

Replace Your Fear With Praise and Prophecy, and Watch What God Does

Editor's Note: This is Part 1 of a two-part series. Watch for Part 2, coming soon!

Even before the coronavirus pandemic escalated in our nation, Moses' and Miriam's song of deliverance, recorded in Exodus 15, inspired me with fresh insight that had previously escaped my notice. The superscription in my Bible says, "Song of the Redeemed" because it celebrates their crossing the Red Sea on dry ground (Ex. 14:11-12).

I especially love how Miriam, described as a "prophetess," takes a timbrel (tambourine) in her hand, then leads all the other women with timbrels and dancing. She challenges God's daughters to sing and celebrate this great victory they've not merely witnessed but personally experienced.

"Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dancing. Miriam answered them, 'Sing to the Lord, for He triumphed gloriously! The horse and his rider He has hurled into the sea'" (Ex. 15:20-21).

Have you ever encountered what seemed to be insurmountable obstacles, and the fear that gripped your heart was almost tangible? Although you appreciated all the Christian platitudes and Scriptures that friends so readily shared with you, no amount of standing still and watching for the "salvation of the Lord" seemed to calm your nerves or deter your anxiety.

How dare anyone suggest you'll never see this enemy again (Ex. 14:13)? No doubt, the Israelites remembered what happened

after the first, second, third, fourth ... and, oh yeah, the 10th plague before the pyramids of Egypt were in their rear-view mirror. Can you identify? About the time you think you're finally going to be able to relax and enjoy your ministry journey, the same, familiar antagonistic thoughts are suddenly in passionate pursuit, hot on your heels again. Intimidation or pride, anxiety or over-confidence, fear of failure or a superiority complex; you name it.

Pharaoh is not the only one who has ever dealt with the diagnosis of a hardened heart. Fears can sometimes give way to frustration, and the war between fight or flight rages. You're not so sure if returning to making bricks and baking leeks is such a bad idea—whatever earlier roles may have looked like in your life. After all, you had become well-adjusted to the more familiar Goshen roads, simply doing what you were told without having to make any major decisions or moves to unfamiliar territory.

Your behind-the-scenes landscape had become comfortable, and being the one leading the pack, even singing and dancing, was not something you relished. On the other hand, a good battle against the enemy, giving him a piece of your mind about God's call in the lives and ministries of women, seemed somewhat appealing.

Prophetic Promises

Godly leaders might have tried to assure you the Lord would "fight for you while you keep silent" (Ex. 14:14b, NASB), but keeping silent was the last thing you wanted to do. After all, someone needed to stand up for the women. Hadn't God promised, "'In the last days it shall be,' says God, 'that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams'" (Acts 2:17; see also Joel 2:28).

According to the original language, the imperative of "stand

still” in Exodus 14 carries the meaning of “standing your ground.” According to the writer of Hebrews, we sometimes have no other—certainly no better—choice but to “hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works” (Heb. 10:23-24, NLT).

“When Israel saw the great power which the Lord used upon the Egyptians, the people feared the Lord, and they believed in the Lord and in His servant Moses” (Ex. 14:31). When your fear of the enemy is replaced by a greater fear and awe of the Lord God of hosts, you can’t help but sing the songs of the redeemed, praising and worshipping the one who is your strength and song—the one who has become your salvation.

God is faithful! He sometimes uses His Holy Spirit highlighter to remind us of His deliverance in the past and His promises for our future. Why? Because *praise for today’s victories can become a prophetic declaration of tomorrow’s conquests!* {eoa}

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