

Reflexes on Redemption

by Raymond Golsworthy

The sermon discusses the reflexes of redemption, which include the reflex of praise, the reflex of hope, the reflex of fellowship, and the reflex of concern, and how these reflexes are still relevant today.

Scripture: Psalm 40:3

Topics: "Redemption Theology", "Worship Ministry"

Description

Raymond Golsworthy preaches on the reflexes of redemption found in Exodus 15, highlighting the immediate results of Israel's redemption from Egypt. The sermon discusses the reflexes of praise, hope, fellowship, ministry, and concern for the house of God, drawing parallels to the experiences of God's saved people today. It emphasizes the importance of singing praises to God, having a sure hope in future blessings, experiencing fellowship with other believers, recognizing diverse ministries working together, and being concerned for God's dwelling place.

Transcript

Exodus 15

Exodus fifteen is one of the great triumph chapters of the Bible. God had just rescued Israel from their awful bondage in Egypt; the armies of Egypt lay dead upon the sea-shore and a new life of liberty had begun for God's people. It is our purpose now to consider some of the immediate results of this redemption; some of the deep reflexes in the hearts of God's people; reflexes of redemption we shall call them. We shall mention four of them, and shall seek to show how those same reflexes are found in the hearts of God's saved people today.

First, of course, and very obviously, was the reflex of praise. The chapter begins, "I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea" (verse 1) and then follow the happy words of the great victory song. God had surely given them their garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness (Isa. 61:3).

No one can dispute that, today also, God's salvation leads on to happy singing. Recipients of grace will gladly testify, "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God" (Psalm 40:3). Very much like those in Exodus fifteen, they will want to say: "My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto Thee; and my soul, which Thou hast redeemed" (Psalm 71:23). This is a very obvious reflex of redemption, but a very precious one, and it surely gladdens the heart of God.

The next reflex we would notice is the reflex of hope. The biblical meaning of the word hope has to do with a sure and certain expectation as to the future, and that certainly appears in Exodus fifteen. While the early verses describe the great victory that had just been won, the eyes of God's people then look right on (Prov. 4:25) to what God will yet do for them in the days that lie ahead. In verse 17, they declare: "Thou shalt bring them in and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance". It seems they are already seeing themselves in the rich land of Canaan, happily enjoying the land of milk and honey. They were assured that the God who had brought them out would also bring them in! There, then is the reflex of hope. As God's redeemed ones, they have the sure and certain expectation of wonderful things yet to come, things which God hath prepared for them that love Him (1 Cor. 2:9).

We would like to make it clear here that with us this entering into Canaan not only refers to heaven, but it includes all the present blessings of the daily Christian life. Being in Christ is our Canaan, and God plans to unfold the milk and honey of Christ to us day by day. We are assured that the God who has so graciously saved us from the guilt of sin, will also save us from the power of sin and, in due time, from the very presence of sin. All along He will show us the wonders of His Christ. He will be our daily manna, and, by God's grace, we shall "go from strength to strength" and every one of us shall in time, "appear before God in Zion" (Psalm 84:7).

Praise God, the day is coming "when we shall say His lovely face" and that will be our cloudless morning (see Rev. 22:4). The Bible even assures us that we shall share with Christ in the kingdom of His Father (see Luke 12:32; Dan. 12:3; Matt. 13:43). There, we would say, is the reflex of hope. And it is a hope that does not disappoint (See Rom. 5:5).

The next reflex we have to notice is what we shall call the reflex of fellowship. In Exodus fifteen this shows itself in two different ways; one the well-known and the other the not-so-well-known. Each of these has its own message for us. Let us explain what we mean.

First we see the beautiful uniting together of the whole congregation as they sing their happy victory song. We read: "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord" (Ex. 15:1). And it seems that they sang as one man, for the song began 'I will sing', not 'we will sing' (verse 1). A solid fellowship indeed!

Thank God, all this has its blessed counterpart in our case. Once we are saved, we have this wonderful intuition of belonging. Somehow we know that we are eternally joined to all we have had the same experience. All barriers seem to have gone down and we sense we are one family together. The truth gradually dawns upon us that we are all sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty (2 Cor. 6:18). And "we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (See 1 John 3:14). The fact is that we all have the Holy Spirit within us, and we are all members of the one body of Christ (See 1 Cor. 12:13). Early in Acts we read that, "All that believed were together" (Acts 2:44) and that they "continued steadfastly in the fellowship" (verse 41) in Christ. Thank God, all barriers are gone!

Paul even tells us in his epistles that Jews and Gentiles are Jews and Gentiles no longer (see Gal. 3:27, 28; Col. 3:10, 11). That is a thing of the past (Eph. 2:11); now they are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:28).

Our point here is that salvation brings this blessed reflex to us. We may not know all the precious doctrines bound up with it, but from the very moment of new birth, we are assured that this blessed fellowship is ours, forever.

We now pass on to consider the 'not-so-well-known'. Exodus fifteen shows us that there is also a fellowship of ministry. It is important to notice that in this chapter, we have two leaders of song, Moses and Miriam and Miriam comes in where Moses leaves off (verses 20, 21). Here are two separate and distinctive ministries being brought together and blended in one happy service to the Lord. We may say that two gifts are here gravitating together and forming one beautiful and acceptable ministry and each is clearly complementing the other. This, we believe is a further important aspect of this reflex or fellowship.

The apostle Paul has much to say about this in his epistles and he uses the figure of the human body to illustrate his point. He explains how the hand needs the foot, the eye needs the ear, and then goes on to say that the evangelist needs the teacher and the teacher needs the pastor, or elder. All these are different, but they are all brought together for the common good. It is all a designed and necessary interdependence that operates within God's church, joining member to member and ministry to ministry. And it is one of God's ways of holding us together, for we soon discover how much we need one another if we are to fulfil our task. We might add that we ourselves have had very vivid experiences of this, and we believe that this fellowship of ministry is a normal and expectable outworking of redemptive forces. All praise to the Saviour's Name!

This latter principle, can be a great encouragement to God's people and particularly to those who find themselves serving the Lord with some sense of isolation and who feel they need some sort of complementary help in their ministry. We would urge such servants of the Lord to look to their gracious Master (who is Head over us all) to supply that need (see Phil. 4:13). They may do so confidently, for they are touching a principle of God's own working and something that is essential to His great eternal purpose. All of this is illustrated in Exodus fifteen, and among the blessed reflexes of redemption.

Finally, we come to consider what we shall call the reflex of concern, namely a concern for the house of God. This appears right at the beginning of the chapter, where Israel is singing: "The Lord is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation: He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation: my father's God, and I will exalt Him". (Ex. 15:2).

It seems that the whole nation is somehow moved by this thought of God's house, and they are dedicating themselves to the securing of it. They realise that they have just been delivered from what is called the house of bondage (Ex. 13:3,14), and they know that they are on their way to their promised rest, so they now realise that God's need is just the same, and they want Him to have His house. Later on, we are told that this was, in fact, God's main purpose behind this whole redemption; He Himself wanted to dwell among them (Exodus 25:8; 29:46).

This certainly has its counterpart with us. Once we are rescued from our bondage to this world we find within our hearts the same concern: God's habitation, His church!

This links us up immediately with one of the main themes of the New Testament. The Lord Jesus, once His ministry had reached a certain point, declared: "I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt.16:18). Later, Paul and Peter go on to tell us that true Christians are the living stones that comprise God's temple, and that God is active now in building us together for that purpose (see e.g. Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Cor.3:16; 1 Pet.2:4, 5).

Even the local gatherings of God's people which Paul was primarily addressing in 1 Cor. 3 are also designated God's temple, God's habitation! The Lord Jesus said: "Where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst" (Matt.18:20). Normally, those who gather thus would be true

believers, cleansed in the blood of Christ, and sharing in His Spirit. They would just gravitate together to worship and serve their Lord, and to learn at His feet. Everything would be marked by beautiful simplicity and in that temple, "every whit of it would utter His glory" (Psalm 29:9 margin). They would thus be a miniature, or representation, of that far greater temple of redeemed and regenerated men and women, stones gathered from every tribe and nation.

Reverting back now to Exodus fifteen, we submit that the concern for God's house which was manifested there will also be found today, wherever men experience God's salvation. And it will probably grow upon us until we find ourselves saying with David: "I will not give sleep to mine eyes or slumber to mine eyelids, until I find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob" (Psalm 132:4, 5).

We believe that that determination, to see God's house built, is a normal reflex of redemption. And God will surely help us as we yield to it and earnestly pursue it.

As a conclusion to all we have been saying, we would like to draw attention to the closing verses of Exodus fourteen. We notice that all those reflexes mentioned in chapter fifteen appeared when God's people saw Pharaoh and all his hosts dead upon the sea-shore. We suggest that we also, as God shall graciously reveal it to us, may now see a very similar victory; the victory of Calvary. The Bible declares that when our Saviour died, He destroyed the devil (Heb. 2:14) and at the same time spoiled principalities and powers, making a show of them openly (Col. 2:15). That God-given sight of Satan and all His hosts utterly defeated at Calvary, will put into our hearts and spirits all the reflexes we have been discussing, specially that reflex of concern that God may have a house for Himself, even in our day. The new questions in our hearts will be:

Are the stones being gathered?

Are they being shaped and fitted together by the great Master-builder?

Is the living Lord evidently in the midst?

Is God finding His rest in that gathering?

Has the glory descended, and filled the house? (1 Kings 8:10,11)

All this will be our concern once we see the victory of Calvary and all hell's forces dead upon the sea-shore (Ex. 14:30). We shall certainly sing with God's Israel, "He is my God, and I will prepare Him an habitation."

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