

## The Song of Moses



After the 10 plagues the Israelites left Egypt, quickly making their way through the desert to escape Pharaoh and his army. Finally they reached the Red Sea.

The Hebrews were encamped beside the sea, whose waters presented a seemingly impassable barrier before them, while on the south a rugged mountain obstructed their further progress. Suddenly they beheld in the distance the flashing armor and moving chariots betokening the advance guard of a great army. As the force drew nearer, the hosts of Egypt were seen in full pursuit. Terror filled the hearts of Israel. Some cried unto the Lord, but far the greater part hastened to Moses with their complaints: "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt? Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness."

Moses was greatly troubled that his people should manifest so little faith in God, notwithstanding they had repeatedly witnessed the manifestation of His power in their behalf. How could they charge upon him the dangers and difficulties of their situation, when he had followed the express command of God? True, there was no possibility of deliverance unless God Himself should interpose for their release; but having been brought into this position in obedience to the divine direction, Moses felt no fear of the consequences. His calm and assuring reply to the people was, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."

It was not an easy thing to hold the hosts of Israel in waiting before the Lord. Lacking discipline and self-control, they became violent and unreasonable. They expected speedily to fall into the hands of their oppressors, and their wailings and lamentations were loud and deep. The wonderful pillar of cloud had been followed as the signal of God to go forward; but now they questioned among themselves if it might not foreshadow some great calamity; for had it not led them on the wrong side of the mountain, into an impassable way? Thus the angel of God appeared to their deluded minds as the harbinger of disaster.

But now, as the Egyptian host approached them, expecting to make them an easy prey, the cloudy column rose majestically into the heavens, passed over the Israelites, and descended between them and the armies of Egypt. A wall of darkness interposed between the pursued and their pursuers. The Egyptians could no longer discern the camp of the Hebrews, and were forced to halt. But as the darkness of night deepened, the wall of cloud became a great light to the Hebrews, flooding the entire encampment with the radiance of day.

Then hope returned to the hearts of Israel. And Moses lifted up his voice unto the Lord. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto Me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward. But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry

ground through the midst of the sea."

The psalmist, describing the passage of the sea by Israel, sang, "Thy way was in the sea, and Thy paths in the great waters, and Thy footsteps were not known. Thou leddest Thy people like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron." Psalm 77:19, 20, R.V. As Moses stretched out his rod the waters parted, and Israel went into the midst of the sea, upon dry ground, while the waters stood like a wall upon each side. The light from God's pillar of fire shone upon the foam-capped billows, and lighted the road that was cut like a mighty furrow through the waters of the sea, and was lost in the obscurity of the farther shore.

"The Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians." The mysterious cloud changed to a pillar of fire before their astonished eyes. The thunders pealed and the lightnings flashed. "The clouds poured out water; the skies sent out a sound: Thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of Thy thunder was in the whirlwind; the lightning lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook." Psalm 77:17, 18, R.V.

The Egyptians were seized with confusion and dismay. Amid the wrath of the elements, in which they heard the voice of an angry God, they endeavored to retrace their steps and flee to the shore they had quitted. But Moses stretched out his rod, and the piled-up waters, hissing, roaring, and eager for their prey, rushed together and swallowed the Egyptian army in their black depths.

As morning broke it revealed to the multitudes of Israel all that remained of their mighty foes--the mail-clad bodies cast upon the shore. From the most terrible peril, one night had brought complete deliverance. That vast, helpless throng--bondmen unused to battle, women, children, and cattle, with the sea before them, and the mighty armies of Egypt pressing behind--had seen their path opened through the waters and their enemies overwhelmed in the moment of expected triumph. Jehovah alone had brought them deliverance, and to Him their hearts were turned in gratitude and faith. Their emotion found utterance in songs of praise. The Spirit of God rested upon Moses, and he led the people in a triumphant anthem of thanksgiving, the earliest and one of the most sublime that are known to man.

"I will sing unto Jehovah, for He hath triumphed gloriously;  
The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.  
The Lord is my strength and my song,  
And He is 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:  
Jehovah is His name.  
Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath He cast into the sea:  
And his chosen captains are sunk in the Red Sea.  
The deeps cover them:  
They went down into the depths like a stone.  
Thy right hand, O Lord, is glorious in power,  
Thy right hand, O Lord, dasheth in pieces the enemy. . . .  
Who is like unto Thee, O Lord, among the gods?  
Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness,  
Fearful in praises, doing wonders? . . .  
Thou in Thy mercy hast led the people which Thou has redeemed:  
Thou hast guided them in Thy strength to Thy holy habitation.  
The peoples have heard, they tremble. . . .  
Terror and dread falleth upon them;  
By the greatness of Thine arm they are as still as a stone;  
Till Thy people pass over, O Lord,  
Till the people pass over which Thou hast purchased.  
Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance,  
The place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in." Exodus 15:1-16, R.V.

Like the voice of the great deep, rose from the vast hosts of Israel that sublime ascription. It was taken up by the women of Israel, Miriam, the sister of Moses, leading the way, as they went forth with timbrel and dance. Far over desert and sea rang the joyous refrain, and the mountains re-echoed the words of their praise--"Sing ye to Jehovah, for He hath triumphed gloriously."<sup>39</sup>

What aspect of this song do you find personally encouraging?

What is your favorite song of praise to God?

Reread this statement:

True, there was no possibility of deliverance unless God Himself should interpose for their release; but having been brought into this position in obedience to the divine direction, Moses felt no fear of the consequences. His calm and assuring reply to the people was, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."<sup>40</sup>

This paragraph describes how Israel, in the depth of a terrible situation, saw God open a path before them. How do we know which path to take when God is leading us through difficult situations?  
Isaiah 30:21

What is our assurance, when trouble comes, if we know we are following God's will?  
Romans 8:28

What assurance do you find in these verses from a song written by David?  
Psalms 68:32-35

How does God feel when we sing praises to Him?  
Psalms 149:3-5

There is a song written recently called "God Wants to Hear You Sing." It talks of singing praises to God when the waves are crashing around us, when fiery darts surround us, and despair is all we can see. Israel was afraid when they saw the Egyptians, but Moses was not. Instead, he spoke words of comfort and courage. How can we have that kind of faith?  
Proverbs 3:5-7

In Egypt, God sent plagues to deliver Israel from their oppressors. In Revelation there are plagues that deliver spiritual Israel as well. Who do spiritual Israel get the victory over?  
Revelation 15:1, 2

What song do they sing?  
Revelation 15:3, 4

This song and the great deliverance which it commemorates, made an impression never to be effaced from the memory of the Hebrew people. From age to age it was echoed by the prophets and singers of Israel,

testifying that Jehovah is the strength and deliverance of those who trust in Him. That song does not belong to the Jewish people alone. It points forward to the destruction of all the foes of righteousness and the final victory of the Israel of God. The prophet of Patmos beholds the white-robed multitude that have "gotten the victory," standing on the "sea of glass mingled with fire," having "the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb." Revelation 15:2, 3.<sup>41</sup>

Would you like to be among those who sing that song some day?