

Song of Moses

Exodus 15:1-19

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The Song of Moses. We have as our Advent series this year, the Songs of Christmas. And, of course, you might be surprised that we are going to the Old Testament, because how can this be a song of Christmas? Well, that's why I'm going to preach it, so I can hope to apply it. And, hopefully, you can understand it. So, as we look at God's word, this is situationally, this is just after the nation of Israel has gone through the Red Sea. They've been delivered from bondage from Egypt. And now safely on Canaan's side, you had Moses singing. And so, we get to listen in as it is recorded for us, as we seek to find out, how is this song preparing us for the person of Christ in His first coming? But even more so, as a people of Advent in the present and not just doing a dress rehearsal of something that is in the past.

How does this song apply to us and for us as a people who are continuing to be a people of Advent as we wait for Christ to come again? Hear, now, God's word, Exodus 15:1-19.

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. The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name.

"Pharaoh's chariots and his host he cast into the sea, and his chosen officers were sunk in the Red Sea. The floods covered them; they went down into the depths like a stone. Your right hand, O Lord, glorious in power, your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy. In the greatness of your majesty you overthrow your adversaries; you send out your fury; it consumes them like stubble.

At the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up; the floods stood up in a heap; the deeps congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil, my desire shall have its fill of them. I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.' You blew with your wind; the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters.

"Who is like you, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders? You stretched out your right hand; the earth swallowed them. You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed; you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode. The peoples have heard; they tremble; pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia. Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. Terror and dread fall upon them; because of the greatness of your arm, they are still as a stone, till your people, O Lord, pass by, till the people pass by whom you have purchased. You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain, the place, O Lord, which you have made for your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established. The Lord will reign forever and ever."

For when the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, the Lord brought back the waters of the sea upon them, but the people of Israel walked on dry ground in the midst of the sea. [ESV]

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Please, pray with me.

Now, Lord, we ask as the Psalmist prayed that you would open up your Word that we might find treasures in your law. That you might give us a song on our lips, a song of hope, for the Lord has come and the Lord will come again. Help us to sing. And help the teacher. In Jesus's name. Amen.

So, I want you to see with me this morning as you look at your outline, you'll see what we have as we have three parts of this song. The first part is "triumphant deliverer," verses 1-5. The second part is "perfect in timing," verses 6-10. And "a pledge for the future," verses 11-18. And then we will apply it together. Let's look together as we look at the song, "triumphant deliverer," verses 1-5.

What we hear in verses 1-5 is similar to what we heard last week as we consider the three names, the Lord, Messiah, Jesus Christ. So, what we have here is we now have the song of Moses crying out to the Lord. And we understand that the Lord in the Greek means the same in the Old Testament in Hebrew, which is he is the sovereign king, he is the Lord of Lords, he is the King of Kings. And here, we understand that this is a triumphant king who delivers. In verses 1-5, what we find is the fulfillment of all that God promised in Genesis which he promised Abraham which he promised to Abraham that he would provide a people. And he would give them a land. And which God had made this promise to Abraham in Genesis.

And so, now what we find is that this triumphant deliverer, the Lord himself, the song cries out, he is victorious. He is strong. And here is something we don't expect to hear during Advent. He is a man of war. This is precisely what this song cries out, for the king has come to lay down all other kings, and specifically, pharaoh. Specifically, the one who kept in bondage the people of God that was Israel. And so, now Moses, having heard the complaints of God's people on the Egyptian side of the Red Sea, they were complaining as they saw in the distance Pharaoh and his armies coming against them. They said, you know, we should go back. Let's go back. Have you led us out here to die? And Moses, by God's grace alone, had patience and he looked to the Lord and the Lord answered and he delivers his people by parting the waters. And they flee.

And this is what we must understand. That the coming of the Lord is the coming of a new kingdom. And any kingdom that seeks to keep the people of God in bondage and not in freedom and being in relationship with him, he will utterly destroy. And this is what he does. So, Egypt becomes a type. It becomes a shadow. And we will get to that in a moment, what it is exactly a shadow of, but put in mind, the reason why we can still talk of the Lord as a man of war is because he seeks to deliver his people from anything which keeps them in bondage. And he seeks to deliver them. He is strong, and he is victorious. As the Psalmist says, "We do not trust in horses. We do not trust in the legs of man. We trust alone in the Lord, the triumphant deliverer."

Secondly, we see that it's perfect in timing. In verses, 6-10, he recites that at just the right time, if you will, the Lord shatters the enemy. And in the greatness of God's majesty, though no one at that moment could exactly see how this is going to work out, God knew that he was going to utterly destroy these armies in one fell swoop. But it is instructive for us, who are now reading back into it into this history, and we see that that's not the view of the Israelites. This did not seem like perfect timing at all. This seemed exactly like the perfect timing for their destruction. And yet, what they could not see is what the Lord knew. And yet, Moses sings, "In your greatness of your majesty, you overthrew your adversaries; you sent out your fury; it consumes them like stubble."

Now notice, also, what it says in verse 9. It was also not in the mind of the enemy either. Egypt refused, having experienced the judgment of God, they refused to believe in the God of Israel. They said, we've got these people; we will pursue; I will cut you down; we'll bring these people right back into slavery. And yet, it says in verse 9, "The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil,

my desire shall have its fill of them. I will draw my sword; my hand shall destroy them.” But verse 10 says, “You blew with your wind; the sea covered them.” At just the right time, God destroys Egypt. At just the right time, not according to our calendar.

And this is what I wrestle with, don’t you? At just the right God’s time, not the right Randy’s time. I want the Lord to do things according to my calendar. And when I sense frustration and impatience in my life, that is a red flag that I’m not in control and yet, I’m trying to be in control. But at this time, perfect in timing, it calls us again to sing, Lord, not my will but your will be done. Because in my time, I doubt you. I am consumed with my own prerogatives, my own goals. But this song sings in perfect tense in the Hebrew, which means, “it is done.” Egypt is destroyed, verses 6-10.

And in verses 11-18, we hear over and over again how this is no longer actually being used in the perfect tense, meaning something which is finished. The tense now changes, and something else happens. In no way shape or form, in verses 11-18, is Egypt ever mentioned again. Why? Egypt is destroyed. Israel is delivered.

So, it goes from looking at what has just happened as a completed act, something which we can be assured of. It now looks to the future. And in this future tense, what we hear in verses 11 and following, he cries out, “Who is a Lord like you?” And then in this pledge for the future, it recalls, it says, “You stretched out your right hand; the earth swallowed them. You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed; you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode,” a place of protection. And because He’s done this, now Moses is singing out, saying, if you have done this with Egypt, now I can look into the future, and all of God’s enemies, all enemy nations which hope to rise up against you and against your people, they will live in fear and trembling because you are the Lord.

And it says, “The peoples have heard; they tremble; pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia. Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.” And this is what the word of God means when it says, it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the Lord. Why? Because it says, “terror and dread fall upon them.” Those who seek to set themselves up against God’s will, God’s providence, God’s grace, God’s deliverance, those who resist Him, He’s not a Lord of deliverance. He is a Lord worthy of fear and trembling. And this is what captures the heart of Moses.

And he says in verse 17, “You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain, the place, O Lord, which you have made for your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established.” He’s looking forward to how God will take His people, plant them in Zion, and there will be built a sanctuary for the Lord looking way forward, way ahead of Moses. Moses couldn’t see how it was going to happen, but he’s singing, you will surely do this. Why? Because this is what you have done. The pledge for the future is sure because of God’s promises have been fulfilled, your people have been delivered.

What has happened to Egypt will happen to the enemies of God. This is his hope. This is the pledge of which he sings. And then it says in verse 18, “The Lord will reign forever and ever.” And then it returns just briefly in verse 19, not as a song, but as a statement and reminder of the history that this is what has happened to the people of Egypt. That armies had been thrown down. The Lord has brought back the waters of the sea upon them. The people of Israel walked on dry ground.

This is the song of Moses. But of what value does it have to us in Advent? This is precisely the point, is that the church of Jesus Christ are to the Lord as Israel was to Him in the Old Testament. The people of God are those who He has redeemed and drawn to Himself. Egypt was a type, it was a manifestation of those who sought to set themselves up against who God is and His deliverance, the One who is alone to be worshipped and feared, and God destroyed them and delivered His people. Having said that, it is important to remember that now, as we look into the New Testament as we look at the celebration of Advent, the Lord’s anger does not rise up against nation or against flesh and blood, because Egypt is simply representing any who would seek to enslave His people. And ultimately, His enemy is the

one who is Satan himself who entered into the world evil. And temptation and the hearts of man, hearts that are ours like our first parents, give in to sin. And we are in bondage to sin unless the Lord delivers us.

You see, what's important for us to remember is that as we consider the triumphant deliverer perfect in timing, a pledge for the future is precisely what the Old Testament is foreshadowing the person of Christ to be. Consider just briefly for a moment that in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, it speaks of the coming of Christ who is God. The name of Jesus would be His name, and Jesus says in Matthew 1:21-25 as He instructs Joseph, "Give him the name Jesus for he shall deliver his people from their sins." Ultimately, that is what enslaves us. But Jesus has come, and let me say it loud and clear, as a man of war. But his war is not against flesh and blood. He came as God amidst our presence to deliver us from the ultimate enemy, the ultimate enslavement, and that is to sin itself.

In Mark, it says that John the Baptist announced that the deliverer is coming. He is simply one who was preparing the way. While he called out for the baptism with water for forgiveness, Jesus would bring about the baptism of the spirit. He's saying, this is what would happen as the result of His coming. He would announce in the gospels this great announcement of Isaiah 40,

The voice of the one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, every mountain shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways. And all flesh shall see that he is God of salvation.

This is speaking of Jesus. And that whole idea of every mountain laid low, every valley being clear and flat, that the Lord of salvation, the Lord of deliverance is coming. He's coming to deliver us from the enemy. And in John, the same thing would be announced. In John 1:29, we hear these words. This is John the Baptist, he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." Do you see the triumphant deliverer? Moses was an imperfect yet called to be a leader of God's people. Yet God would deliver His people under his leadership. Now, we see that the Lord would send Himself to be the ultimate deliverer.

But it's also just at the right time. We hear in Romans 5, we hear these words as we would hear announced that at just the right time, "While we were still sinners." It says, for while we were still weak, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly.

For one will scarcely die for a righteous person, though, perhaps, for a good person, one dare even to die. But God chose his love for us in this, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

At just the right time. But it is also a pledge for the future, that Jesus and the gospel of John would be announced in chapter 14 and chapter 16, that He would come and He would say to His people, "I will not leave you as orphans. I will my holy spirit to be with you. But I will return again." So, we as the people of Israel, as Mary and Joseph, we are still a people of Advent. We need a triumphant deliverer who's perfect in timing, who gives a pledge for the future that is trustworthy. We need help from the outside.

As one writer and preacher says these words, "As we look at the songs of Moses, if we look at the coming of Christ in his advent, if we consider his promise to return again in his second coming, it is a song. It is a narrative. It is an announcement that we need help from the outside, y'all." Do you need help from the outside? I do.

The Pastor Fleming Rutledge says these words as she writes about Advent. She says,

"There he is. There he will be until the trump sounds forever, summoning us to rethink, to reorder our lives, totally orienting ourselves to an altogether new perspective, the perspective of God in Christ."

Consider the way God sees us. Does he care that you or I might have a matching set of Gucci luggage? Will the Lord judge us by the degree of our recognition given to our names when they appear on

the playbill or the letterhead or in the list of trustees or the patrons? Will he even judge me by my performance as a father, or you as a parent, or as a neighbor, or as a friend? What will he judge me by? The Lord have mercy if this is what He will judge me by. Because I need grace from the outside. I need a triumphant deliverer. I need the One who is going to come and to meet me, not with just an announcement to repent. I don't need to hear repentance, I need the power to repent. I don't need to be told to confess, I need the Holy Spirit and God's grace to enable me to confess. So, I need help from the outside. The Advent, as was the rescuing of God's people from Egypt, as it is for us now as we await His second coming, we still need help from the outside.

Fleming Rutledge continues.

“A power from the outside is coming, a power that is able to make a new creation out of people like us, stones like us. The power that is coming is not our power, not the power of our deeds, or our inner strength, or our spiritual discipline, or our faith, or even our repentance. It is God's power that gives good deeds and inner strength and spiritual discipline and faith and repentance. We are able to repent and bear the fruit of the Spirit because He is coming.”

We cannot presume to tell ourselves that we have better genes, better morals, better theology, better attitudes, better humility, better repentance, better music, better buildings, better politics. It is God who is making the people of God. It is God who is making the people of God. And He's making this people for His kingdom and making them out of stones. May the Lord take our hearts of stone and give us hearts of flesh. His coming and dwelling among us in His first Advent is the same longing which we ought to cry out and say, Lord, in your mercy, come. Because we scarcely need to read few paragraphs in any newspaper or on any website to see, I am weary of the brokenness. I'm weary of my brokenness, I'm weary of the violence and brokenness and injustice in the world. Lord, have mercy. Lord, come.

Let me ask you, have we become so enamored, so accustomed, to the brokenness that is us in the world around us that we create our own little scales of who's righteous and who's not? But we've just grown accustomed to it. It's the way it is. And we've stopped singing, Lord, come. Are we filled up with our possessions? Are we satisfied with our address? Are we longing only for the things of this world, and we have stopped singing, Lord, true deliverer, along with Moses, come and be the Lord forever and ever.

I need to still sing these words, and I invite you, too. Because, you know what? The heavens are still singing. Because in this curious place in Revelation 15:3, as John is given a vision of the worship in heaven, notice what he says. He says,

And I saw what appeared to be a sea of glass mingled with fire, and also those who had conquered the beast and its image, and the number of its name standing beside the sea of glass with harps of God in their hands. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

“Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations. Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship you for your righteous acts have been revealed.”

The heavens are still singing the song of Moses and they've added to it the song of the Lamb who was slain. And what they are singing is His future glory, because this is what He did in His first Advent. And he's now saying, long for my second coming. And until that time, I'm making a kingdom of my people out of stones.

We need the deliverance, not from flesh and blood, but from sin and brokenness, not just of the world, but our own. And the promises that His righteousness will be revealed, and His grace is abundant, His mercy is sure for He is the Lord. And along with Moses, we can say, triumphant deliverer, victorious

and strong, perfect in timing, whose promises can be trusted. Lord, have mercy on us, for we are sinners. Forgive us and come and make all things new. We're a people of Advent. Let us sing with Moses and the song of the Lamb in heaven as we wait for the Lord to come again. Let's pray.

Come, Lord Jesus, for we need you. We cannot trust in our own righteousness. We cannot trust in our own names, our own backgrounds. We cannot trust in our works or our successes, and we give you thanks that you do not judge us in our failures. Rather, you call us to new life in Christ. For Moses sung of you, O Lord, as the strong deliverer. And in your Son, we hear proclaim the One who delivers His people from their sins. Will you do that for us this day? But more than that, make us a people who are singing, who are discomfited by the world as it is and long for its restoration. But Lord, begin with us. Begin with our own hearts. So, Lord, I would ask in your mercy, do not call us alone just to repent or to confess, to love you and to love our neighbor as ourselves, because by themselves, Lord, that is judgement. But Lord, what you command, will you give the power to do. By your strong deliverance, help us to be a people who love you with our whole heart and strength. In Jesus's name. Amen.