

Place: Lurgan Baptist 6:12:2005

Reading: Exodus 15:1-22

## FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN

### 7. THE SONG OF THE SAVED

In 1792 a group of settlers travelled to Africa. There were more than a thousand of them, all of African descent. Some had worked as slaves on American plantations. Others had served as soldiers in the British Army and then moved north to live in Canada. Together they planned to resettle in what is now Sierra Leone, on land purchased as a Province of Freedom. The settlers were all professing Christians. When they reached Africa they marched ashore singing a hymn by William Hammond ( 1719-1783 ) the song was entitled “ *Awake and Sing the Song.* ” One of the verses goes

*“ Awake and sing the song  
Of Moses and the Lamb  
Wake every heart and every tongue  
To praise the Saviour’s name  
Sing on your heavenly way  
Ye ransomed sinners, sing  
Sing on, rejoicing every day  
In Christ, the eternal King,”*

It was an appropriate hymn to sing. The settlers had been released from captivity, they had crossed the sea, and now they were entering the promised land. So they sang of the prophet Moses who brought Israel out of Egypt. They also sang to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who had set them free to serve God in a new land. The Lord had done such a great thing for them that it called forth a song of praise. You see, whenever God does something great He deserves to be praised and often this praise comes in the form of a song. ***Did you realise that the Christian faith is a singing faith ?*** In fact, from the beginning to the end of the Bible, you will find songs of praise to God for who He is and what He has done. This first song of Scripture has been called the ***Song of Redemption*** for it proceeded from the hearts of a redeemed people. The Book of Psalms is actually a collection of songs written by David and others. These Psalms became the Jewish hymnbook for their worship services. Throughout the Old Testament we find the people praising the Lord for their redemption and deliverance.

The New Testament also contains a number of hymns of adoration. We think of the song of Mary ( Lk 1:46-55 ) the praise of Zacharias ( Lk 1:68-79 ) the exultation of the angels at the birth of Christ. And of course, in addition to that we find references indicating the importance of praise in the worship of the early church.

This pattern of praise has continued throughout church history. Many of the reformers realised

the vast potential of music in Christian worship and in the proclamation of the gospel. One of the greatest reforms of Martin Luther was the restoration of congregational singing. Christians are still singing “ *A mighty fortress is our God,* ” and many other hymns written by Luther. In addition to the revival they began in England, John and Charles Wesley are probably best known for their many marvellous hymns and gospel songs. The effectiveness of the evangelistic crusades of D.L. Moody was due in part to the powerful singing of Ira Sankey. The Christian faith is indeed a singing faith. But what is it that motivates Christians to sing ? Why do we have song in our hearts and praise on our lips ? Well, we sing because of

### **1. Salvation:**

David knew the joy of salvation for he wrote, “ *I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me and heard my cry. He brought me up also out an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God, many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.* ” ( Ps 40:1-3 ) When a person trusts Christ, the Lord picks him up and sets him on the solid rock, Christ Jesus. Instead of a cry of desperation, the believer now has a song of praise to the Lord for His great salvation. Have you ever noticed that throughout Scripture salvation is always accompanied by joy ? Think of the parable of the lost silver, the lost sheep, the lost son ! You see, when you know Christ as your Saviour He gives you a song.

### **2. Scripture:**

Paul says, “ *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.* ” ( Col 3:15-16 ) You see, through the Word of God we discover, the God of the Word. And the more we learn of God’s goodness and grace toward us, the more we will desire to sing praises to His name. Sometimes it takes grace to sing, especially when you’re experiencing difficulty and suffering.

( Matt 26:30 Acts 16:22 ) Sometimes it takes grace to listen to others sing. So we sing because of 1, 2,

### **3. The Spirit:**

Do you recall Paul’s words to the Ephesians ? “ *And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.* ” ( Eph 5:18-19 ) Those who are filled and controlled by the Holy Spirit have a joy within that must express itself. Singing and praising God is a natural outgrowth of this joy. You see, that’s why our singing does not depend on how we feel or on the circumstances around us. Instead, our singing depends on the indwelling ministry of the Spirit. So if we know the Lord and have experienced His salvation, if we are continually feeding on the Scriptures, if we are filled and controlled with the Spirit, then we will have a new song that we can sing unto the Lord, because His joy fills our hearts. Now when we come to ( Ch 15 ) we come to the first recorded song of Scripture. Incidentally,

did you hear about the woman in the choir who was a waterproof soprano ? Nothing could drown out her voice. You see, everyone does not have a great singing voice. But if we are God's redeemed people, we want to sing. Now look at this glorious song and the first thing I want you to note is,

### **(1) THE TIMING OF THIS SONG**

Did you notice how this chapter begins ? “ *Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song .....* ” ( 15:1 )

Now the Scripture says, “ *It is a good thing to gave thanks unto the Lord, it is good to sing praises unto God for it is pleasant and praise is comely.* ” ( Ps 92:1 147:1 ) But before we can praise the Lord we must first know God, deliverance must be known and enjoyed, salvation must be accomplished and accepted, before a burst of praise can escape a sinners lips. Look at,

#### **(a) THE PERIOD SPECIFIED:**

“ *Then,* ” the word “ *then,* ” makes the connection between chapter 14 & chapter 15 between salvation and its song. You see, salvation is what put the sing into Israel's heart. As soon as the people were saved, they burst into song. Now what a contrast all this is from what was before. You see, there was no singing in Egypt. When you look at the opening chapters of the book of Exodus, all that you hear is the lash of the oppressor, the cry of the bondman, the groan of the prisoner, but you will hear no singing. In the grip of a cruel tyrant they had neither the desire nor the ability to sing. But now listen, “ *Then sang Moses and the children of Israel.* ” When ? Yesterday, they were a multitude of undisciplined bondmen, today they are gloriously free.

They have been sheltered by the blood of the lamb and delivered by the hand of the Lord, and now standing on the sunny banks of resurrection with the smile and favour of heaven resting upon them, they pour out their hearts in joyous thanksgiving. *Their redemption began with a sigh ( 2:23 ) but it ends with a song. ( 15:1 )* And what had produced this startling change ? *Two things the blood of the Lamb, and the power of the Lord.* This song is therefore the song of the saved. Membership in this choir is obtained not by superior vocal capacity, but by a right spiritual condition. But how is that condition reached ? Well, look at the order in ( 14:31 ) The order is they “ *saw,* ” they “ *believed,* ” and then they “ *sang.* ” Is this not where praise comes in ? Its after salvation, and not before it. The prodigal first received his father's kiss of love then “ *they began to be merry.* ” Philip went down to Samaria and preached Christ, the people believed the Word and there was “ *great joy in that city.* ” ( Acts 8:8 ) The Ethiopian in the desert of Gaza believed, and then went on his way “ *rejoicing.* ” ( Acts 8:39 ) My .... the story is the same, and so is the order in every case. Salvation comes first, then comes the song. My .... can you truthfully take up the language of this song and say, “ *He is my God,* ” “ *He is become my salvation.* ” ( 15:2 ) Can you say with David, “ *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my God, my strength, in whom I will trust.* ” ( Ps 18:1 ) (a) but notice,

#### **(b) THE PEOPLE IDENTIFIED:**

You see, some scholars feel that this song was sung like this. Someone shouted, “ *I will sing unto the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously.* ” Another rang out, “ *The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation.* ” Still another group sang, “ *He is my God .... And I will exalt Him.* ” Whatever, the whole nation joined in the music forming a chorus of millions. The context makes a special point of mentioning the involvement of the women as well, as the men.

( 15:20-21 ) The point is, that this song of redemption is for all God’s people. It was not enough for Moses to sing it, or even all the men of Israel. The women had seen the same salvation, and they were trusting in the same Saviour. And is the whole church not called to offer the same kind of praise to the Lord ? By faith we have stood with the women at the cross, watching the Saviour suffer and die for our sins ? By faith we have looked over the shoulders of the apostles into the empty tomb, where Christ rose again. My .... Christ has redeemed us. We have been brought out by the blood of the Lamb and the hand of the Lord and now every believer is called to take up the song of redemption ! (1)

## (2) THE THEME OF THIS SONG

“ *Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord.* ” ( 15:1 ) But what did they sing about ? What was the theme of this song ? The Lord. You see, they not only sang unto the Lord, but they sang about the Lord. The word “ *Lord,* ” occurs no less than 12 times within 18 verses. The pronouns “ *He, Him, Thy, Thou, and Thee,* ” are found 33 times. This song is all about Jehovah, the glory of His person, and the greatness of His power ! It was He that had triumphed gloriously and cast the horse and his rider into the sea. ( 15:1 ) It was His right hand that had dashed in pieces the enemy.

( 15:6 ) It was because the Lord had blew with the wind that they had sent as lead in the mighty waters. It was in the greatness of His excellency that He had overthrown those who had rose up against Him. ( 15:7 ) My .... is this not true praise ? There is not a word here about self, its doings, its feelings, its sayings. There is not a syllable about what they had done, rather they sang about the Lord. My .... is this not amazing ? Challenging ? For how many modern hymns today are full of sentimentality and emotion instead of divine adoration. They recount our experiences instead of His mercies, they tell more of human attainments instead of Christ’s atonement. How different was this song of Moses and Israel, “ *I will exalt Him,* ” sums it all up. Do you know something ? Hymns ought to be spiritual in their content.

Songs that express how we feel, or that dwell simply on the benefits we have derived from being saved, must never displace the hymns that express spiritual truths and doctrines. Many people get their theology from songs rather than from sermons. And much so called “ *Christian,* ” music conveys bad theology. Many Christian songs today are not based on Scripture.

Instead of teaching Biblical truth, they are deceiving people with their “ *false,* ” gospel. My .... a singer has no more ring to sing a lie than a preacher has to preach a lie. For no matter how beautiful a song may be, if it is not teaching Biblical truth, then it has no place in our worship service. Now this song which was sung to the Lord and which was all about the Lord may be divided into parts ! Notice, that

***(a) Israel Celebrate what God had done:***

That is, there was a retrospective aspect to this song.

What God had done. This is summed up in ( 15:13 ) They have seen the salvation of the Lord, they have liberated from Pharaoh's power, and separated from Pharaoh's kingdom by the might of Jehovah. And now redeemed and blessed .... with the rich spoils of victory lying everywhere around them .... they pour forth the gratitude of their hearts in this magnificent outburst. Now have a look at ( Col 1:12-14 ) where we have the spiritual realities of which Israel's experiences are the material types. Now to get these verses in the order of experience, you'll have to read them backwards. ***Forgiven .... Redeemed .... Translated .... Delivered .... Giving thanks.*** An old English preacher said, " *a grateful mind is a great mind.*" My .... in light of what God has done are we marked by thanksgiving ? Martin Rinkart ( 1586-1649 ) was a Lutheran pastor in the village of Eilenberg, Saxony. He grew up as the son of a poor coppersmith, felt called to the ministry, and after his theological training began his pastoral ministry just as the Thirty Years War was raging through Germany.

Floods of refugees streamed into the walled city of Eilenberg. It was the most desperate of times. The Swedish army encompassed the city gates, and inside the walls there was nothing but plague, famine and fear. Eight hundred homes were destroyed, and the people began dying in increasing numbers. There was a tremendous strain on the pastors, who expended all their strength in preaching the gospel, caring for the sick and dying, and burying the dead. One after another, the pastors themselves took ill and perished until at last only Martin Rinkart was left. Some days he conducted as many as fifty funerals. Finally, the Swedes demanded a high ransom. It was Martin Rinkart who left the safety of the city to negotiate with the enemy, and he did it with such courage and faith that there was soon a conclusion of hostilities, and the period of suffering ended. Rinkart, knowing there is no healing without thanksgiving composed this hymn for the survivors of Eilenberg. It has been sung around the world ever since.

***“ Now thank we all our God  
With hearts and hands and voices,  
Who wondrous things hath done  
In whom this world rejoices  
Who from our mothers arms  
Hath blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love  
And still is ours today.”***

My .... as we look backward, are we truly thankful for what the Lord has done ? Or are we like the nine leprous men who refused to give thanks to the One who had healed them ? (a)

***(b) Israel Anticipate what God will do:***

That is, there was a Prospective aspect to this song.

What God will do. Look if you will at ( 15:17 ) The first aspect speaks of grace, the second aspect speaks of glory. They praised God for the past, stood on the further side of the Red Sea, beneath a cloudless heaven, and rejoiced in anticipation of the glorious future which lay just ahead of them. The spiritual counterpart of this is found in ( Rom 5:1-2 ) Do you recall what Paul says ?

*“ Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”* Peace for the past, grace for the present, and glory for the future. Or to put it another way, we have peace to begin with, grace to go on with, and glory to end with. For surely the Lord will bring us in. ( Jn 14:1-3 ) Is it not wonderful to know that those whom He has led forth He will infallibly lead in ? Those whom He justifies, these He also glorifies. ( Rom 8:30 )

What a song this is ! What God has done, what God will do ! Do you see that this hymn is theo-centric ? It is thoroughly God-centred. My .... Moses gave all the glory to God. He did not say one single word about his role in Israel’s salvation. It was all about the Lord ! They could sing, *“ To God be the glory great things He hath done.”* (1) (2)

### **(3) THE TEACHING OF THIS SONG**

What can we learn from this song ? What does this song teach us ? Three simple things,

#### ***(a) What our RESPONSE should be to God:***

Here were Israel who had experienced the protection of the blood ( 12:13 ) and the power of the Lord ( 15:16 ) What was their response ? This song of praise. Indeed in view of all that God had done, would do, they determined to glorify Him. *“ I will exalt Him,”* or *“ I will glorify Him.”* You see, in light of what God had done, would do, they had

#### **1. A New Experience of Wonder:**

Do you see what they say in ( 15:11 ) *“ Who is like unto Thee O Lord, among the gods ? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders ?”* The mark of spiritual health and progress is the increasing sense of wonder which comes through the contemplation of God’s person and work. Any form of irreverent familiarity in holy things is the evidence of stagnation and backsliding. God have mercy on us if and when the things of God fail to fill our souls with wonder.

#### **2. A New Experience of Worship:**

*“ Then sang Moses and children of Israel this song,”*  
( 15:1 ) My .... where is genuine wonder, there is true worship. The song was *“ to the Lord.”* John Wesley conducted an open air service in a little village in Cornwall over 200 years ago and wrote, *“ I preached Christ our wisdom and righteousness and sanctification. I could not*

*conclude till it was so dark that we could scarce see one another. And there was on all sides the deepest attention, none speaking, stirring or scarce looking aside. Surely here was God worshipped in the beauty of holiness.*” My .... do we not need a new sense of worship where self is dethroned and Christ is enthroned ? 1, 2,

### **3. A New Experience of Witness:**

*“ The people shall hear .... the dukes of Edom shall be amazed, the mighty men of Moab shall tremble .... all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.”*

( 15:14-15 ) You see, where is true worship, there is powerful witness. ( 1 Cor 14:25 ) (a)

#### ***(b) What our CONCEPT must be of God:***

My .... what’s your concept of God ? Do you look upon Him as some feeble, weak, disappointed, defeated deity who is the object of worship in many churches, or do you look upon God the way Israel looked upon Him ? For here is a song that magnifies God and His attributes.

It’s a song that speaks about,

#### **1. The Power of God:**

*“ Thy right hand O Lord is become glorious in power.”*

( 15:6 ) The right hand of God is representative of His omnipotence. Glorious in power !

*Casting power in*

( 15:4 ) *Covering power in ( 15:5 ) Conquering power in ( 15:6 ) Consuming power in ( 15:7 )*

*Congearing power in ( 15:8 ) Do you need to be reminded of His power this .... ?*

#### **2. The Wrath of God:**

*“ Thou sendest forth thy wrath which consumed them as stubble,”* ( 15:7 ) this term used to describe the anger of God, means *“ fierceness or fury.”* The wrath of God revealed at the Red Sea was awful, but what a dreadful scene awaits those who refuse the salvation offered in Christ.

#### **3. The Wisdom of God:**

The army of Pharaoh had a determined strategy. It is stated in this song, *“ the enemy said.”* ( 15:9 ) They thought they had it all figured out. They were filled with self-confidence. The master plan of the Egyptians might be called *“ Operation P.O.D.”* They were going to Pursue, Overtake and Destroy. ( 15:9 ) Yet operation P.O.D. was annihilated by operation G.O.D. The wisdom of man was destroyed and the wisdom of God prevailed.

#### **4. The Holiness of God:**

The words *“ glorious in holiness,”* reveal that at the centre of all God’s attributes is this great

attribute. “ *It is the glory,*” said Stephen Charnock “ *of every perfection in the Godhead.*” Thomas Watson said, “ *holiness is the most sparkling jewel of His crown.*”

#### 5. The Mercy of God:

“ *Thou in Thy mercy hast led forth the people which Thou hast redeemed.*” ( 15:13 ) My .... the children of Israel were not delivered because of their strategy or strength. Their deliverance was an act of sheer mercy. Is that not our testimony this .... ? My .... God in His mercy does not give us what we do deserve, hell, and God in His grace gives us what we don't deserve, heaven.

#### 6. The Faithfulness of God:

The psalmist said, “ *Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and Thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.*” ( 36:5 ) Now the word “ *faithfulness,*” is not used in this context, however what is said reflects God's unchanging nature. My .... what happened here is exactly what God had promised. ( 3:8 ) As Moses said in another setting, “ *He is the faithful God.*” ( Deut 7:9 ) And then this song speaks of,

#### 7. The Glory of God:

“ *Sing ye to the Lord for He hath triumphed gloriously.*”

( 15:21 ) Pharaoh and the Egyptian system represented the glory of man. But while the glory of man was extinguished, the glory of the Lord was exalted. Do you need to pause this .... and see your God ? The power of God, the wrath of God, the wisdom of God, the holiness of God, the mercy of God, the faithfulness of God, and the glory of God ! My .... this “ *God is our God for ever and ever, He will be our guide even unto God.*”

( Ps 48:14 ) What does this song teach us ? (a) (b)

#### **(c) What our FUTURE will be with God:**

For our future, that is the eternity of the believer will be an eternity in which we shall sing unto the Lord, and in which we shall sing about the Lord. Do you know what we are going to sing ? It will go something like this,

“ *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain .... and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood.*” ( Rev 5:9, 12, 15:3 )

**“ *When with the ransomed in glory  
His face I at last shall see,  
Twill be my theme through the ages  
To sing of His love for me.*”**