! You can only imagine the 2 million Israelites saying "Now this is more like it, sweet spring water, sweet dates and sweet palm shade."

**Robert Rayburn** - The **twelve** and the **seventy** are both Hebrew images of perfection. Shade, pasture, and clear, fresh water. We are reminded of the 23rd Psalm: "...he makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters..."

Jack Arnold - Israel failed God's first real test in the desert, but God still graciously dealt with the infant nation. God knew that babies have to have time to grow up. Therefore, with loving patience, He tolerated the people's unbelief and brought them to luscious Elim (the place of trees) where there was abundant water and many trees. It was not an accident that there were twelve wells for the twelve tribes of Israel and seventy trees for the seventy senior elders of Israel. God brought the Israelites to a time of refreshing after a major test, and they stayed at Elim relaxing for about one month (Exodus 16:1). God brings testings, but they are temporary and will pass. After testing, God brings the Christian to a place of spiritual refreshing where he can grow strong in the Word, prayer, and fellowship so as to get truth in the head to face another battle. When the new crisis comes, all the things which were learned while in a season of refreshing must be put into practice by faith. ([Sermon](#))

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How wisely God has apportioned our cup! He does not give us all sweetness, lest we should rest satisfied with earth; nor all bitterness, lest we grow weary and disgusted with our lot. But He wisely mixes the two, so that if we drink the one, we must also taste the other. And perhaps a time is coming when we shall see that the proportions of this cup of human joy and sorrow are more equally adjusted than we now imagine—that souls capable of enjoyments above the vulgar crowd can also feel sorrow in comparison with which theirs is but like the passing April cloud in contrast with the long Egyptian night. How wise an ordination this is we cannot now discover. It will require the light which streams from the Eternal Throne to reveal to us the blessed effects of having the sentence of death written on all our earthly enjoyments. (The Life of Catherine Booth)

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### Exodus 15:22-27 The Same Hand

He cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. —Exodus 15:25

The children of Israel had not gone far from the shore of the Red Sea when the realities of their new freedom began to register. They no longer enjoyed the ample food and water supply of Egypt. Now, after traveling 3 days into the wilderness, the large crowd had no water. And when they finally arrived at the oasis of Marah, the water was bitter (Ex. 15:23).

Thus the children of Israel were compelled to rely on a miracle. So they cried out to Moses, and Moses cried out to the Lord. The Lord showed him a tree, which Moses cast into the water. Miraculously, the water turned sweet.

The transformation of the water was a miracle akin to the plague of blood sent to Pharaoh and the Egyptians (Ex. 7:14-25). Egypt's clean water had been sullied with blood by the hand of the Lord. The lesson of Marah was clear—the same hand that turned water into blood could turn bitter water into sweet. The same power that brought curses on Egypt could bring health to Israel.

If you have a seemingly impossible need today, remember that the hand that supplied your greatest need—forgiveness of sin—is the same hand that can adequately supply all your needs. Trust Him to accomplish things that seem impossible. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

When our problems overwhelm us,  
God wants us to look to Him;  
He provides the right solutions—  
Lighting paths that once were dim.  
—Sper

Impossibilities compel us to rely on God.

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### **Exodus 15:22-27 From Bitter To Sweet**

Joy and sorrow are often close companions. Just as the Israelites went from the thrill of victory at the Red Sea to the bitter waters of Marah just 3 days later (Exodus 15:22, 23), our rejoicing can quickly turn into anguish.

At Marah, the Lord told Moses to throw a tree into the water, which made it "sweet" and drinkable (Ex. 15:25). Another "tree," when "cast into" the bitter circumstances of our lives, can make them sweet. It is the cross of Jesus (1Peter 2:24). Our outlook will be transformed as we contemplate His sacrificial death and His submission to the will of God (Luke 22:42).

Our pain may come from the ill-will of others, or worse, from their neglect. Nevertheless, our Lord has permitted it. We may not understand why, yet it is the will of our Father and Friend, whose wisdom and love are infinite.

When we say yes to God as His Spirit reveals His will to us through His Word, the bitter circumstances of our lives can become sweet. We must not grumble against what the Lord permits. Instead, we must do all that He asks us to do. Jesus said that we are to take up our cross daily and follow Him (Luke 9:23).

When we remember Jesus' cross and submit to the Father as He did, bitter experiences can become sweet. —David H. Roper [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

Lord, I've not always understood  
What plan You have for me;  
Yet I will glory in Your cross  
And bear mine patiently.  
—Anon.

God uses our difficulties to make us better—not bitter.

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### **Exodus 15:22-27a A Tree Of Healing**

While waiting in the church parking lot, I switched on the car radio and heard the distinctive voice of Bible teacher J. Vernon McGee. "When the experiences of life are bitter," he asked, "what can make them sweet?" Just then I glanced in the rearview mirror and saw a boy walking with his mother toward the church. He held her arm as they moved slowly, every step an effort because of his cerebral palsy. They had come to worship God.

So, what can sweeten the painful experiences of life? McGee's answer: "Only the cross of Christ." He cited the healing of the bitter waters of Marah in Exodus 15, which he saw as a prophetic picture of Christ's sacrifice for our sin. Moses "cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet" (Ex. 15:25).

The New Testament uses "the tree" as a metaphor to describe the cross on which our Savior died. In 1 Peter 2:24, for example, we read that Christ "Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree."

Today, as we embrace all that the cross means, we can find healing of heart and the transforming power of God's love that sweetens the bitterest waters of life. —David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Christ takes each sin, each pain, each loss,  
And by the power of His cross  
Transforms our brokenness and shame,  
So that we may glorify His name.  
--DJD

The cross of Christ can sweeten the most bitter experience of life.

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### **Exodus 15:22-27b Into The Desert**

After the Israelites miraculously crossed the Red Sea, they were led into the desert. How strange that God would lead them from a place of revelation and power to a place of disappointment and dire need!

But God wanted to show them that life is a combination of bitter and sweet, triumph and defeat. When the Israelites arrived at Marah, they complained because the water was bitter (Ex. 15:23). After Moses interceded (Ex. 15:25), God reminded them to keep His commandments (Ex. 15:26). Then He brought them to the abundance and refreshment of Elim (Ex. 15:27).

The Lord wanted to teach them that each experience on their journey would reveal their hearts. This test showed they were living by sight

and not by faith.

They also learned that God was involved in their daily affairs. He wanted them to know that He not only could part the sea, but He would also supply water for His people. He knew their needs because He planned their way.

If you are being led into a wilderness of disappointment and bitterness right now, trust God, for He knows exactly where you are and what you need. As you obey His commands, He will lead you out of the desert and into a place of spiritual abundance, healing, and refreshment. —Marvin Williams ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We shrink from this life's challenges—we plead  
For watered pastures never touched by pain;  
But God will often let us sense our need  
Before He sends His cool, refreshing rain.  
—Gustafson

The more bitter the desert experience, the sweeter the water of the oasis

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### **Exodus 15:22-27 AN OASIS IN THE DESERT**

"He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters." (Psalm 23:2).

A humble Christian, when beset by a tremendous trial, misquoted Scripture but found great comfort in it. He said, "I'm so glad the Bible tells us, 'It came to pass' and not 'It came to stay.'— Those particular words do not speak of the temporal nature of difficulties, but in other places the Bible clearly teaches that God will see us through our trials. Life is not all hardship. If it were, discouragement would overwhelm us and we would give up.

In Exodus 15 we read that the children of Israel tasted the bitter waters of Marah. But then God led them to Elim where they enjoyed wells of sweet water and the coolness of sheltering palms. The people knew that both stops were by God's direction. His "glory cloud" hovered over them to point the way. When it moved, the Israelites moved; when it stopped, they stopped. That cloud clearly marked both Marah and Elim.

Whenever God leads us to a campsite at Marah, where we experience bitterness, sorrow, or disappointment, we must keep in mind that we will one day drink the sweet water of Elim's wells and feel the refreshing shade of its palms. God's comfort will surely come—both on earth and in heaven. And when we are enjoying the encouragement of Elim, we should rejoice, knowing that God is strengthening us for the rest of the journey. —P. R. Van Gorder.

In every desert of calamity, God has an oasis of comfort.

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### **Exodus 15:1-7,22-27 From Singing to Complaining by Theodore Epp**

In the Israelites' song recorded in Exodus 15, the word "Lord" occurs 11 times, and various personal pronouns referring to Him occur more than 30 times. So it is clear that the song was sung to Him and about Him. All the honors of the victory were reverently laid at His feet.

In this song of assurance and praise, Moses is not mentioned once. This indicates that the Israelites now had complete confidence in the trustworthiness of God. Only three days after the Red Sea experience, however, the Israelites were grumbling against Moses and against God.

Why such a change of attitude in just three days? They had overlooked the fact that the cloud had led them in this direction, and since God was leading them, He would supply their needs.

When the people murmured against Moses (v. 24), they were actually murmuring against God. Every complaint against circumstances, every grumbling about the daily trials of life is directed against the One who "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:11).

Although the Israelites did not have this verse at the time, they had seen enough of God's work to know that He did not make mistakes and that He could perform anything necessary to provide for them.

And remember, what happened to Israel is to serve as an example to us (1 Cor. 10:11).

"Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness)" (Heb. 3:7,8).

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### **Exodus 15:22-27 The Road To Blessing**

So [Moses] cried out to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a tree. —Exodus 15:25

Robyn and Steve have a counseling ministry that provides very little income. Recently, a family crisis forced them to embark on a 5,000-

mile round trip in their well-used minivan.

After attending to the crisis, they started back to Michigan. While about 2,000 miles from home, their van began to sputter and stall. A mechanic looked at it and told them, "It's done. You need a new engine."

Unable to afford one, they had no choice but to coax the van home. Three days, a case of oil, and a lot of prayers later, they miraculously limped into their driveway. Then they heard of a "car missionary" who assisted people in ministry. Amazed that the van had made it, he offered to replace the engine free of charge. If Steve had gotten the van fixed en route, it would have cost him thousands of dollars he didn't have.

In Exodus 15, the Israelites were led by God into the desert. Three days into their trip, they ran out of water and had no way to get it. But God knew about the problem. In fact, a solution awaited them in Marah (Exodus 15:25) and Elim (Exodus 15:27). God not only fixed their water problem but also provided a place to rest.

Even when our situation looks difficult, we can trust that God is leading. He already knows what we'll need when we get there. [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)

I know not by what methods rare  
The Lord provides for me;  
I only know that all my needs  
He meets so graciously.  
—Adams

Facing an impossibility gives us the opportunity to trust God.

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### Exodus 15:26 The Great Healer

I am the Lord, who heals you. —Exodus 15:26

The doctors I know are smart, hard-working, and compassionate. They have relieved my suffering on many occasions, and I am grateful for their expertise in diagnosing illnesses, prescribing medication, setting broken bones, and stitching up wounds. But this does not mean that I place my faith in physicians rather than in God.

For reasons known only to God, He appointed humans to be His partners in the work of caring for creation (Gen. 2:15), and doctors are among them. Doctors study medical science and learn how God designed the body. They use this knowledge to help restore us to a healthy condition. But the only reason doctors can do anything to make us better is that God created us with the ability to heal. Surgeons would be useless if incisions didn't heal.

Scientists can learn how God created our bodies to function, and they devise therapies to help restore or cure us, but they are not healers; God is (Ex. 15:26). Doctors simply cooperate with God's original intent and design.

So I am grateful for science and doctors, but my praise and thanksgiving go to God, who designed an orderly universe and who created us with minds that can discover how it works. I believe, therefore, that all healing is divine because no healing takes place apart from God.

Father God, You are the Great Physician, and I ask for healing, whether mind, body, spirit, or in all of these. I believe You will give what is best. Thank You for Your goodness, kindness, and love in all things.

When you think of all that's good, give thanks to God.

**INSIGHT:** Genesis 2:7-15 gives us a glimpse into the perfect living environment of Adam and Eve before the fall. God provided everything necessary for their sustenance and enjoyment—food (Genesis 2:9), water (Genesis 2:10), and other natural resources (Genesis 2:10-12)—and gave man the responsibility to manage these resources (Genesis 2:15). God had originally intended for humanity to live forever, but after the fall Adam and Eve were prevented from eating from the Tree of Life so that they would not live forever in their sinful condition (Genesis 3:22-24). [\(Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved\)](#)

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### Exodus 15:22-16:5 THE SPORT OF SCAPEGOATING

"Then the whole congregation... murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness" (Exodus 16:2).

Fred Grimm, a Christian probation officer, told of a father who made a scapegoat of his son by blaming him for family conflicts. Although the man and his wife had been fighting for years, the father told his son,

"It's always because of your big mouth that your mother and I fight. If I leave you and your mother, it will be your fault."

The youngster's problems were compounded when the father died suddenly from a stroke and the mother accused her son of having caused his father's death. The boy was devastated.

Blaming others for our problems is not only unjust and cruel, it's displeasing to the Lord. The children of Israel did this in the wilderness shortly after their deliverance from the land of Egypt. When food and water were short, they panicked and blamed Moses and Aaron for getting them into their predicament. They made scapegoats of their leaders. Yet God mercifully overlooked their lack of faith and unfair criticism of His servants in those two incidents. Later, though, when the Israelites committed the same sin again, He judged them severely (see Numbers 16:1ff).

Scapegoating can do great damage. Instead of looking for someone else to blame for our problems, we need to analyze our situation, acknowledge our failures, and ask God for forgiveness and help.—H. V. Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We won't get closer to God by passing judgment on others.