

Dr. John Oswalt, Exodus, Session 8, Exodus 15 – Song of the Sea Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide Quiz, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Oswalt, Exodus, Session 8, Exodus 15 – Song of the Sea, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. John Oswalt's lecture analyzes Exodus 15, focusing on the Song of Moses and Miriam. **He emphasizes the interconnectedness of faith and God's actions**, highlighting how God's deliverance from Egypt shaped Israel's understanding of their identity and relationship with God. **Oswalt connects this theme to Christian faith**, arguing that the Exodus narrative mirrors the resurrection of Christ. The lecture also **explores the significance of singing in biblical faith** and discusses God's multifaceted nature, including His providence and healing. Finally, **Oswalt addresses the importance of trust and the challenges of maintaining faith** in difficult circumstances.

2. 18 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Oswalt, Exodus, Session 8 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Pentateuch → Exodus).



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3. Briefing Document: Oswalt, Exodus, Session 8, Exodus 15 – Song of the Sea

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and important ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. John Oswalt's "Exodus, Session 8":

Briefing Document: Dr. John Oswalt on Exodus 15 (Song of Moses and Miriam)

I. Introduction & Context

- Dr. Oswalt opens with a prayer focused on the resurrection of Christ, emphasizing its connection to the promise of eternal life and the ability to live with certainty and overcome burdens. This establishes a theological framework for the study of Exodus.
- He introduces the "Song of Moses and Miriam" (Exodus 15) as a pivotal text, noting its connection to the song sung in Revelation, emphasizing its significance as a recurring theme throughout the Bible. "Perhaps you remember that in the book of Revelation, we're told that the people sang the Song of Moses and of the Lamb. So, the tie-in here is very significant."
- He divides the song into three stanzas: (1) Verses 1-3 (introductory), (2) Verses 4-12 (God's power), and (3) Verses 13-18 (future implications).

II. Stanza 1: Personal Declaration of Faith (Exodus 15:1-3)

- The emphasis is on the pronouns "I" and "He," highlighting a personal relationship with God: "I will sing to the Lord...The Lord is my strength and my defense...He is my God."
- This demonstrates a shift from being mere spectators to becoming participants in the relationship with God.
- This personal declaration arises from God's actions, leading to a newfound relationship, and the "I" represents both Moses and the nation of Israel. "God has demonstrated his faithfulness and as a result Moses and the people are saying he is my God. No longer are they merely spectators. Now they are participants with God in this whole undertaking."

- Oswalt identifies how similar phrases found here are used and alluded to in later Old Testament books (Psalm 18:1-2, Psalm 118:14, Isaiah 12:2, Habakkuk 3:18-19). He notes that the song of Moses was taught and remembered for its connection to the Exodus, helping maintain hope, build strength and remind them of their identity.
- He reinforces the point that faith is "inextricably connected with God's actions in history" and he ties that into the Resurrection and how Paul understood it in 1 Cor. 15. "If the Hebrew people were not delivered from Egypt, if this is a, as is unfortunately all too popular today, a theology story, then I have to say, what about theology? Where did they get the idea that God is God alone?"

III. Key Concepts in Stanza 1 (Exodus 15:1-3)

- **He is my strength:** This emphasizes total reliance on God to face life's challenges and to do so triumphantly, not just make it through.
- **He is my song:** Singing is an intrinsic aspect of Biblical faith and fully expresses the joy and relationship that a person has with God. He discusses the importance of congregational singing. "When God comes into your life, something happens that can only be fully expressed in a song. Just spoken words don't do it. It has to be sung words."
- **He is my salvation:** Because of their knowledge of God's salvation, people can face every situation with strength and with a song.
- **He is my God:** Emphasizes a personal relationship with Yahweh and his uniqueness.

IV. Stanza 2: God's Power and Uniqueness (Exodus 15:4-12)

- The dominant pronoun shifts to "You," showcasing God as the active agent in their salvation, contrasted against "they" being the passive recipients of God's actions.
- God's actions included overthrowing Pharaoh's army by hurling them into the sea. "You threw down those who opposed you. It consumed them by the blast of your nostril...You blew with your breath, and the sea covered them. They sank like lead."
- The stanza highlights God's uniqueness, and that the gods of other nations "cannot hold a candle to you." Yahweh is not one of the gods, but in a different category altogether.

V. Stanza 3: Future Implications (Exodus 15:13-18)

- The perspective shifts from looking back at past deliverance to looking forward to future implications of that deliverance.
- The Exodus message causes fear among the enemy nations. "Everybody is scared witless. Because they've heard what your God has done."
- The exodus from slavery to Egypt means that they are now "slaves of God". "God has bought us. We were slaves in Egypt, and by his actions, we've become slaves of God."
- Emphasis is placed on "hesed" (steadfast love, mercy, unfailing love) as a key attribute of God in the Old Testament. He notes that the word is unique to the Old Testament and emphasizes the passionate and undeserved devotion from a superior to an inferior. "The passionate, undying devotion of a superior to an inferior, especially when undeserved."
- This "hesed" is why God delivered Israel and leads them to a deeper relationship with Him.
- The purpose of the Exodus was to bring them into a relationship with God, rather than just a geographical location. God's primary purpose is not for them to accomplish tasks, but for them to have a relationship with Him. "He delivered them to bring them into a relationship with himself."
- God is taking them "home" to the temple, emphasizing a relationship with Him.

VI. Chapter Divisions and the Flow of Exodus (Exodus 15:19- end)

- The conventional chapter break after verse 21 is deemed inappropriate and ought to come after verse 21, as verse 22 starts a new section.
- Chapter 15 brings the section on God's power to a close and introduces the section on God's providence, which is covered in 15:22-18:27.
- While the Israelites know God's power, they still need to learn to trust His care for them.
- The first reaction to challenges in the wilderness is grumbling and mistrust, reflecting a "fearful inability to trust." "Why is our first inclination to mutter? Thinking of ourselves, fallen nature, loss of control, displeasure."

- Oswalt states that the root of all sin is fear and that even those who have come from good families still have deep fears.

VII. God's Providence and Healing (Exodus 15:22-end)

- The anecdote of the tree thrown into bitter water is not just about Jesus on the cross, but an example of the variety in God's ways of working.
- God has many ways to work, and people should not dictate to God how he should work.
- Oswalt discusses five gifts of healing, and the different ways that God heals, including instant healing, turning points in illness, miraculous healing, the specific grace to triumph over illness, and the triumphant crossing (dying well).
- God made the world to operate in certain ways and while living according to his standards is no guarantee that nothing bad will happen, it is generally expected that health will follow.
- The session closes with a prayer thanking God for his role as a healer, for the gift of health, and for his grace in triumphing over disease and death.

VIII. Key Takeaways

- **Personal Relationship:** The Exodus is not just about national liberation but also about establishing a personal relationship with God.
- **God's Actions:** Faith is rooted in God's historical actions and interventions in human affairs.
- **God's Character:** God is unique, all-powerful, and characterized by "hesed" (steadfast love).
- **Trust and Providence:** The Israelites (and all believers) are called to trust in God's providence, especially amidst challenging circumstances.
- **Congregational Singing:** Music and singing are vital expressions of faith and theology.

This briefing document captures the key themes and ideas discussed by Dr. Oswalt in this session, emphasizing the importance of the Song of Moses as a reflection of God's power, love, and the ongoing need for faith and trust in His providence. It also points towards the themes to come in the subsequent chapters.

4. Study Guide: Oswalt, Exodus, Session 8, Exodus 15 – Song of the Sea

Exodus Session 8 Study Guide

Quiz

1. According to Oswalt, what is the main theme that runs through the Bible and is reflected in the Song of Moses and Miriam?
2. What does the abundance of "I" and "he" pronouns in the first stanza of the Song of Moses signify?
3. Why was the Song of Moses being taught and remembered, according to Oswalt?
4. Oswalt claims the Exodus event is inextricably connected with what for the Israelites? What other event is the Exodus connected to for Christians?
5. What three words beginning with "F" in English does Oswalt highlight, and what do they convey about the relationship between God and humanity?
6. In the second stanza (verses 4-12), what pronoun is dominant, and what does this shift in perspective represent?
7. How does the perspective in verses 13-18 differ from verses 4-12?
8. What does the Hebrew word *hesed* mean, and why is it significant in understanding God's actions in the Exodus?
9. According to Oswalt, what is the ultimate purpose of the Exodus, as revealed in verse 17?
10. What does Oswalt suggest is the root of all sin? What is the first inclination of the Israelites when they reach the bitter water in the wilderness?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The main theme is that God is highly exalted, and He is the source of strength, salvation, and victory over oppression. This is the same theme in Revelation with the Song of Moses and the Lamb.
2. The pronouns signify a personal pronouncement of faith and salvation, highlighting a new sense of relationship with God, where they go from being spectators to participants.

3. The Song of Moses was taught and remembered because it reminded them of who they were, kept hope alive, and was strengthening and upbuilding as it was connected to the Exodus event.
4. Oswalt claims the Exodus event is inextricably connected with God's actions in history. For Christians, the Exodus is similar to the Resurrection of Christ.
5. The three words are "strength," "song," and "salvation". They convey a total reliance on God, who enables people to face life triumphantly and fills their hearts with song.
6. The dominant pronoun is "you," which signifies a focus on God's actions and power, emphasizing that God alone is responsible for the victory over the Egyptians.
7. Verses 4-12 look back at God's actions in the past, while verses 13-18 look forward to the future, focusing on the impact the Exodus will have on the surrounding nations and Israel's destiny.
8. *Hesed* is translated as unfailing love, mercy, steadfast love, or loving kindness. It refers to God's passionate, undying, and undeserved devotion to His people, which is fundamental to the Exodus.
9. The purpose is not merely to reach a geographical place but to bring them into a deeper relationship with God, to dwell in His sanctuary.
10. Oswalt suggests the root of all sin is fear. The first inclination of the Israelites is to mutter or complain.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the Song of Moses (Exodus 15) in the context of the Old Testament, and explain its continuing relevance to faith. How does the song connect to themes throughout the Bible?
2. Analyze the three stanzas of the Song of Moses, focusing on their different perspectives (past, present, and future) and what each reveals about God and Israel's relationship with Him. How do the pronouns shift throughout the poem and why?
3. Explore Oswalt's view on the relationship between faith and historical events, particularly in connection with the Exodus and the Resurrection. Explain how these historical events provide a foundation for the theological ideas presented.
4. Examine the concept of *hesed* as described by Oswalt, and discuss how it informs our understanding of God's character and His relationship with His people. Provide examples of how this concept relates to other stories in the Bible.
5. Discuss Oswalt's perspective on God's healing and the diverse ways it can manifest, as seen in the events in Exodus 15:22-27. How does he argue against the idea that the only true healing is instantaneous or miraculous?

Glossary

- **Exodus:** The second book of the Old Testament, detailing the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.
- **Song of Moses:** A poem found in Exodus 15, celebrating God's victory over the Egyptians and expressing Israel's faith and gratitude.
- **Song of Miriam:** Part of the Song of Moses in Exodus 15:21, it is Miriam's response to the events at the Red Sea.
- **Yahweh:** The personal name of God in the Old Testament, often translated as "Lord."
- **Resurrection:** The event of Jesus Christ rising from the dead after his crucifixion, a central tenet of Christian faith.
- **Hesed:** A Hebrew word that encompasses ideas of love, mercy, steadfast love, loving-kindness and passionate, undying devotion of a superior to an inferior, especially when undeserved.
- **Providence:** The protective care of God, often referring to His guidance and provision for His people.
- **Ebenezer:** Meaning "stone of help", it refers to a stone used to mark a place where God has shown his faithfulness.
- **Sanctification:** The process of becoming more like God.
- **Subterfuge:** Deceit used in order to achieve one's goal.
- **Canaan:** The land promised to the Israelites by God, often referred to as the "Promised Land."
- **Tabernacle:** A portable sanctuary used by the Israelites during their wilderness journey.
- **Histoplasmosis:** A disease caused by fungus.

5. FAQs on Oswalt, Exodus, Session 8, Exodus 15 – Song of the Sea, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: Themes from Exodus 15 and Beyond

- What is the significance of the Song of Moses in Exodus 15, and why is it referenced later in the Old Testament?** The Song of Moses is a powerful declaration of faith and salvation that emerged from the Exodus. It is a personal pronouncement, where both Moses and the nation of Israel declare that God is "my strength," "my song," and "my salvation." It is repeatedly quoted and alluded to in later Old Testament books (Psalms, Isaiah, Habakkuk) because it serves as a reminder of God's actions in history, particularly the deliverance from Egypt. This song kept hope alive, strengthened the faith of the people, reminded them of who they were, and cemented the Exodus as a foundational event in their identity. The song highlights how their faith is inextricably linked to God's historical actions, and the annual Passover celebration would reinforce this connection.
- What do the phrases "He is my strength," "He is my song," and "He is my salvation" convey about God and our relationship to Him?** These three phrases all starting with "F" in English, while possibly coincidental, reveal a complete reliance on God. "He is my strength" signifies that God enables us to face life's challenges victoriously, not by our own might but through His power. "He is my song" suggests that God brings joy and a new expression of faith that goes beyond mere words and can only be fully expressed in song. Finally, "He is my salvation" emphasizes that He is the ultimate source of our deliverance, which empowers us to face any situation with strength and joy. This highlights that salvation is not just an event, but a state of being that affects our daily lives and relationship with God.

- Why is singing so important in biblical faith, and how has the role of congregational singing changed over time?** Singing is considered an intrinsic element of biblical faith. When God enters someone's life, it often leads to a profound experience that can be fully expressed through song. The text emphasizes that singing is not just an add-on, but a necessary expression of faith that transcends spoken words. Historically, leaders like Martin Luther championed congregational singing, challenging the tradition where singing was primarily reserved for priests and choirs. Unfortunately, the current trend seems to be to move away from congregational singing, which is something to be wary of, as people need to sing their faith.
- How does the perspective of the Song of Moses shift between verses 1-3, 4-12 and 13-18?** The song of Moses is organized into three stanzas with distinct perspectives. Verses 1-3 are a brief introduction focused on personal declaration and establishing relationship with God. Verses 4-12 shift the focus to God's actions in history. They look backward at God's powerful intervention and the defeat of Pharaoh and his army. This section uses second-person pronouns ("You," "Your") to emphasize that it is God's actions alone that led to the deliverance. The final stanza, verses 13-18, shifts again, now focusing on the future. It explores the implications of the Exodus and God's unfailing love, or "hesed", for the future of Israel. It talks about how the Exodus event will cause the enemies of God to fear, and how God's unfailing love will bring the people to His sanctuary, leading them into a deeper relationship with Him.
- What is the significance of the word "hesed" in verse 13, and how does it relate to God's actions in the Exodus?** "Hesed," often translated as unfailing love, mercy, steadfast love, or loving-kindness, is a central concept in the Old Testament, particularly concerning God's character. It signifies the passionate, undying devotion of a superior to an inferior, especially when undeserved. It is an unusual word, largely unique to the Old Testament, and it appears more than 250 times, primarily referring to God. In verse 13, it explains God's motivation in leading the Israelites to freedom and towards a closer relationship. It indicates that God's actions were not based on the merit of the Israelites but on His steadfast and compassionate love. It's why he didn't just abandon the Israelites, start over with Moses, and leave them in slavery.

- **What is the ultimate purpose of the Exodus according to this text, and what does it mean for our understanding of God's plan?** The ultimate purpose of the Exodus is not merely to deliver the Israelites from physical slavery but to bring them into a deeper relationship with God. He is taking them "home," into his sanctuary and to a closer relationship with Him. The establishment of laws and the building of the tabernacle are all part of this journey towards relationship. It emphasizes that God saves people not to perform tasks, but for Himself. It is not merely geographical or about completing tasks, but rather about entering into a relationship with God, a theme that stretches back to God's walking with Adam and Eve in the garden.
- **What is the relationship between God's power and God's providence, and how is it illustrated in the text?** The text explores the connection between God's power (demonstrated in the Exodus) and His providence (how he cares for his people day-to-day). Chapter 15 demonstrates that they know that God can win against any force or god, but chapters 15:22-18:27 explore if God cares about their basic needs and if they can trust him. The Israelites' first reaction to hardship after leaving the Red Sea was to "mutter" or complain, revealing a lack of trust in God's care. This highlights our natural inclination to be fearful and distrustful because of our fallen nature. However, this distrust is countered by the examples of God's provision—like the bitter water turning sweet—to encourage faith in God's providence.
- **What are the various ways God brings healing, and how does this idea relate to the tree that made the water sweet?** The text explains that God brings healing through a variety of means, not only instantaneous miracles. He can provide healing through gradual recovery, turning points in sickness, specific acts of grace that bring triumph amidst suffering, and even through a triumphant death. The use of a tree to make bitter water sweet illustrates that God works in different and unexpected ways. It highlights that God has a variety of ways of working and we ought not to dictate to God. The text also challenges the notion that only miraculous, instantaneous healing is valid. And by emphasizing the different ways of healing, the text suggests that we should not limit our expectations of God's intervention or try to fit Him into a rigid framework of how healing should occur.