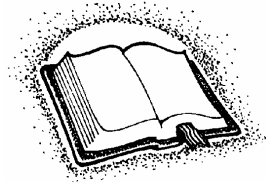


Unlocking the Bible (6)



ESCAPE - TO LIFE! An overview of the Book of Exodus

Exodus, - or EXIT - is a surprising title for the second book in the Bible. Coming immediately after Genesis – the story of God’s excellent beginnings - it talks of a way of escape. What from? Why? What has gone wrong?

The time gap between the events recorded in Genesis and those in Exodus represents a disaster in the history of God’s people.

Entering Egypt as guests, through the amazing Providential role of Joseph in that country, and following the brothers' treachery, (*you meant it for evil, but God meant it for good*) they encountered kindness and good will. Pharaoh gave them the bountiful land of Goshen: they could not have been more privileged.

But, in time, “*there arose a king who knew not Joseph*” and, with a change of ruler, there came a change of conditions. The privileged guests now became slaves of an unsympathetic and cruel regime. Realising their predicament, they cried to the Lord.

In time, He called and sent Moses as the deliverer to enable them to escape from that bondage and slavery. And that, not by the might of the plagues, but by the effectiveness of the Passover lamb, and complete trust in it, as God's way for their redemption. This provided **release**.

Having secured release, the next phase involved **rehabilitation** – learning to live a new life, freed from bondage and on their way - as pilgrims - through the wilderness to the Promised Land.

That rehabilitation entailed two aspects, both revealed to Moses on Sinai.

The first was the issuing of the Ten Commandments, a unique presentation of God’s standards which they were to obey and by following which they were to live their new life. Adherence to these was critical. So absolute and important were they that they were physically given to Moses by God, intact. There was no element of human contribution.

But the second – the Tabernacle - was different. It was dependent on human contribution to see it come to reality. What was given was a *pattern*, not the substance. Its realisation and coming into being was dependent on the people providing the materials from their own possessions and collaborating in its manufacture, assembly and erection in accordance with what had been shown to Moses on the mountain. That was to be done willingly - and skilfully, reflecting the Creator God whose work was acclaimed as being 'very good'.

That has significant lessons for us in our day, for the book of Exodus is a fitting picture of our redemption and its implications.

Intended to enjoy this world as guests of God, mankind became slaves of Satan and inherently bound in sin. But, through “*Christ, our Passover (Lamb)*”

.... *sacrificed for us*' (1 Corinthians 5.9), there can be release and the start of a new and distinctive life as *'pilgrims bound for the heavenly land'*.

As with the children of Israel, that life is to be lived in total obedience to God's standard and in diligent effort to ensure that His tabernacle dwelling place - the Church - materialises through the surrendered lives and inspired operation of all true believers in accordance with what is revealed in His Word.