Always have Cause to Sing

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Preacher: Rev Andrew Coghill

[0:00] And we come this evening then to this 15th chapter in Exodus, where we have the song, or one of the songs of Moses. He also has another song of a perhaps greater extent at the end of Deuteronomy 31 and then into 32, where just looking ahead we'll see in Deuteronomy 31, verse 19, Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel.

Put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me. Against the children of Israel. And in verse 30, Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song until they were ended.
And that song pretty much takes up the whole of chapter 32 in Deuteronomy. And the Lord says it's like a testimony, a witness. He says against the children of Israel, but really it's a recounting of all that he has done with them and to them.
And of course we know ourselves that if you want to remember something, if you want it to be embedded in your consciousness and be easily accessible to your memory, you put it into rhyme and you put it into song.
To this day, even in my old and middle age, some of the verses that I can most easily access the precise text of them is because when the children were small, we would have had programs and CDs and tapes and so on, where there would be people singing little songs with the biblical text and then giving the reference at the end of them.
[1:34] And you put it into song and then you have the reference and that's how you remember it. Most of you, if I were to ask you to quote some familiar psalms, if I were to say like, well, quote me part of Psalm 121 or quote me a bit of the 23rd Psalm or quote me a bit of Psalm 40 or Psalm 46, I would want you to ask, just think in your memory, do you instantly begin to recite the prose as it would be actually in the biblical text or does it come more readily in the medical version?

Well, for most of us, I imagine, the metrical version comes more readily because we have been taught it in song and in rhyme. And teachers in school know this as well, that if you want the children to remember something, you put it in rhyme, you put it in song, and it is more readily accessible to the mind and to the memory.
Now, this particular song, chapter 15, let's say this, is the oldest recorded song in history. I'll say that again, the oldest recorded song in history.
Now, one might, of course, reference the singing of the angels of the created beings at the time of creation that we have referenced in Job, probably the oldest book of the Bible.
In chapter 38, verse 4, God says, Where was thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare thou hast understanding. And verse 7, When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.
[3:06] Now, this is the song of the created beings. The song of angels or the song of stars, we might say. I think, well, if ever those are metaphor, that's it.

But, of course, it has been discovered now by scientists sending out their little probes into space and so on, that stars have been identified as emitting a certain vibratory hum, a sort of ongoing single vibrating note.
And maybe, for all I know, the frequencies are different from one star or constellation to another. But the stars do hum in that sense.
They have been identified, some of them, as emitting this vibratory note, which may be different from star to star. But they do hum, if not actually sing, in enunciating words.
And all the morning stars sang together. So we could say, creation has an older song than Moses, but we don't know the content of that particular song.

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[4:08] We don't have the detail. We're not told the content of that creation song, unlike this one. The first of the songs of Moses, we reference the other one in Deuteronomy 32, verse 4.

So the first of Moses, or indeed, anyone. Now, it may be surprising to us to recognise that accounts of particular singing in Scripture are actually surprisingly rare.
There are not that many accounts of singing or particular songs recorded in Scripture. There is this here, the crossing of the Red Sea, Exodus 15.
Moses' more lengthy song in chapter 32 of Deuteronomy. In Numbers 21, where the children of Israel are brought by the Lord, directed by the Lord to find water.
Again, we read in chapter 21, verse 16 of Numbers from thence, they went to Beir, that is the well, whereof the Lord spake unto Moses, gather the people together, and I will give them water.
[5:13] Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well, sing ye unto it. The princes dig the well, the nobles of the people dig it by it.

The direction of the lawgiver with their stays. And from the wilderness they went to Imamah, and so on. Now, that particular song may have been spontaneous to the Israelites, and one reason we say that is because it doesn't exactly give much of the glory to God.
It's about, oh, the lawgiver. Yes, Moses gave direction, and yes, he pointed us out where to dig. And the nobles of the people dug it with their stays, and they dug it, it would spring up, O well.
But it's not exactly directed towards the Lord, or glorifying to him in the way that this song is all about the Lord. You know, just need to read a few verses.
The Lord is my strength and song. I will sing unto the Lord. He has become my salvation. He is my God. I will prepare him in habitation. Where? Ultimately in the heart.
[6:17] My Father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war. Thy right hand, O Lord, has become glorious in power. In the greatness of thine excellency, thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee.

Thou who sent this forth thy wrath. And so on throughout the song. It is all about the Lord. What thou hast done, and thou hast delivered. It's all about thee, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord.
Which makes us understand that the Lord inspired, it would appear, Moses, to teach this particular song to the Israelites. And Miriam obviously had a hand in reading the wilderness they sang.
Probably, it's a case of once they had learned it, that the men of the rest of the campset sang one piece, the women sang back to them, and as they danced with their timbrels and so on, that they would be singing out one chorus, and the men sing back, and so on, as they all rejoiced together.
But it's rare. This is a God-sent, God-honoring song. Aside from that which they sang in Numbers 21, obviously we've got the song of Deborah in Judges, chapter 5.
[7:28] We've got the women singing for David after he has slain Goliath. Again, a bit more man-centred. You know, Saul has slain his thousands, and David has tens of thousands.

Doesn't really reference the Lord that much. It's more a kind of spontaneous joy in victory. When Hezekiah, at the beginning of his reign, orders the cleansing of the temple from all its pagan idolatry, then we read how he instructs the Israelites to sing by that which David had prepared, the songs that the Levites and the singers were to sing.
But by now, they have effectively got the Psalms that David and Asaph and others have written, and Hezekiah is telling them to put it into use, again, at the cleansing of the temple.
It all seems to be on occasions of particular deliverance, of particular triumph, when there has been an unexpected victory, when there has been a work of great deliverance, either from death by thirst or death by an enemy, that the people of God break forth almost spontaneously into song.
It is all usually in the light of a particular deliverance or victory wrought by God. It's perhaps worth recognising that the ongoing worship of the temple, once it was established, and David, anticipating the temple, had written the Psalms under inspiration from God, and Asaph had written some too, that these were intended to be part of the ongoing, day-by-day worship of God.
[9:10] So the ongoing worship of the temple, obviously, was intended to be part and parcel of the thanksgiving for deliverance.

The only reason God's people were established in the land, the only reason they had a tabernacle or a temple around them, the only reason the sacrifices could go ahead, and the worship of God was established through its holy place, was because God had delivered them and redeemed them in order to serve him.

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That, remember, was his instruction, his command to Pharaoh, let my people go that they may serve me. Not just in the wilderness, but that they may serve me in general.
So the Psalms and the singing in the tabernacle and the temple, as David and Asaph and others had written, were intended to be part of the celebration and thanksgiving and praise of that ongoing deliverance.
Thus, of course, pointing to the ultimate victory and the ultimate deliverance over death, the victory of Christ over death, which is the ultimate enemy. You know, 1 Corinthians 15, verse 26, the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.
[10:25] It is the one which, if we are honest, we all fear a wee bit. Somebody once said, you know, when they were a young Christian and they'd been in sort of fellowships and things with old men and old Christians and everything, saying, oh, they couldn't wait to die.

They couldn't wait to go to glory. And then somebody else, perhaps rather cynically, I think it was a retired minister or something, had said, well, if you were to put a loaded gun to their head and say you're about to pull the trigger, you'd soon see then whether or not they were ready to go or whether they were ready to die at that point.
But if we know the victory over death has been won, then we have nothing to fear. It is the thing we do fear, if we are honest. But Christ has gone before us into that great unknown.
The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. And so this, pointing towards that salvation, pointing towards that ultimate victory, the ongoing songs of the worship of God in the temple were part of that victory.
It is almost always in the context of victory and deliverance. Unexpected and special victory, special deliverance that the people of God break forth into song, at least in the Old Testament.
[11:46] Now, once singing is recorded a bit more frequently in the New Testament, we see, if we take a particular example, you know, in the Acts of the Apostles, a famous instance of Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail, chapter 16 of Acts, verse 25, at midnight, the depths, the darkest bit of the night, when they're in the inner prison, the inner cell, no windows, nothing, their feet made fast in the stocks, having just been whipped and scourged publicly, at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God and the prisoners heard them.

So, interestingly, in the New Testament, suffering for Christ, such as Paul and Silas had just been through, suffering for Christ appears to be taken as part and parcel of sharing in that victory.
That's a wee bit that we've got our heads run, but if you think about it, suffering for Christ is taken as being sharing in that victory, part and parcel of the sufferings, the victory, the triumph of Christ.
If we are counted worthy to suffer for his sake, then we are effectively being counted worthy to be part of the struggle, part of the battle, part of his army, and that is a cause to celebrate the victory.
So, it is this spontaneous outpouring of praise for victory, for deliverance, for the faith that they are enabled to have that Paul and Silas sing out to God in the midst of the darkness, in the midst of all their sufferings.
[13:26] Now, prior to their deliverance of the Red Sea, of course, before coming to the Red Sea, the children of Israel are told to hold their peace.

chapter 14, at verse 14, if you see there, the Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.
In other words, keep your mouth shut and you see what God is going to do.
You cross the Red Sea in obedience to his command, hold their peace, while the Lord wrought this great deliverance. But now, now that they are safely across, their joy and praise cannot be contained.
Indeed, it ought not to be restrained. They had no hand in the saving of themselves. But the less they had to do then, the more they have to do now.
The more is their part now to praise the Lord for what he has done. Albeit, the recorded occasions of song and singing are rare, especially in the Old Testament.
[14:28] Yet, singing is as much the language and outworking of holy joy as prayer is of holy desire. It is holy because in almost all the recorded occasions, it goes hand in hand with faith.

I'll say that again. The singing of God's praise is holy because in almost all the recorded cases, it goes hand in hand with faith.
Look at the end of chapter 14 in Exodus here. Israel saw the great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians and the people feared the Lord and believed the Lord and his servant Moses.

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Then sang Moses and the children of Israel. The very next verse, you know, when they believed, chapter 14 verse 31, then they sang, chapter 15 verse 1, they sang with faith.
Indeed, the connection of this between faith and singing, we have it underlined again. Psalm 106 verse 12 there. Then believed they his words, they sang his praise.
[15:40] Then believed they his words, they sang his praise. Psalm 106 verse 12. And of course, as we see here, this song of Moses, whether it's this particular song that is referenced, the first ever song in Scripture or whether it's the later on song of Deuteronomy 31 or whether it's 32 or whether it's a sort of reference for the song of Moses, the faithful logist.

Well, we remember that in Revelation 15 at verse 3 we read that the redeemed of the Lord sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.
That deliverance brought by God who consistently throughout history is delivering his people, saving them time and again, whether it's from Pharaoh and the Egyptians, whether it's from death in the midst of the sea, whether it's from dehydration and thirst and dying slowly in the desert that way, whether it's from the Philistines, whether it's from Goliath, whether it's from the Assyrians, whatever it may be, whether it is ultimately from sin and death, God delivers his people again and again and again.
and that which Moses is one of the forerunners of, the Lamb is the ultimate fulfillment, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega, Moses and the Lamb, they sing the song of Moses, the man of God, and the song of the Lamb.
That's what we read in Revelation. It is both the beginning and the ending, the ultimate expression of praise is the singing of God's praise for what he is to have.
[17:23] Now, the content of the song, as we say, is probably taught by Moses to the people. It's not unduly long as a song, but obviously it's not such as you could just memorize in five minutes.

So it would need to be taught to them. In a day when most people were not literate and they couldn't write it down in their report was written afterwards, they would have to be taught. They would have to be taught by rhyme and taught by rote.
And so it would be that which they would learn, that which they would memorize, would a tune do it, would a song do it. Miriam would take the women in the Eastern tradition, which even continues in some countries over this day.
Such expressions of the dance and the song by the women would tend to be that one main female character would lead and the others, almost like the chorus line, if you like, would follow not only their movements and their dance movements, they also echo back that which they sing.
So she would lead and they would follow and the implication is that as they sing and the content of what Miriam sings, he is pretty much the same, for headlines anyway, in terms of what Moses teaches the people.
[18:36] So the congregation at large sings, the women sing, the congregation sings back, they are all engaged in this together. Miriam is described as a prophetess.

We don't know a lot of what she actually was used of the Lord in prophesying that way, but we do know, for example, that she told in Micah chapter 6 and verse 4, for I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt and redeemed thee out of the house of servants, and I sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.
So God inspires Micah to write down in testimony to the people. It's not just Moses, but Aaron and Miriam too. Now, whether she had a particular ministry too, it is like women or whatever her position was, it's not for nothing, of course, that we're told in the book of Numbers, that when they are protesting against Moses for whatever his wife is meant to have done, we read in Numbers 12, verses 1 and 2, Miriam and Aaron speak against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married, and they said, hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses?
Hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it, and whatever else follows on from that, the leprosy incident and so on. They wouldn't say that if they didn't have some reason at least for saying that God had used them too.
God had used Aaron as his mouthpiece to speak initially to fail. Aaron, of course, became the first-time priest. Miriam, therefore, must have been used of the Lord in some way, whether by way of particular prophecy or in terms of communicating God's commandments, especially to the women of the congregation or whatever it may be.
[20:25] She is regarded clearly as described as a prophetess before the Lord. So, Miriam, a prophetess, she, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand and all the women went out with her

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with timbrels and dances.

And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. So, we see also in this song the hopelessness of fighting against the Lord.
A God like Jehovah, there is no victory against. You know, those who would fight against their creator are at war with the whole of creation. You know, what does God use to overthrow Pharaoh? Apart from, you know, ten plagues, all of which represent a use of creation to overcome, you know, the plague of blood, turning the water into blood, bringing locusts, bringing flies, bringing lice, causing the cattle to die, hail and fire, darkness, death of the firstborn and so on.
In all of these, not one solitary Hebrew has raised a hand in violence against the Egyptians. Moses himself has struck nobody since the 40 years earlier when he murdered the Egyptian and tried to hide his body in the sand.
[21:45] This deliverance has not been wrought by an uprising, by a slave revolt, by rebellion, by demonstration. It is God, and only God, using the powers of creation and nature to fight for him.

You can't fight against this kind of God. He controls the winds that parted the sea. He controls the waters that stand up in a heap.
He controls the land by which the Israelites go through, and which when the Egyptians are saying to do, as Hebrews tells us, they drave their wheels heavily. The wheels came off their chariots.
The earth itself fought against the Egyptians, and then the waters flows over their heads again. In the Song of Devil, in Judges 5, we read, the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.
There is no victory against the Lord, and whatever we seek to do in our own strength, we cannot win against the God who controls all of creation.
[22:52] And this battle, then, if you're going to fight against the Creator, you have to be at war with the whole of creation. The report, the news of this great deliverance, is that which would strike fear not only into the hearts of the rest of Egypt, but also into the other pagan nations round about.

That's what we're reading about in verses 14 and 15. The destruction of this, not only of the immediate enemy and threat, but also the news of the report of this destruction would cause a weakening in the strength of the other pagan nations.
As they heard about it, they would be afraid. they would be weakened in their resistance against the Israelites. We get a wee hint of that when Rahab meets with the spies in Joshua, I think it's chapter 6 there, and she says, you know, all the hearts of our men are turned to water, turned to wax, because of the report that we heard, and how you overcame the Egyptians, and how they were all drowned, and how you had victory over Sihon, the king of the Ammonites, and all the king of Bashan, and how the waters of the Jordan stood up before you when you crossed over, all of this makes them terrified, that all of creation itself is fighting for these, the Lord's people.
So the deliverance and song of triumph is a song of great victory, victory. But, I remember several years ago, hearing a CD of a sermon preached by Mr.
McSween, it used to be the minister in Point, when the congregation was still newly established from Nauk, as it were, he was the first minister of it, and he preached a sermon on one occasion saying that people tend to think if they've been brought out of a time of great trouble, that all their troubles now are behind them, and of course it doesn't follow what they are, it could be that there are more troubles ahead, and he was referencing Abraham, who having had all his long and painful years of childlessness, then delivered, and then Isaac coming along, and the apple of his eye, and the fulfilment of all his hopes, and then being told in Genesis 22, take now thy son, thy only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him up for a boat to offer him, on the mountain, and I'll tell you all, and have all his dreams and hopes, were just out of time to dust, when he got that particular instruction, now of course the Lord worked a great deliverance there too, but the tendency is for us to think, oh my goodness, that particular thing is behind me now, that's me through, it's all going to be plain sailing now, and it isn't of course, just because you've got through one hurdle, does not mean there aren't any up ahead, and what we might liken this to, is the
[25:45] Israelites have got safe onto the shore, the desert shore, having come out from under the Egyptian yoke, is perhaps, you know, if, let's say, exam time, you're working really hard, because there's a particular course you want into, in your own chosen university, perhaps a very prestigious university you want to get into, and you're waiting, and the exam results come through, oh great, you've got the ones you want, and look, there's your let them acceptance, everybody celebrates and isn't it wonderful, and then you go there, and then you sit down in your first lecture, on the first

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day, and the lecturer says, right, for this course we're going to do, these are the books you want you to read, these are the courses we're going to do, you want your next lecture at nine o'clock on Tuesday morning, you want your essay by Thursday, or whatever it may be, all the terror, all the dread and what's going ahead of you, but this is what you wanted, you wanted to get there, you wanted to get through to this, and you were saved and brought and delivered in order to endure exactly this kind of testing, trial, and all the difficulties that are ahead of you now, you've got through one hurdle, but you've got through in order for the privilege, because lots of other people would have wanted that universally pleased, wanted the privilege of being put through more trouble, you know, if somebody's wanting to join the forces, for example, or join the army, and they apply for officer training, there's only a limited number of places at

Sanders, and you get into Sanders, that is a privilege in itself, to be accepted for officer training at Sanders, but then the training really starts, the real reality of all that's ahead of you really starts, because if you're going to be an officer to lead by example, you're going to be as good as all your men, and 10% better, so what is ahead of these recruits is gruelling, it's going to be hard, it's going to be difficult, but this is exactly what they signed up for, this is what they wanted, this is the privilege they desired, and now the hard work really starts, and it's a bit like that with the Israelites here, they groaned in their misery of their slavery, the burden of their oppression, they longed for deliverance, and the Lord delivered them by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, he sent all the plagues in Egypt, he brought them out of
Egypt, he enriched them and they spoiled the Egyptians, he parted the Red Sea, he brought them through, he destroyed their enemies, and there they are on the other shore, free, and they just can't believe it, and we read here verse 22, so Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, almost as though getting them to come away from that sight of their deliverance is like drawing teeth, they don't really want to leave that sight, they just want to linger there and soak it up, soak up just the fact of being free, and the victory and the wonder and the amazement of all that they've been through, isn't it wonderful, isn't it brilliant, and yes it is, but now the hard work really starts, now the 40 years that only God knows at this stage is ahead of them in the wilderness, is about to begin, they've got through one time of struggle and difficulty and venture and the deliverance and the song of triumph, but this is only just the beginning, this is only just the beginning of what is ahead of them, now the training, the testing, the building up of faith and obedience really begins here, and we see this beginning when they start to travel through the wilderness of Shur, they travelled three days in the wilderness and they found no water, now of course water is essential for life, if you don't have water you're going to die, and when they came to Marah they could not drink of the waters of
Marah, which means of course bitter, for they were bitter, therefore the name of it was called Marah, and this is of course what Naomi says in Ruth chapter one, don't call me Naomi, which means my sweet one, call me Marah, because the Lord has dealt very bitterly with me, because Marah means bitter, so the bitter waters that they could not drink, and the people murmured against Moses, saying what shall we drink, notice, three days, three days, into the wilderness, they've just finished singing their song of triumph, they've just had this great victory and this deliverance and this privilege, and here they are three days, and they've begun to murmur already, doesn't quite say they're murmuring against the Lord, but they're murmuring against Moses, what shall we drink, it's a legitimate question, God is not saying to them, what, morning and groaning of an eye and drink, I'm grateful you are, God realises that they need water, just as
Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount, don't say oh what will we eat, what will we drink, for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of these things, but seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and not you'll be able to live on thin air, you won't be to eat your drink, get it again, but rather all these things shall be added unto you, go to God first, go to God with your needs, with your complaints, with your problems, you know, it's like if a child was needing money for something at school or whatever and instead of coming to the parents and saying look, the school wants so much for this trip or for that and I haven't got the money, is it possible I can get the money for this trip, they'll say okay, right, okay, how much do you need and they'll give them whatever they sign for it or whatever the form needs rather than the equivalent would be if they tried to steal it because they needed the money, now they need the money legitimately but if it's legitimate all you have to do is ask and if you need water, it's legitimate to ask and if you're at the end of your tether and your resources and you don't know where to turn, it's legitimate to ask, it's not so legitimate just to mourn because what is God seeking to do?

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[32:13] He is seeking to build up their faith and you will only build up and strengthen anything by testing it, by putting it under pressure.

So likewise the athlete tries to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning and do their training and be checked with their stopwatch by their trainer and is going to say, I need you to be faster than that, come on, pump it a bit more, break a bit more sweat, make those muscles aching with all the effort, I want to see your pressure, I want to see you flat on the ground by the time you're finished, leave it all out there on the track, come on, give me more, and the trainer will push them to the absolute limits of all that they have and their body will hate it, but at the end of the day when it comes to the Olympics or the Commonwealth Games or whatever, they will be glad that they were pushed to their limits and their body will respond to the testing and to the challenge and to the effort and the pressure that has been put under, because it is only by being tested that they're able to know that they can come through.
How does the student, the doctorate student or the master's student at university, how do they know that they have the ability or the accomplishment to be awarded a master's degree or a doctorate or whatever unless they be examined?
And if you're examined, what are you doing? You are tested. You are put through the ringer by your examiners, whether it's in written or oral exams. You're put under pressure.
You have questions fired at your right, left and centre that hopefully you have prepared for. But it is only the preparation and the build-up and the making ready of the knowledge and then the testing of it that enables you to come out the other side with whatever award or experience or progress you have to make in order to go further.
[34:13] And this is what is beginning here in the desert. They've got through the Red Sea. They've been delivered. Now what? I didn't just bring you out of slavery so you can sprawl on the sands and say isn't it great to be on holiday now and not be slaves anymore.

The Lord has brought them out in order to bring them in to a relationship with himself. This is the purpose of it. So just as with any experience in life the testing, the trial is part of the building up of their faith.
So the waters of Mara, what is the solution? Moses doesn't just moan about it. Moses cried unto the Lord and the Lord showed him a tree which when he had cast into the waters the waters were made sweet.
There he made for them a statute and an ordinance and there he proved them and said if thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord and so on. Now let's think about this tree for a minute. We might think, oh I wonder what kind of tree that was. Now if you just throw the trunk of the tree into the waters then it makes these bitter waters sweet. What incredible chemical properties that tree must have.
[35:25] Well that is one possibility of course. But if that were the case it's more likely the Israelites would say oh boy it's that kind of tree. Let's go and tap down as many of those trees as we can and carry them with us through the wilderness so that when we come against bitter water again we just throw them in and that will sort it.

No. I would suggest to you although you cannot say definitively but I would suggest you that this tree which the Lord shows to Moses and the apparently miraculous effect of the tree and its properties upon the hitherto undrinkable water is of the same kind as what we read for example with Elisha.
2 Kings chapter 2 at verse 19 the men of the city said unto Elisha behold I pray thee the situation of this city that was Jericho is pleasant as my Lord see it but the water is not and the ground barren and he said bring me a new cruise and put stock therein and they brought it to him so he's got a new earthen pot and it's filled up with salt and he went forth unto the spring of the waters and cast the salt in there and said thus saith the Lord I have healed these waters there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land so the waters were healed unto this day according to the saying of Elisha which he spake.
Now there is no property in salt which causes water of whatever nature to become sweet and drinkable if before it was undrinkable if it was you know not suitable for consumption at all and wasn't benefiting the man.
Salt has many properties but it doesn't have that ability in and of itself and even if it did one earthen vessel full of such you know such material is very quickly going to be dissolved and absorbed and used up so the waters would not be healed for very long.

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[37:32] What then do we understand by the nature of this incident with Elisha? It is meant to be a miracle. It is meant to be God working a miracle of healing of the waters and using an outward illustration or a material thing in order to demonstrate something to show that we are doing this and obedience to God something which in and of itself does not have the power to work this change.

But God has but the salt doesn't and the cruise doesn't and you know the earthen vessel doesn't. Likewise in Numbers 21 when we have the brazen serpent when all the people have moaned against the Lord and he sends fiery serpents amongst them and they bite the people and the people start dying.
The Lord said to Moses make ye a fiery serpent set it upon a pole and it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten when he looketh upon it shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass and put it upon a pole and it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived.
There are no medicinal properties in looking your eyes towards a serpent of brass set up on a pole. There is nothing medical that is going to change by looking visually at a particular object.
What is intended here? What is intended is that the Lord puts a certain element in place and having instructed the people to follow a particular path is testing their faith.
[39:10] Are they prepared to do as he says? Or do they first of all need to analyse and say well you know we've never actually had it before that you make something out of brass and stick it up on a pole that that heals you whatever it is.

So I don't see how this is going to work. In fact I don't think there is any medical properties in that metal serpent at all that is going to heal. So I don't think we should do it. That's not what God is asking for.
He is saying do you believe? Do you believe I have the power to heal you? If you do look to this metal serpent. Look to this bruising serpent on the pole. There is nothing in and of itself which can effect that cure.
There is nothing in the cruise of salt that is going to heal the waters. At Jericho. And I would respectfully and humbly suggest there is nothing in that tree.
Even though the Lord chose Moses the particular tree. There is nothing in that tree that is going to heal the waters of Mara. Not in and of itself. Because the people do not say let's always get one of these trees.
[40:08] But rather God has healed the waters. And in this context of seeing what God has miraculously done so soon after miraculously getting them through the Red Sea.

Miraculously delivering them from Egypt. Miraculously setting them free from slavery. Now when they don't have water do they believe? Do they trust that God can and will miraculously supply their need?
Here is the first instance. And they are put to the test. They don't exactly pass with flying colors. But Moses goes to the Lord. The Lord shows him what to do. And so the waters are healed.
And it is in that context. The waters were made sweet. Then we read. Same verse. 25. There he made for them a statute and an ordinance. And there he proved them.
Tested that. And said. If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God. And wilt do that which is right in his sight. And wilt give ear to his commandments.
[41:17] And keep all his statutes. I will put none of these diseases upon thee which I have brought upon the Egyptians. For I am the Lord that healeth thee. The tree did not heal the waters.

The Lord healed the waters. And as the Lord healed the waters. As the Lord is saying. Just as I can bring sweetness and life. Out of that which is bitter.
And death inducing. I am the Lord that healeth thee also. You are in a state of natural death. You are afflicted by sin. Which is a burden. And a bondage far more severe than anything the Egyptians could do to you.
But I am the Lord that healeth thee. He wants them to be brought into this relationship with them. And he is seeking to prove them. To test them.
If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God. And wilt do that which is right in his sight. Then you'll be kept safe. I won't put any of these diseases upon you.
[42:16] It's the first test. They haven't done brilliantly. But they've been shown what they need to do. And then after the testing. There is the relief.

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The Lord then brings them. They came to Eden. Where were twelve wells of water. Three strong ten pantries. And they encamped there. By the waters. There will be many other tests.
But through the first one. The Lord brings them. Proves them. Shows them. How it's meant to be. There will be many such tests. Many such trials.
And their experience. And their difficulties. And their problems. Are not over yet. Neither are yours. Neither are mine. Because you're yet alive. We're here in this veil of tears.
We're here in this fallen world. So your problems are not over yet. But we know the method by which we are enabled to continue. Trusting in the Lord. Obeying his commands.
[43:13] Following where he leads. And he will always supply. Always. He will relieve. Just as he does by bringing them to Eden at the end.

Always. He will give deliverance. And always. We will have reason. And cause. Not only to believe in him.
Not only to thank him. But because we are thankful. And because we believe in him. And give thanks for what he has done. And we will always have cause to say.
That is right.

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