

Mary Craig

From: Mary Craig
Sent: Thursday, November 10, 2011 12:25 PM
Subject: Mary Craig Ministries November 2011 e-mail

THE LORD IS MY
STRENGTH AND MY
SHIELD;
MY HEART TRUSTS
IN HIM, AND I AM
HELPED;
THEREFORE MY HEART
EXULTS,
AND WITH MY
SONG I SHALL
THANK HIM.

PSALM 28:7

Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.

November 2011

Some years back I determined to take each person in my family and make a list of 20 things for which I thanked God about them. This was easier for some than others! In fact, at the time, I was having difficulty being thankful for my father and how I was raised, etc. Yet I set myself to the task and through it God showed me how he had used my upbringing to instill self-discipline, a strong work ethic, perseverance, a solution-oriented outlook, and a “can do” attitude toward life. When I gave the list of my 20 things to my father on Thanksgiving Day that year, he looked at it, read it, and put it in his pocket. He didn’t say anything; but I knew he appreciated it because he kept it. God did a work through this, both in me and in my father.

So I am saddened by the trend today in our culture. Many move right from their celebrations of Halloween or compromise with it to preparing for Christmas. The stores around me have already decorated for Christmas and are out to get the profits from the biggest money day of the year. With Halloween being second, I suppose it is to keep that spending rolling along. Thanksgiving is more and more a bump in the road, and more about food and football (and okay, family and friends) than about giving thanks to God. (By the way, it’s legal now to say Almighty God; aren’t you glad?)

11/12/2011

We are commanded in the Word of God to come before Him with thanksgiving and to extol Him with music and song. (Psalm 95.2, 3) Various reasons are given throughout God's Word: God is a great God and the great King above all gods; because of the grace given by Him through Jesus Christ; because of His generosity and the generosity of others towards us; because of the supply of our needs; because of God's goodness and His love that endures forever; because of His righteousness; because He is our strength and shield; because we are to make known among the nations what He has done and proclaim that His Name is exalted; because of His promises and commitments made to us; because in whatever circumstance we find ourselves, God is with us and it is God's will for us.

God is faithful. He answers prayer. He delivers from troubles. He is a covenant-keeping God who provides, protects, pities our frame, empowers, preserves, pursues His enemies to their destruction, and blesses His own.



The first recorded song of thanksgiving to God by a human is a song of Moses in Exodus 15.1-18. He sang unto the LORD for He had triumphed gloriously. Moses declares, "The LORD is my strength and song, and He is become my salvation; He is my God and I will prepare Him a habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt Him. The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is His Name. (Exodus 15.1-3) This song was composed by Moses and sung by him together with the children of Israel after their deliverance from Pharaoh and after the parting of the waters. This song is a song of triumph but also one of judgment upon God's enemies and deliverance for God's people.

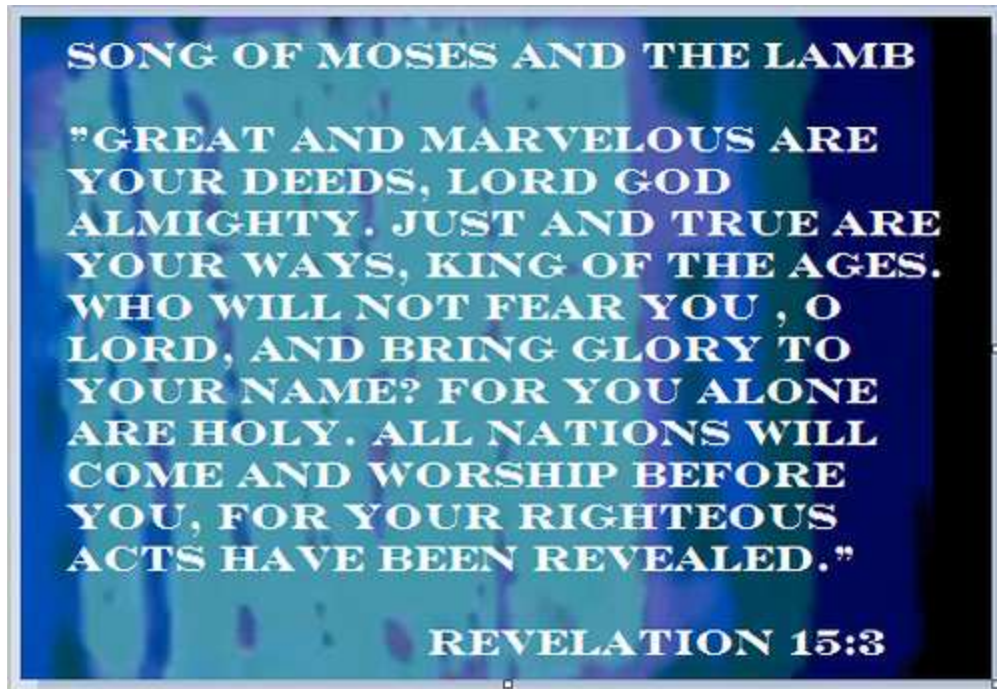
Most of us consider the other song of Moses that is recorded in Deuteronomy 32.1-43. The heavens and earth stand as witness to the words of Moses' mouth as He publishes the Name of the LORD and ascribes greatness unto his God. In it he calls God's people to remembrance and reminds them of who God is and His ways. God is the Rock and judges His people when they turn to other gods, another rock in whom to trust. God avenges the blood of His servants and renders vengeance to His adversaries, and will be merciful unto His land and to His people.

This song was to be remembered. "And he said unto them, Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which you shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life: and through this thing you shall prolong your days in the land, whither you go over Jordan to possess it." (Deuteronomy 32.46, 47) By a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved. (Hosea 12.13)

The reason for this song was that God had revealed to Moses what was going to befall the people of God after they entered the land promised to them. (Deuteronomy 31.27-30) In the Word of God we corrupt ourselves, but when we turn to the Lord in true repentance, He restores. God Himself will cause His people to return by humbling them, chastening them, and turning their hearts to want to return to Him as Father and as God.

Other songs of thanksgiving are recorded in the Word of God. Right off, I think of many songs of David, the song of

Deborah, and Mary's song. Of import is the last song mentioned, the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb, a song in Revelation 15.3, 4.



This song was sung in heaven by those who had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image and over his mark and over the number of his name, those standing on the sea of glass having the harps of God. It is a song of overcoming. After singing this song John looked and "behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened. (Revelation 15.5)

This song joins the new song proclaiming the glory of the Lamb who was slain and who has redeemed us to God by His Blood out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing. And every creature in heaven and on the earth agreed.



Our songs of thanksgiving, therefore, will remember the work of Christ—past, present, and future. They will reflect on His work as Creator and Redeemer. We are to extol Him in thanksgiving for creation, for salvation and sustenance, and for our full redemption and glorious future.

We are to remember the LORD.