

## Exodus 15

- Israel has finally and forever escaped the Pharaoh of Egypt
  - Just as the Lord promised Abraham, the nation of Israel came out of Egypt after 400 years
    - They have crossed the Gulf of Aqaba and entered into Midian
    - And they have just witnessed the destruction of the Egyptians army
  - At the end of chapter 14, Moses summarizes the moment

[Ex. 14:30](#) Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.

[Ex. 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.

- Moses says that Israel saw the destruction of Egypt, feared God, believed in the Lord and in Moses
  - While this testimony sounds encouraging, such is not the case
  - According to the Psalms, we read this

[Psa. 106:4](#) ¶ Remember me, O LORD, in Your favor toward Your people;  
Visit me with Your salvation,

[Psa. 106:5](#) That I may see the prosperity of Your chosen ones,  
That I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation,  
That I may glory with Your inheritance.

[Psa. 106:6](#) We have sinned like our fathers,  
We have committed iniquity, we have behaved wickedly.

[Psa. 106:7](#) Our fathers in Egypt did not understand Your wonders;  
They did not remember Your abundant kindnesses,  
But rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea.

[Psa. 106:8](#) Nevertheless He saved them for the sake of His name,  
That He might make His power known.

[Psa. 106:9](#) Thus He rebuked the Red Sea and it dried up,  
And He led them through the deeps, as through the wilderness.

[Psa. 106:10](#) So He saved them from the hand of the one who hated them,  
And redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.

[Psa. 106:11](#) The waters covered their adversaries;

Not one of them was left.

[Psa. 106:12](#) Then they believed His words;

They sang His praise.

[Psa. 106:13](#) They quickly forgot His works;

They did not wait for His counsel,

- What Israel saw and what they believed was not what it first appeared to be
  - The Psalmist tells us that the people rebelled at the Red Sea
    - Nevertheless the Lord rescued the nation, but not because they were deserving of such rescue
    - Rather, the Lord rescued Israel for His own name
      - What this means is God rescued Israel because He has promised Abraham He would do so
      - Had the Lord allowed Israel to perish in their unbelief, the Lord would have gone against His word
  - Therefore, we see that God's actions in saving men, whether physically or spiritually, are based upon what produces the greatest glory for His name
    - His saving power is reserved for His name sake, not for our sake
    - We were save for His glory
- Throughout the story of Israel in the desert, this theme repeats itself
  - The people of Israel are portrayed repeatedly as disobedient, unbelieving and ones who test the Lord's patience and goodness
    - The writer of Hebrews sums up the dispossession of this generation of Israel in this way

[Heb. 3:16](#) For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses?

[Heb. 3:17](#) And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?

[Heb. 3:18](#) And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient?

[Heb. 3:19](#) So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

[Heb. 4:1](#) Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it.

[Heb. 4:2](#) For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

- Exodus shows us the early stages of Israel's disobedience in the desert
  - Most notably, we'll witness the rebellion while Moses meets God on the mountain
  - And it's helpful for us to remember that this generation of Israel is described in Scripture as an unbelieving generation of Israel
  - And as a result of unbelief, they are not permitted to enter the promised land
    - Symbolically, the promised land is a picture of the kingdom
    - So this generation pictures the rebellion of unbelieving Israel
- From there, we proceed to Chapter 15, which is set in the same moment, immediately after the army of Pharaoh is swallowed up in the sea
  - This chapter completes the third section for the book
  - The people of Israel amazed as they see the Lord's work
  - And under the influence of the Spirit, Moses and Miriam, Aaron's sister' lead the nation in a song of prophecy
- Chapter 15 is dominated by these two songs, the song of the Moses and the song of Miriam
  - These are victory hymns sung to celebrate the Lord's great victory
    - To this day, these hymns are still part of worship in many synagogues
    - These songs are a form of poetry, and as we study them we need to understand something about Hebrew poetry
  - Western poetry is primarily focused on the sound of words: the rhyme and rhythm and alliteration

- But Hebrew poetry is based on parallelism in the meaning of adjoining lines
  - In the most common arrangement, lines of text are paired up
  - Each line in the pair is saying the same thing in different ways
  - The art of Hebrew poetry is in finding different ways to express the same thought within a pair
- You see this pattern throughout the OT
- Poetry is formed in pairs of lines, in which each pair is a single thought
- The pairs of lines are then grouped into strophes, not unlike stanzas of poetry
  - Each strophe is a single topic or thought expressed in detail by each pair of lines
  - The song of Moses has three strophes
    - The first strophe runs from vs.1-5
    - The second from vs.6-10
    - And the final strophe from vs.11-18
- The song of Moses is prophetic, and it is a pivotal moment in Scripture
  - In fact, this song is so important, that Revelation 15 tells us it is sung immediately before the Bowl judgments are poured out on the Earth in the time of Tribulation
  - Obviously, the prophetic meaning of these verses extends all the way into the last days, days that are still yet in our future

**Ex. 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.

**Ex. 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.

[Ex. 15:3](#) "The LORD is a warrior;  
The LORD is His name.

[Ex. 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. 15:5](#) "The deeps cover them;  
They went down into the depths like a stone.

- Immediately, you can notice the parallelism of Hebrew poetry, the pairs of lines working together to complete a thought
  - The first strophe recounts the might of God to conquer Israel's enemy
    - The song begins with a praise of God fighting strength
    - He is Jehovah, which always means the covenant keeping God
    - He drowned the Pharaoh's men
  - The second strophe begins in v.6

[Ex. 15:6](#) "Your right hand, O LORD, is majestic in power,  
Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.

[Ex. 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.

[Ex. 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.

[Ex. 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.'

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

- God shattered the Pharaoh's army
  - He overthrew those who rise up
  - In His anger, He consumed them
  - When the Lord divided the waters, He provided an opportunity for Israel to escape

- But this same escape also gave the enemy reason to believe Israel was weak and could be conquered
- And just as the enemy thought they were triumphant, the enemy was destroyed by God's hand

- The final strophe is starts in v.11

[Ex. 15:11](#) "Who is like You among the gods, O LORD?

Who is like You, majestic in holiness,  
Awesome in praises, working wonders?

[Ex. 15:12](#) "You stretched out Your right hand,  
The earth swallowed them.

[Ex. 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.

[Ex. 15:14](#) "The peoples have heard, they tremble;  
Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia.

[Ex. 15:15](#) "Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed;  
The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them;  
All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away.

[Ex. 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.

[Ex. 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.

[Ex. 15:18](#) "The LORD shall reign forever and ever."

- Having destroyed Israel's enemy, Moses asks who is like the Lord?
  - He has defended Israel and redeemed His people
  - And the peoples of the earth have heard of this deliverance, Moses declares
    - Those of Philistia and Edom and Canaan
    - Their hearts have melted away at the news that God is fighting for Israel
  - These people have terror at the prospect of Israel's victory
    - The Lord's people will passover into their lands

- Ultimately, Israel will reach God's holy mountain and will receive their inheritance in the sanctuary of the Lord
  - And in that place, the Lord will reign forever and ever
- Moses ends his song with a summary of the events of chapter 14

**Ex. 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.

- Before we examine Moses' song in detail, let's also note the second song of the chapter, that of Miriam, Moses' sister

**Ex. 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.

**Ex. 15:21** Miriam answered them,

I        "Sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted;  
I        The horse and his rider He has hurled into the sea."

- Here song repeats the essential theme of Moses' song
  - Notice that Miriam is called the sister of Aaron
  - But that would also make her Moses' sister, of course
- She is a prophetess, and she is the first woman in the Bible to carry that title
  - This means that the song she sings is also are also divinely inspired
  - Her statement in v.21 seems to be nothing more than a repetition of Moses' song
    - But in reality, her offers us something much more profound
- To examine this song properly, I first need to establish a framework or construct
  - As we've already noted, the song of Moses is divided into three parts
    - The first part recounts is very specific to the events of the Exodus

- It mentions the Red Sea and Pharaoh and chariots
- The second part beginning in v.6 starts to change
  - There is still mention of seas piling up and the deep so we know that Moses is still talking about the same event
  - But the song begins to describe the event in a more general way
    - Moses talks about God shattering Israel's enemy
    - Overthrowing those who rise up against God
    - Consuming enemies with burning wrath
    - The enemy thinks it has won right before it is defeated
- Finally, the third part becomes almost entirely divorced from the context of the Exodus
  - The earth swallows the enemies of God
  - While God has redeemed His people
  - The world has seen God's power and trembles
  - God's people meet God at Zion, the holy Mountain
  - While God resides forever in His sanctuary
- Notice the progression in the song
  - It moves from more to less specific concerning the Exodus
    - By this progression, we can see that Moses is speaking not only about the events of that day but also of future events in Israel
    - In fact, this prophecy is speaking of the times of Tribulation, when Israel will be redeemed ultimately from the Antichrist
  - We have already established how the Exodus story is a picture of the end times
    - Israel in bondage and set free by a redeemer
    - The redeemer must conquer Israel's enemies, first through a series of judgments and plagues
    - Ultimately, Israel is set free through a sacrifice of the Lamb



- And once the nation is freed, it is led to worship God at His holy mountain
- Now Moses is prophetically making that connection for us
  - The first third of the song establishes the fact of God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt
  - The second third of the song begins to move us away from the events of Exodus and toward the future work of God in Tribulation
- The real switch occurs in the third strophe
  - Moses begins to describes events that are future to his day
  - In v.13 Moses says that God's people will be redeemed while the world will fear what they see
    - Says various nations will tremble in fear of God's work
    - The event was just completed, yet Moses is already talking about the effect it had on the world

[Josh. 2:8](#) ¶ Now before they lay down, she came up to them on the roof,  
[Josh. 2:9](#) 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.

[Josh. 2:10](#) "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.

[Josh. 2:11](#) "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.

[Josh. 2:24](#) They said to Joshua, "Surely the LORD has given all the land into our hands; moreover, all the inhabitants of the land have melted away before us."

- So we know that the third strophe is looking into the future, and that future extends much farther than Joshua
  - The Lord will lead Israel into their inheritance, to the mountain, where the Lord will reign forever and ever
    - Is this mountain Mt Sinai in Midian?

- Is it Mt Moriah in David's day
- Or is it another mountain?

[Heb. 12:18](#) For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind,

[Heb. 12:19](#) and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them.

[Heb. 12:20](#) For they could not bear the command, "IF EVEN A BEAST TOUCHES THE MOUNTAIN, IT WILL BE STONED."

[Heb. 12:21](#) And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I AM FULL OF FEAR and trembling."

[Heb. 12:22](#) But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels,

[Heb. 12:23](#) to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

[Heb. 12:24](#) and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

[Heb. 12:25](#) See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven.

[Heb. 12:26](#) And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN."

[Heb. 12:27](#) This expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

[Heb. 12:28](#) Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe;

[Heb. 12:29](#) for our God is a consuming fire.

- The writer of Hebrews taught that the mountain the nation of Israel was brought before was a mountain of gloom and darkness
  - This mountain is where Moses delivered the law, and it was a mountain that generated fear and gloom
    - This fear and dread was representative of the effect God's law has to condemn sinful men
    - Even Moses trembled
  - But believers have been led into a different kingdom, one of light and angels and God Himself

- The Zion that will descend to earth once all that has been created has been removed and something unshakeable replaces it
- This is the mountain Moses is describing, the place where the Lord reigns forever and ever
- But before the nation of Israel will enter into that kingdom at the conclusion of the Tribulation, they will first endure the wrath of the antichrist and his forces
  - For an in-depth understanding of these days, please refer to our Revelation course online
    - The Tribulation comes to an end when the Lord returns, slays the antichrist, receives Israel in faith and ushers in the Kingdom age
    - Then the Lord will plant Israel in their inheritance in the land, as Moses declares in v.17
    - Meanwhile, the Lord will occupy the temple and reign forever, as Moses says in v.18
  - Moses song speaks of God's work in the Exodus, but he uses that story to draw a picture to the work of God in the time of Tribulation
    - This method of drawing prophetic pictures is consistent with Hebrew poetry in general
      - Just as poetry involves pairs of statements that echo the same thought in different but complimentary ways
      - So does prophecy often pair together a near term event with a far term event
        - The earlier event pictures the later event
        - And by understanding the earlier, we come to understand what will happen in the future
- Finally, I mentioned that Miriam's prophecy added an intriguing detail to this prophetic picture
  - She says that the Lord hurled the horse and rider into the sea
    - We understand how this statement is connected to Exodus, obviously
    - Pharaoh's horsemen were consumed by the Red Sea

- But curiously, her statement is spoken in the singular
  - A rider and a horse is thrown into the sea
  - The use of the singular gives us the clue to understand how this statement is both speaking of Egypt and prophetically speaking of the last days
    - In Revelation 6, the arrival of the antichrist at the start of Tribulation is described this way

[Rev. 6:1](#) ¶ Then I saw when the Lamb broke one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures saying as with a voice of thunder, "Come."

[Rev. 6:2](#) I looked, and behold, a white horse, and he who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.

- The man riding this horse in Revelation 6 is the antichrist, depicted as arriving to conquer the world
- At the end of Tribulation, he is defeated by God, in the last minute, just as the antichrist is about to crush Israel in Jerusalem
  - Like the Exodus, the the Lord provides Israel an escape westward away from the advance of the enemy
  - As Israel fees, the enemy advances
  - And the Lord fights the battle for Israel, saving them at the last minute

[Zech. 14:1](#) Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you.

[Zech. 14:2](#) For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.

[Zech. 14:3](#) Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.

[Zech. 14:4](#) In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

[Zech. 14:5](#) You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!

[Zech. 14:6](#) In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle.

[Zech. 14:7](#) For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

[Zech. 14:8](#) And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

[Zech. 14:9](#) And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.

- Miriam says this rider and horse will be hurled into the sea
  - The word for hurled is literally the word cast, as in cast into the sea
  - And the sea is a common metaphor in the Bible for the depths of hell or God's judgment
- So Miriam's song describes both the riders of Exodus while also picturing the antichrist meeting his judgment in Tribulation
- This is why the final judgments of Tribulation are prefaced in Revelation with this statement

[Rev. 15:1](#) Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished.

[Rev. 15:2](#) And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.

[Rev. 15:3](#) And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying...

- Before we leave the song, I want to show something even more interesting in these accounts
  - In the story of Exodus, we noted that God made clear He was judging not only the people of Egypt, but also the Egyptian gods
    - Each plague was designed to assault a god and render it impotent before the eyes of the people
    - We also noted that God changed the calendar 180 degrees to reflect that God's ways of redemption are the opposite of man's ways

- While man weighs his deeds expecting to get credit for good works
  - God cares nothing for works for the sake of redemption, and instead provides a sacrificial Lamb for men
- Finally, in the songs of the crossing of the Red Sea, once final pagan myth is destroyed
- The cult of Baal was the basis for all Canaanite religion
  - Baal is the god of Canaan and his name means “Lord”
  - The Hebrews always considered Baal to be the false god of this world, that is Satan
    - The NT uses Beelzebub meaning Lord of the flies as a term for Satan
- The Canaanite religion had a false mythology of creation centered on the false god Baal
  - Their creation myth begins with Baal and another character called Yamm (which is a word meaning sea) in conflict and struggle
    - Yamm or sea was a force of confusion or formless chaos
    - While Baal was a force of order, and Baal was threatened by Yamm
      - Baal conquers Yamm thereby setting the rest of creation into motion
    - Having conquered Yamm, Baal sets up a kingdom and a palace and he begins to reign over the world, according to the Canaanite myth
  - Throughout the lands Israel sojourned, this story was as central to the pagan understanding of creation
    - As common as the myth of evolution is today, this myth was accepted and understood equally widely then
    - And we can recognize Satan’s counterfeit tactics in this myth, which he brought to the Canaanite peoples
      - He declares himself to be the god of order, while the formless deep of God’s creation was his enemy

- He conquered the creation and began to reign over it, which references the fall in the Garden
- So how does this relate to the songs of Moses and Miriam?
  - This account reads like the Canaanite creation myth only in reverse
  - If we were to read this song in Hebrew, we would be struck by two things
    - First, the word in Hebrew for sea is yam
      - So throughout the narrative, the poet explains to the reader that the sea is conquering God's enemies
        - The sea destroys the armies opposed to God
        - The sea destroys the antichrist in a future day
    - Secondly, the concluding statement in v.18 says that the Lord will reign
      - In Hebrew this is Yahweh malakh
      - In the Canaanite religion, the celebratory statement of Baal as he conquers Yamm was Baal malakh
- While the story of Exodus is first about Israel leaving slavery, it is also a creation story in that it explains the creation of Israel as a nation
  - The song of Moses is written in such a way that it testifies to the superiority of God's creation in contrast to the creation myth of Satan
    - Though the connection may not be readily apparent to us, the construction of this poem and the carefully chosen words in Hebrew create that connection
      - The God of Israel is the Creator and has power over all creation
      - Baal didn't destroy Yamm; Yamm will destroy Baal
  - Since the song of Moses introduces us to the way the Exodus story is a creation account of sorts, it leads us to see the following pattern
    - In the first creation story, the world was created, being formed out of water

- In the Exodus story, the nation of Israel is created, born out of the water of the Red Sea
  - The Red Sea is widely understood to be a baptism of the nation as a whole (not of each individual in the nation)
- In our personal redemption by faith, we are made new creatures in Christ having been born again through the baptism of spirit and water
- And in the final days, the nation of Israel is born again in faith, residing in the kingdom with rivers of flowing water
- Each of these moments is a triumph of God over Satan and his forces
- Further supporting the creation motif is the connection of each creation to the Sabbath
  - After the six days of creation, God rested
  - After the Exodus, God will command Israel to rest for one day each week
  - After our personal salvation, we come to rest in our Sabbath, Christ, perpetually
  - After the nation of Israel is saved, the world enters into eternal rest in the kingdom
    - Each Sabbath is greater than the one that preceded it
    - We will look at the issue of the Sabbath in much greater detail in future chapters
- So to summarize the Songs of Moses and Miriam
  - Moses and Miriam spoke as prophets
    - They declared the mighty works of God in Egypt and in times to come
    - They testified to God's defense of Israel in Egypt and God's defense of Israel in Tribulation
    - They spoke of Pharaoh's defeat in the Red Sea and the antichrist's eventual defeat at Christ's return to rule



- Furthermore, the poetry was constructed carefully to invite comparisons to Canaanite creation mythology
  - And with that comparison, we see a pattern linking several creation moments
- We will have more to say about these symbolic connections in the future, but for now let's finish the chapter

[Ex. 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.

[Ex. 15:23](#) When they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore it was named Marah.

[Ex. 15:24](#) So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"

[Ex. 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.

[Ex. 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."

- After the crossing, they began to travel westward into the land of Midian
  - After three days of travel, they had yet to find water
    - This isn't surprising
    - The region gets less than an inch of rain per year
  - At about this point, they reach a source of water, but the water was bitter and undrinkable
    - The bitterness indicates foul and likely poisonous water
      - The place is called Marah, which means bitter
    - So the people begin to grumble asking what shall they drink?
      - It's remarkable that the nation would find cause to grumble so soon after the crossing
      - Here we see a spiritual truth playing out
      - Even after witnessing great signs and wonders, the people are still hard hearted and unable to trust in God

- The mind can be influenced by what we see and experience, but the heart (the spirit) cannot
- Moses asks God for relief, and God gives Moses a solution
  - Throw a tree into the water and it will become drinkable
  - And with that solution, comes a new statute and regulation and a test for the people of Israel
    - These things are coming upon the nation because they are sinning so readily after having seen the Lord deliver them
    - With that sin comes rules and regulations and tests
    - This is merely a foretaste of the Law to come
- God directs that if the nation would heed his voice and do what is right and keep all his statutes and commandments, they will not receive the Lord's judgments
  - By extension, if Israel does anything other than obey, they will experience God's judgment
    - God says He is the healer of Israel, meaning God can turn bitter water to sweet
  - Ultimately, this requirement is repeated in the Law itself
    - This ends the third section of the book and sets up a new theme that runs through the rest of Exodus and through the remaining books of Moses
    - The nation that left Egypt is unbelieving yet God saved them for His name sake
      - Their unbelief is a cause for them to test God ten times
      - To show them their unbelief and sin and to cause them to seek after Him, the Lord gives the nation laws and statutes
      - They fail in keeping these laws, necessitating God's judgment
- We will begin chapter 16 next time with the final verse of chapter 15