

# EXODUS

## THE GOD WHO RESCUES

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### SESSION OBJECTIVE: EXODUS 15:13-18

To understand more about Moses' song.

#### Read the Text:

*You have led in your steadfast love the people whom you have redeemed; you have guided them by your strength to your holy abode. 14 The peoples have heard; they tremble; pangs have seized the inhabitants of Philistia. 15 Now are the chiefs of Edom dismayed; trembling seizes the leaders of Moab; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. 16 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. 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. 18 The LORD will reign forever and ever. (Exodus 15:13-18, ESV)*

#### Study the Text:

### Moses' Song, Pt. 2

The beginning of Exodus chapter 15 features a song that "Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the LORD," and one that featured a number of characteristics of God as it pertains to the Exodus story as a whole (Ex. 15:1). One of the central themes of last week's study was the importance celebrating God's victories through song in worship. The LORD conquered Pharaoh and his host by first drawing them into the Red Sea, then making them confused and chaotic, before finally drowning them. Israel played no part in the fight at all. God is truly a God that fights for His people (and *through* His people, now). Last week was all about the work of God between Israel and Egypt. This week, it's all about the surrounding nations. The song continues in verses 13 through 18 and it details the ways in which surrounding nations now fear the LORD. Below is a breakdown of some of the key details and concepts in this passage.

#### STEADFAST LOVE

Verse 13 says that God led His people out of Egypt in "steadfast love," which is a crucially important word in Hebrew. It's the Hebrew word *hesed*, which is a word that stands for God's covenantal love. It is key to understanding the character of God and why He acts. He takes pleasure in those who hope in his steadfast love (Psalm 147), His steadfast love never ceases (Lamentations 3:22-23), but His steadfast love is not just an action, it is also something that can satisfy us (Psalm 90:14). Here, Exodus 15:13, He leads in His people by His steadfast love. God even loves His people when they complain. For example, in Exodus 14:12, they said "For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." Even in moments of doubt and murmuring, God leads His people for no other reason than that He has chosen to make a covenant with them and love them.

#### RESPONSE OF THE NATIONS

Much of this song speaks of the horrifying response of the surrounding nations, specifically of Philistia, Moab, and Edom. God's works are often noted by the surrounding nations in the Old Testament. In Joshua chapter 2, Rahab confirms the Canaanites' fear of the LORD after hearing the stories of what He had done to Egypt: "I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the

inhabitants of the land melt away before you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt.” Terror and dread had fallen upon them until the Lord’s people have passed by. Joshua 5:1 records a similar response, this time of the Amorites: “As soon as 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 that the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the people of Israel until they had crossed over, their hearts melted and there was no longer any spirit in them because of the people of Israel.” Although not mentioned in the song, even the inhabitants of Gibeon had heard “all that [God] did in Egypt” (Josh. 9:9) and were fearful enough to lie to Joshua to deceive him because they “feared greatly for [their] own lives (Josh. 9:24). There are also examples of the nations fearing kings being led by the LORD, such as is the case in 1 Chronicles 14:17: “And the fame of David went out into all lands, and the LORD brought the fear of him upon all nations.” The Israelites sang this song in part to boast of the greatness of God that even other nations feared Him.

### **THE ABODE**

Verse 17 says, “You will bring them in and plant them on your own mountain.” God will bring the people He has purchased (Ex. 15:16) and plant them on His mountain, or His “abode.” This mountain is undoubtedly Mount Zion, where Solomon will have “peace on all sides” (1 Kg. 4:24), and eventually constructed the Temple. This is the place where the presence of God would permanently be fixed toward His people as they cry out in prayer towards the Temple (1 Kg. 8:22-53). But it takes a long time for any of this to come to pass. David won’t even capture the city of Jerusalem from the Canaanite tribe of Jebusites for around 300-400 years (2 Sam. 5:6-10), and that would only happen years after his anointing and subsequent years of hiding, before finally ascending the throne. But this Mount Zion, Jerusalem, the City of David, will be the place forever connected to the God of victory over Egypt, and it will soon become the place of that same God, this time in victory of sin and death, first on a cross and then in the coming of the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).

### **THE LORD WILL REIGN FOREVER AND EVER**

The last line of this song is not only true in Moses’ day, but will remain true through the song of the Lamb recorded in Revelation 15. Revelation 15 notes that a group who had conquered the beast stand and sing:

*“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.” (Revelation 15:3-4)*

For just as when the Egyptian army had been swallowed by the sea and Israel’s response was to sing together, so will it be that when the beast and its image has been conquered in the end of time that the response will be singing together.

## **What About Now?**

One takeaway is the enduring truth of God’s goodness to lead His people. The Lord still leads the redeemed today. And the same hope that is expressed in part of this song is available to us, as well. In the same way that the Lord led the Israelites, so does He lead us, His redeemed. Another takeaway is the power in testimonies concerning the work of God. When God does something that only He can do, word of it often travels fast. In the case of Exodus 15, it’s the news of God’s conquest of Pharaoh and Egypt, which incites fear in the surrounding nations. Today, it’s often the testimony of a changed life by Jesus Christ that catches notice. God is a God that has been talked about through the ages by onlookers as they try to make sense of how He does what He does. That means it is totally reasonable (and good, even) to include the testimonies of

His works in the songs we sing today as we worship Him. God is worthy to be praised, and His works are worthy to be declared.

## Study Questions

### Day One

1. Read Exodus 15:13. By what did the LORD lead His people? What is significant about this word? (Hint: See above notes)

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2. Read Exodus 15:13. By what did the LORD guide His people? To what location did the LORD lead His people?

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### Day Two

1. Read Exodus 15:14. Which nation does this verse describe? What did they do when they heard about the LORD?

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2. Read Exodus 15:15. What three nations are mentioned in this passage? How do they respond to the stories of the LORD?

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### Day Three

1. Read Exodus 15:16. Why does this passage use the term “purchase” for God’s relationship to His people?

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2. Read Exodus 15:17. Where will the LORD bring His people and what will He do with them there? Where is this “mountain” or “abode?” (Hint: See above notes)

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### Day Four

1. Read 1 Kings 8:22-53. How does Mount Zion eventually become the abode of the LORD?

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2. Read Exodus 15:18. For how long will the Lord reign?

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**Discuss the Text!****Week 36 Discussion: Testimony**

In Exodus 15:13-18, several nations are mentioned that hear of the stories and works of the LORD and subsequently tremble in fear. Moab, Philistia, Edom, and Canaan are powerful nations in their own way, and yet they become aware of the LORD's power and scared as a result. News of God's works traveled fast. Talk as a group about the power of testimony when God does something only He is able to do.

1. Icebreaker: Have you ever shared your testimony with anyone? If not, why not try today?
2. Have you ever heard a testimony that deeply impacted you?
3. Do people still tremble at stories of God?
4. Do testimonies matter? Why or why not?
5. What should immediately follow a testimony? (e.g. prayer, Gospel presentation, etc.)
6. Should the church worship service have more space for testimonies? Why or why not?

**Takeaways:**

1. Israel knows God is leading them to a new and better home.
2. Israel knows the people groups they must go past are trembling because of God's salvation for Israel from the Egyptian army.
3. The Lord will reign forever and ever.