

Exodus : Historical Background

The Exodus is the primary event of redemption in the Old Testament. God delivered his people from slavery in Egypt, made a covenant with them at Sinai and eventually brought them into the land of promise.

“Exodus” is derived from the Greek word Exodos which means “departure” or “the exit”.

Exodus is the book of divine redemption. It tells us how a people of slavery gain their deliverance from the “iron-smelting furnace” (Deut 4:20).

Deliverance from Pharaoh becomes the model of all deliverance in Scripture, it becomes the background for understanding deliverance from our sins.

The doctrine of sacrifice begins with the Passover lamb. The sealing of the covenant and the consecration of the priest are other doctrines in Exodus.

The doctrine of worship begins in Exodus. The tabernacle is the unique structure for the worship of God. It is continued in the temple.

We are introduced to some biblical principles in Exodus. The famous Ten Commandments.

The unique role of a prophet, Moses, is seen in Exodus. And Moses becomes a powerful intercessor before God. And also we are introduced to the priestly ministry, which foreshadows the priestly ministry of Christ.

One of the most important doctrine we learn from Exodus is the theology of covenant.

We don't know exactly when the Exodus took place, but it was around the period 1500-1250 BC. This was the time when the Egyptian empire was at its peak.

What God did at that time is something that continues to amaze us! As God said, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the land of slavery”.

Day 1 : From Freedom to Slavery [Exodus 1]

According to the account of Joseph in Genesis, Israel was once a welcomed guest in Egypt (Gen. 47:5). Jacob and his sons came to Egypt as free men and Joseph's wisdom was used to save Egypt from its terrible years of famine. Then there comes a king who did not know about Joseph.

Now God had blessed the Israelites, they were fruitful and multiplied greatly and became numerous. This was a fulfillment of the promise to Abraham that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars in the sky (Gen. 15:5).

But this was a threat to the king. Let us see what are some things that king did because of fear :

- deals shrewdly,
- oppresses, forces into labor
- makes their lives bitter
- uses them ruthlessly.

This is what fear can do. Fear controls us and makes us do things that are wicked and foolish.

Seeing that slavery itself did not solve his problem, Pharaoh increases the pressure. He takes things into his hands and orders for murder. Little did Pharaoh know that he would face what he started, the tenth plague the death of the firstborn, (and his firstborn). It truly shows how we reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7,8).

The midwives, however, feared God. They were not afraid of the king of Egypt, because they feared the everlasting King, God. So God was kind to them. God is kind to all those who fear him.

Do you fear God? Do you put the invisible kings' word above a visible king? There is so much we can learn from these midwives. They were not the richest, most educated or smartest, but they feared God. That is all that ultimately matters.

Application : What are some foolish things you do because of fear?

"There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.- 1 Jn.4:18"

Day 2 : Deliverance of the Deliverer [Exodus 2]

Just at the time when the cruelty of the Pharaoh was at its height the deliverer was born. Heb 11:23 says that the parents of Moses hid him by faith. They could make out that he was no ordinary child. Because of their faith they were not afraid of the king's edict.

At three months when they could not hide the infant any longer they put him in a basket and hid him in the reeds along the river. Moses lay helpless on the river. Yet no one hurt him. When we seem most neglected and forlorn, God is most present with us.

Pharaoh cruelly sought to destroy Israel, but his own daughter had pity on a Hebrew child, and not only so, but without knowing it, preserved Israel's deliverer, and provided Moses with a good nurse, even his own mother. Moses ended up being treated as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Moses wanted to intervene to help the Israelites. Let's also see what the book of Hebrews says about Moses in Heb. 11:24-25. He was willing to be ill treated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a short time.

Also Moses tried to end the dispute between two Hebrews. One of them asked him who made him ruler over them. Once Moses got to know that the fact of his killing the Egyptian was known he was afraid and decided to run away to another place called Midian. Moses's own attempt to help the Israelites ended up as a failure. There Moses marries Zipporah and has a son named Gershom.

Many years went by and the Israelites were still under slavery and cried out for help. God heard them and remembered the promises given to their forefathers. God looked on the Israelites because of the promises and was concerned about them.

God was concerned about them not because of anything they did but just because of the promises He had already made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This shows the heart of God that He was concerned! Salvation is possible because God is concerned. We should praise God for his compassionate nature.

Application : Praise God for the different events He put in your life, so that you could know Him.

"In all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose - Rom. 8:28"

Day 3 : The Calling of Moses [Exodus 3]

The years of the life of Moses(v.1-6) can be considered in three forties; the first forty he spent as a prince in Pharaoh's court, the second as a shepherd in Midian, the third as leader of Israel. When God first appeared to Moses, he was tending sheep. This seems a very menial job for a man of his background and education, yet he was satisfied with it; and here he learnt humility and contentment. Eventually we see that Moses was esteemed by God for his humility rather than for all his learning.

Moses saw a bush burning without fire to kindle it. The bush burned, and yet did not burn away. God gave Moses a call, to which he returned a ready answer. Putting off the shoe was a token of respect and submission. We should approach God with reverence and preparation, carefully avoiding everything that looks light, rude and disrespectful.

Moses hid his face, as if both ashamed and afraid to look upon God. The more we see of God, and his grace, and covenant love, the more we should seek to worship him with reverence and godly fear. God notices the afflictions of Israel(v.7-10). Their sorrows; even the secret sorrows of God's people are known to Him. God hears the cries of His afflicted people. The oppression they endured; the highest and greatest of their oppressors are not above Him. God promises speedy deliverance by methods out of the common ways of providence.

In the present world also there are many people in spiritual slavery in a spiritual Egypt. In a way we were also brought in from slavery to sin into freedom in Christ. In the beginning Moses thought that he himself will be able to deliver Israel (v.11-15). He however set himself to the work too hastily. He ended up having to make a quick exit from Egypt. Now, years later after that first attempt he is no longer having the earlier self-confidence faith and zeal. Now he says "Who am I , that I should go...". Many times we can lose confidence in ourselves and our ability to do God's task. God being with us is enough to get things done.

God, changes the hearts, and opens the ear of people(v.16-22). God could hence say beforehand that the leaders of Israel will listen to Moses. The Pharaoh on the contrary would not listen to Moses and would need some compulsion from God's mighty hand. God revealed his plan to Moses beforehand. God also has revealed to us as Christians, His plans for the world , the eventual outcome and our role in it. Are we willing to go according to God's plans?

Application : What is God's calling for you and how are you responding to it?

"To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps - 1 Pet.2:21"

Names of God

Through out the Bible, God has graciously revealed Himself to His people by a name that is appropriate to the situation. Here is a list of few of the prominent names of God.

- **El-Shaddai** (*Gen. 17:1 When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, "I am God Almighty ; walk before me and be blameless.)* When translated means “God Almighty”, “Mighty provider”. This name speaks of God’s mighty and infinite power to nourish, satisfy and supply. This is the first name God used to introduce Himself.
- **Yahweh or Jehovah** (*Ex. 3:15 God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob--has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation)* Which means covenant keeping God. It is used about 6,300 times in the OT. Yahweh also means God is the same as when God said “I am who I am” or “I am because I am” or even “I will be that I will be.”
- **Jehovah-Shammah “Jehovah is there”** (*Ez.48:35 "The distance all around will be 18,000 cubits. "And the name of the city from that time on will be: THE LORD IS THERE.")* The returning captives would find Jehovah there in the city they would build. We find God leading, waiting and blessing us at the destination we seek to reach.
- **Jehovah-Jireh “Jehovah will provide”** (*Gen. 22:14 So Abraham called that place The LORD Will Provide. And to this day it is said, "On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided.")* God provided the lamb for Abraham, and also for us on Calvary.
- **El-Roy “God that sees”** (*Gen.16:13 She gave this name to the LORD who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me.")* Show that God sees, God overlooks none, nothing escapes his notice.
- **Jehovah-Nissi “Jehovah our Banner”** (*Ex.17:15 15 Moses built an altar and called it The LORD is my Banner.)* shows victory over enemies, trials and temptations. God marches where His banner flies. Victory belongs to God.

Day 4 : The God of Miracles [Exodus 4]

Moses objects (v.1-9), that the people would not take his word, unless he showed them some signs. God gives him power to work miracles.

Moses hesitated to do the work God designed him for (v.10-17). There was much of cowardice, slothfulness, and unbelief.

God sometimes chooses those as His messengers, who have the least of talents so that His grace in them may appear even more glorious. Christ's disciples were no orators, till the Holy Spirit made them such.

God condescends to answer the excuse of Moses. Even self-difference, when it hinders us from duty, or clogs us in our duty, is very displeasing to the Lord. But while it is easy to blame Moses for shrinking from this dangerous service, let us ask our own hearts if we are neglecting duties more easy, and less dangerous.

After God had appeared in the bush, He often spoke to Moses(v.18-23). Pharaoh had hardened his own heart against the groans and cries of the oppressed Israelites; and now God, in the way of righteous judgment, hardens his heart against the teaching of the miracles, and the terror of the plagues. But whether Pharaoh will hear, or whether he will forbear, Moses has to do his part of telling him.

God met Moses in anger(v.24-31). The Lord threatened him with death or sent sickness upon him, as the punishment of him having neglected to circumcise his son. When God reveals to us what is amiss in our lives, we must be radical in making the changes. This is the voice of every rod of discipline; it calls us to return to Him who disciplines us.

The elders of Israel met him in faith, and were ready to obey him. Very often less difficulty is found than was expected, in plans which are according to the will of God, and for His glory.

Let us arise and do what God expects from us. The Lord will be with us and will prosper us. If Israel welcomed the tidings of their deliverance, and worshipped the Lord, how should we welcome the good news of salvation. We need to embrace it in faith, and adore the Saviour!

Application : What are some things that prevents you from doing God's work?

"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do - Eph.2:10"

Day 5 : The Promised Deliverance [Exodus 5,6]

Even when Moses got upset with God and questioned Him, God was so patient and showed him the plans God has to humble Pharaoh and make him to decide to send Israelites out of Egypt. One thing we must notice is that God emphasises that it is He Himself who will accomplish it. In 6:1 “see what I will do to Pharaoh”; “because of My mighty hand he will let them go”; “because of My mighty hand he will drive them out.”

Moses was worried about his role in bringing trouble instead of relief to the Israelites. God is telling him don't worry, it is not your business but mine! God gives two reasons for which he is rescuing the Israelites.

1. To fulfill the promise He made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (He is a faithful God).
2. Also, because of His compassion on them as they cried out to God out of the painful slavery.

In 6:6-9 as God directed Moses he reported to the Israelites what God is going to do for them. But they did not listen to him because of their discouragement and cruel bondage. This is a common human way to think when we are in trouble “Where is God?” and “If God is with us why am I going through these troubles?” etc.

How do you respond when you face a tragedy? What is something that you are afraid to face? In 6:10 God tells Moses to “Go, tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of the country.” But Moses said to the Lord “if the Israelites will not listen to me, why would Pharaoh listen to me, since I speak with faltering lips?” See v.28-30 also. It shows how conscious Moses was about his weaknesses. It took a long time for him to realise that it does not depend on his abilities but on God!

Are you worried about your weaknesses, lack of talents or abilities, physical appearance or any other defects? Does your confidence depend on your abilities, talents, experience, appearance, background, education or anything of that kind? Remember Paul's conclusion: 2Cor.12:7-10 “....that is why I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”. Also in 1Cor.1:26-31 “.....God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.....”

Application : What are somethings that you are afraid to face?

“What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? - Rom.8:31”

Day 6 : The Finger of God [Exodus 7,8]

Moses did many miracles in Egypt. The Egyptian magicians also did some of those things by their secret arts. They turned their staffs to snakes (7:11); they too turned water into blood (7:22); they too brought frogs (8:7). Through these magic they thought they are as powerful as God Himself. This is the way Satan, the deceiver works. (2Thes.2:9-12) The deceiver works counterfeit miracles. His goal is to turn people away from God.

But when God brought the plague of gnats, as usual they tried to imitate it and they failed (8:18), then the eyes of the magicians were opened to see the power of God. Soon in 8:19 they reported to Pharaoh in fear "this is the finger of God."

Even when they were fully convinced that "this is the finger of God", they did not turn to God and surrender. How often do we recognize "the finger of God"? What is our response to it? Do we surrender to Him or forget it soon like the Egyptian magicians and Pharaoh? Jam.1:22-25 "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." Imagine how our life will be if we study our Bibles daily and make progress in atleast one area of our life!

When we are not willing to see the finger of God and turn back to Him, He will put more pressure on us not to destroy us but somehow to help us repent and to save us. Because our God grieves and His heart gets filled with pain when we go on sinning (Gen 6:6) but He rejoices when one sinner repents (Lk. 15:7). Remember Jonah, how God sent a storm and made things to go from bad to worse till he repented in the belly of the fish! God is patient but He puts pressure on us to repent for our own good.

After Paul mentioned all the discipline that God brought against the Israelites he said in 1Cor.10:6-13 (v.6)"now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did." And (v.11) "these things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" And he ends with the encouragement in v.13 that God will not allow us to be tempted beyond our limits and also He will provide a way out to stand up under it!

Application : What are some problems / temptations in your life that you think is too hard to overcome?

“No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear.. - 1Cor.10:13”

Day 7 : The Plagues [Exodus 9,10]

We see an on-going battle between God’s will or plan and Pharaoh. Though Pharaoh, by the mercy of God, received more than one chance to release Israel and avoid the plagues, he refused. He hardened his heart! [Ex.7:13].

But what we must understand is that the conflict is not only with Pharaoh and the Egyptians but with their gods! [Ex.12:12]. It is with all gods, power, authorities, principalities and ideologies, visible or invisible, that God and His truth stood against.

Pharaoh had resisted all efforts of Moses to get the captives free. The issue now had to be forced. Most of the plagues could have been a slap on one of the Egyptian god.

- The Nile was considered a god and it turned into blood, that could have been an insult to the river god.
- There was a frog god named ‘Heka’ that became a curse instead of a blessing!
- Gnats could have been an insult to the temple. Polluting the temple.
- The flies could have been an insult to the god ‘Khepra’.
- Cattle were worshipped in Egypt. They dying showed utter weakness.
- Soot was used by priest to bless the people. It turn as a curse!
- Isis and Serapis were the gods of fire and water, yet they could not protect Egypt from hail.
- The gods could not protect from locusts too.
- The sun god ‘Ra’ was cursed because there was darkness.
- Pharaoh was considered divine. So the death of the heir of the throne (Pharaoh’s firstborn) was a big blow too.

These are all speculations and cannot be proved, but what we know for sure is that Yahweh, the Almighty God, the God of the slaves reigned and reigns.

The plagues reveal how great the Lord God of Israel is : “there is no one like the Lord our God” (8:10).

Application : In which areas of your life do you submit / resist God’s plan?

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time - 1 Pet.5:6”

Day 8 : The Final Plague [Exodus 11,12]

The final stroke was the biggest of all, the death of every firstborn. It was such a catastrophic blow that it made Pharaoh’s hard heart give in!

It was also the final triumph over the gods of Egypt. As God said “I will bring judgement on all the gods of Egypt” (12:12).

This last plague struck at midnight. At the midnight hour Yahweh will be obvious winner!

This definitely shows the greatness of our God. He is loving, kind and merciful but we should not forget that He is all-powerful. No one can stand against Him. As the Scripture says, “It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Heb. 10:31).

It is foolish to fight against God. Pharaoh learned it the hard way. It took so much damage and death for Pharaoh to understand that he’s not in control.

Brothers and sisters, do we take God lightly? How many plagues will it take for us to submit to God’s plan? Are we on the Lord’s side?

Do we fear the Lord and worship Him? Do we really fear Him?

As the Egyptians were facing the judgement of God, the Israelites were facing the redemption by the Lord! Each man was to take a lamb, slay it, eat some of it roasted, burn the rest and put blood around the wood of his door (12:7). This was an act of faith (Heb. 11:28).

This is exactly what we see in the New Testament in the cross. The blood on the door was a sign (12:13) as Christ was slain for us. By faith in His blood we are redeemed! We passover from death to life in Christ. As in 1 Pet. 1:19 with the precious blood of Christ, we are redeemed.

Application : What does the cross mean to you? What are some things you learn from Jesus on the cross when you think about pressures in your life?

"I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death - Phil.3:10"

Day 9 : The Exodus Begins [Exodus 13]

After the great redemption, the exodus begins. Israel begin their journey to the promised land.

Now the closest route from Goshen to Palestine was a sandy, desert route taking about two weeks to travel. God chose the longer route for them (13:17-18) This shows how God always chooses the longer route for us, because the longer route shapes us better. It is the better route.

We live in an age where we want everything instantly. Instant coffee, instant food, instant "happy family", instant money.... but God's policy is not short-term, it is long-term.

Satan says, 'buy now pay later' but God says, 'sow now reap later'. Peace is a product of discipline (Heb.12:11). Character is not infused into babies at birth, it is built day by day, challenge by challenge.

We don't reach the promised land (heaven) immediately! It is through the journey of life that we reach there!

But the good news is not only does God redeem us, He guides us too. God's presence was with them (v.21-22). God went ahead of them. God prepared the way for them.

God prepares the way for us too. We are not only saved by the grace of God, we are also strengthened by the grace of God (1Cor.15:10, 2Tim.2:1). Yes the road ahead is tough and narrow but with the Spirit guiding us it becomes an exciting adventure!

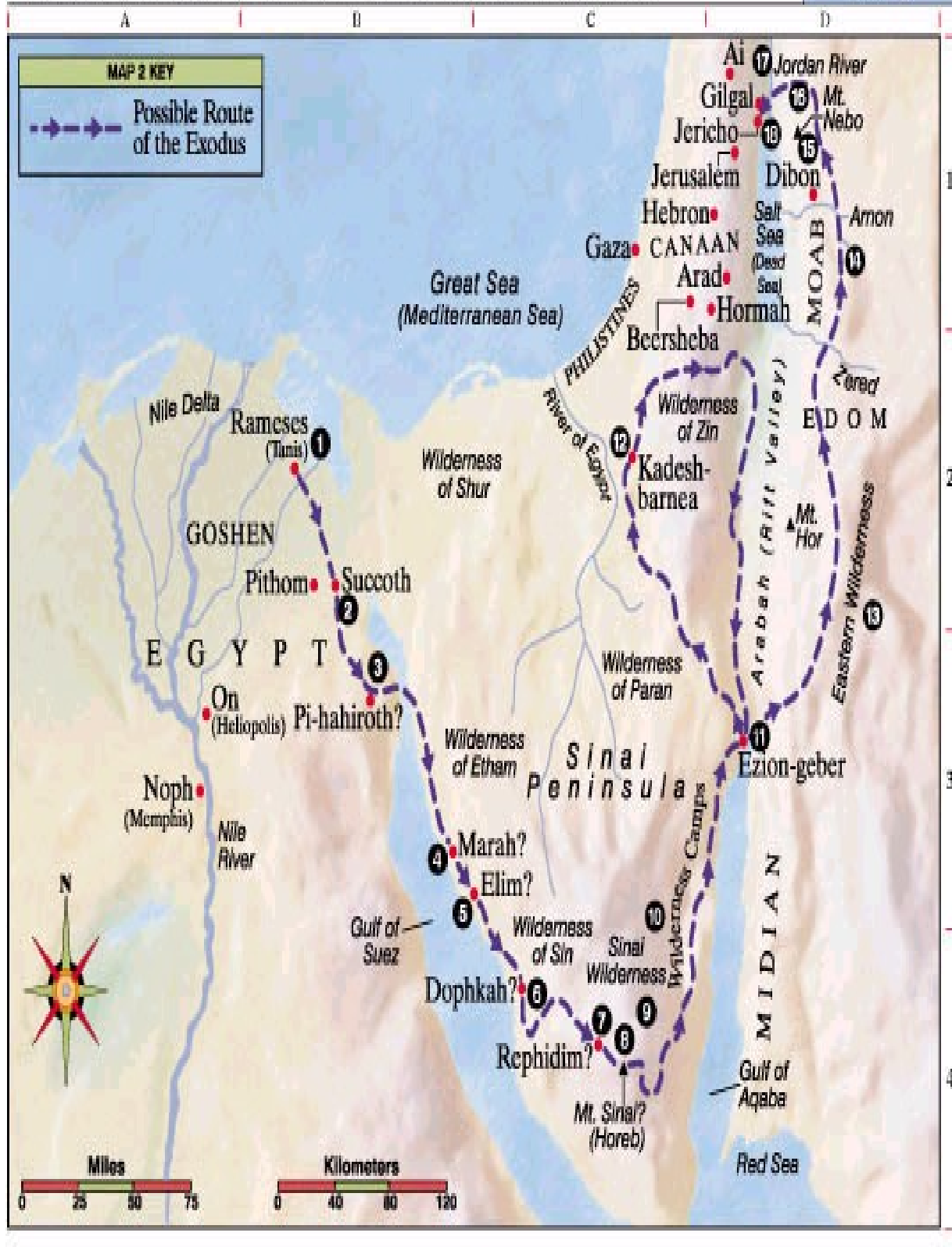
We all come under the wings of His salvation, come under the care of His special providence. This is true not only of Israel in the Old Testament but of Christians in the New Testament.

Application : Have a prayer walk reflecting on how your Exodus (from baptism till now) has been.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day--and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing - 2 Tim.4:7,8"

ISRAEL'S EXODUS FROM EGYPT AND ENTRY INTO CANAAN

MAP 2



Israel's Exodus from Egypt and Entry into Canaan

1. **Rameses** Israel was thrust out of Egypt (Ex.12; Num.33:5)
2. **Succoth** After the Hebrews left this first campsite, the Lord attended them in a cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night (Ex.13:20-22)
3. **Pi-hahiroth** Israel passed through the Red Sea (Ex.14; Num. 33:8)
4. **Marah** The Lord healed the waters of Marah (Ex.15:23-26)
5. **Elim** Israel camped by 12 springs (Ex.15:27)
6. **Wilderness of Sin** The Lord sent manna and quail to feed Israel(Ex.16)
7. **Rephidim** Israel fought with Amalek (Ex.17:8-16)
8. **Mount Sinai** The Lord revealed the Ten Commandments (Ex. 19-20)
9. **Sinai Wilderness** Israel constructed the tabernacle (Ex.25-30)
10. **Wilderness Camps** Seventy elders were called to help Moses govern the people (Num.11:16-17)
11. **Ezion-geber** Israel passed through the lands of Esau and Ammon in peace (Deut. 2)
12. **Kadesh-barnea** Moses sent spies into the promised land; Israel rebelled and failed to enter the land; Kadesh served as the main camp of Israel for many years (Num. 13:1-3, 17-33; 14; 32:8; Deut. 2:14)
13. **Eastern Wilderness** Israel avoided conflict with Edom and Moab (Num. 20:14-21; 22-24)
14. **Arnon River** Israel destroyed the Canaanites who fought against them (Deut. 2:24-37)
15. **Mount Nebo** Moses viewed the promised land (Deut. 34:1-4). Moses delivered his last three sermons (Deut. 1-32)
16. **Plains of Moab** The Lord told Israel to divide the land and dispossess the inhabitants (Num. 33:50-56)
17. **Jordan River** Israel crossed the Jordan River on dry ground. Near Gilgal, stones from the bottom of the Jordan River were placed as a monument of Jordan's waters being divided (Josh. 3-5)
18. **Jericho** The children of Israel possessed and destroyed the city (Josh. 6)

Day 10 : The Song of Redemption [Exodus 14,15]

Could you just imagine being there among those Israelites; crossing the Red Sea with a wall of water on your right and on your left? I am sure the very sight of it would have left us gasping for breath. Yet this was what God showed the Israelites that He was the God of the impossible.

The song that Moses and the Israelites sang was a victory song. One thing we notice here is that there is no mention of man, all the glory is given to God. They were dancing and singing praises to God. After all God had saved their lives from a powerful Pharaoh's army who was chasing them. He had also freed them from the bondage of slavery.

The prophecy in Gen.15:13-16 was being fulfilled. It was 430 years of slavery (Ex.12: 40) and everybody was excited to be free; Free at last. No more quarries, no more carrying of bricks or breaking of stones. No more lashes, no more punishments. Yes, freedom is what they longed for!

But their happiness did not last long. They traveled in the desert without finding water for 3 days. Think about the children pleading, "Mama...Water". And when they did finally find water, they were surprised to find it bitter. Are we not tempted to ask the question, why? Did God forget to plan the arrangement of water for His people? No. Not at all! It was just God's way of testing His people for their faithfulness. There will be times of rejoicing in our lives where we would completely give thanks, praise and worship God.

God always sends us times of testing to see our reactions. How do we behave when we are thirsty and there is no water (no response from God)? Do we give up easily? When we encounter bitter waters how do we feel? When something goes terribly wrong in our family or in our relationships with people, are we tempted to grumble like the Israelites did? (15:24).

Times of testing never lasts for long because our God gives us only as much as we can bear (1Cor.10:13). When we behave righteously inspite of bitter things happening to us, God will show you a piece of wood that will make the waters sweet. God clearly tells us (15:26) that if you obey then I will protect you from diseases (sin) and give you healing (salvation). God gives us the freedom to choose. But he loves it when we make the right choices.

Application : What are some challenging times you had been through recently and what has been your response?

"The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever - II Tim.4:18"

Day 11 : Manna from Heaven [Exodus 16]

Our God is a God who tests our heart, our obedience and refines us to become better Christians. (Deut.8:1-5). The Israelite community reaches the desert of Sin, that was a place with sand and stone, totally dry and barren. That was a place where His people were tested. Probably on that day the dough that they brought from Egypt was over, they had completed 30 days; and they were in the utmost distress for bread, and they start grumbling as they were used to do, when in distress. The whole community of Israel was grumbling against Moses and Aaron.

It is a common case, when things do not go so well as we wished for in church or state or our country, we tend to grumble against the politicians, leaders, and others and lay all the blame on them.

We tend to grumble or complain or we lose our faith when we go through tough times(Desert of Sin) in our life. God puts these times so that our weaknesses could be revealed, since He knows our weaknesses.

Though they were grumbling, murmuring , rebellious, and ungrateful, the Lord dealt kindly and bountifully with them; He did not rain fire and brimstone upon them, as on Sodom and Gomorrah, nor snares and an horrible tempest, as on the wicked; but what was desirable by them, and suitable to their present circumstances, even bread, which was what they wanted, and this too readymade. And God rained down manna upon them.

God rained plenty of manna for each one. It would come as thick and as fast as a shower of rain, and lie around their camp. It will be from heaven. Manna was prepared perhaps by the ministry of angels (Ps.78:24,25), and therefore called the bread of heaven, and angels' bread. For us as Christians, Jesus is the bread from heaven(Jn.6:32). The bread that was not given to us by Moses, but by God our Father. A bread that gives us life!

And the children of Israel did eat manna for forty years. The Israelites survived on manna that God gave them till they reached the border of the promise land. As Christians God has given us His word. We can remain faithful to Him till the end only if we eat the word of God everyday for ourselves.

Application : Which are some Scriptures from the Bible which has filled your spiritual appetite recently?

"Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God - Mt.4:4"

Day 12 : The Crisis of Water [Exodus 17]

The waters of Marah may have been bitter but what could be worse than no water? What were they to do? All the congregation of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin(v.1-3). As children of God, though our life's journey may have taken different paths, we all came from the wilderness of sin. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We as disciples sometimes forget where we came from. They pitched in Rephidim—a place in the desert—to refresh, comfort, make a bed.

They were to dwell or abide there for a while. What they thought as a place of comfort and rest turned out to be a place of thirst. They quickly discovered that there was no water to quench their thirst. They looked to Moses as their source of supply. They chided (contended) with Moses to provide water for their thirst (v. 2). They were looking to the wrong one to supply their needs.

We need to learn that the things and comforts of this world can never satisfy the needs that only God can fill.

We need to make sure that we should not look for the wrong source, some times we could depend on encouragements, or on others that they should pray for us or on somebody to help us but we forget that God is our helper and we need to look up to Him. There have been many times when God has had to remind us that He is our source of supply. God reminds us that He would supply all our needs according to His riches. We got to understand when we are faithful to Him, He will take care of us and all that is dear to us.

Murmuring is not only a sign of immaturity, but of lack of faith. It is no wonder that God judged their murmuring. They lacked faith. Just look at the complaints. They said that Moses: 'Took away their comfort—brought us from Egypt', 'wanted to kill them', 'wanted to kill their children', 'wanted to destroy their livelihood—kill their cattle'.

Today what do we complain about? Do we complain about our upbringing, our looks, do we complaint about our husbands, wife, children or about others who are not good to us? God has the power to solve every challenging situation we face in our lives.

Application : What are some complaints you are struck with? How do you expect God to solve it?

“Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God - Phil.2:14,15”

Day 13 : The Jethro Principle [Exodus 18]

The news of Israel had circulated so widely in that region that Jethro knew that Israel had come out of Egypt and that Israel was near Mount Sinai. So he came to pay his respects and brought Moses' wife and two children.

They greet each other in peace, have a friendly talk and talk over the problems of administering justice.

One thing to notice is in v.11, Jethro's confession. "Now I know that the Lord is greater than all other gods". The people of that culture and time were realizing that the God of the Israelites is greater than the gods of Egypt.

This was the first great contest in that ancient world between a polytheistic faith of many gods and monotheistic faith of one God. In this contest, Yahweh the God of Israel, the maker of heaven and earth, clearly showed that He is the one, only true and living God.

The second part of the chapter deals with Jethro's advice on leadership. There are lots of leadership lessons we can learn from this passage.

- Leadership is definitely to meet the needs of the people. People came to seek God's will (v.15), that is what godly leadership is all about.
- Leadership is heavy work (v18). One or few cannot handle it alone. Large groups must be broken down into smaller groups and various levels must be responsible for meeting the majority of needs within their groups.
- Leaders must be "capable men, who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain" (v21). Leadership is a gift and a responsibility too.
- Leaderships' delicate balance : to stand the strain and letting people go home satisfied (v23). We need strong leadership (standing the strain) and caring so the people are happy (satisfied).

Application : Think about the different leadership roles (at home, in your job, in church) you had been through and how have you handled it at times of pressure?

" ...let him use it (gifts) in proportion to his faith... if it is leadership, let him govern diligently.. - Rom.12:6-8"

Day 14 : Covenantship[Exodus 19]

Upto this point Israel had been held together by the covenant given to Abraham and as a people of tribes held together by a council of elders. At Sinai they were to come under the covenant of the law and they were to become a nation, a nation under God.

Some very important matters appears here :

1. **The basis of covenant.** The basis of the covenant was divine redemption : “I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself” (19:4). So as a compassionate mother, God tenderly brought Israel out of Egypt. That is what God does to us in Christ. We become the sons of God. Redemption begins with God’s compassion.
2. **The reward of covenant.** Ex.19:5-6 is really what it is all about! God wants Israel for Himself as a unique “treasure”, “a kingdom of priests” and “holy nation” . Each word has so much depth to it. That’s what the church is now (1 Pet. 2:5-9).
3. **The conditions of the covenant.** The condition of the covenant was obedience on man’s part. We are also saved by God’s grace through our faith and our obedience in Christ!

When the people heard the terms of the covenant they accepted them. “We will do everything the Lord has said”. God took them at their word and gave Moses instructions on how He would approach Israel and announce the terms of the covenant.

1. God would come down. For a covenant, both the parties must meet. God personally comes down to enter a covenant relationship with Israel. This is the heart of the biblical salvation : God comes to man!
2. The people must consecrate themselves. They are prepared to meet God. The question we need to ask ourselves is “how can a holy God have fellowship with a sinful person like me?” This is the key to understanding salvation!
3. The best response to have is “fear and trembling” (20:18-20), which we will study in the next chapter.

Application : What are you to God? Think about five things that you are to God.

“ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light - 1 Pet.2:9”

Grace and the Law

Understanding the salvation offered in the OT and the laws of the OT becomes a difficult problem for most of us. Many of us think it was by keeping the many laws of OT that those people were saved. And we find it difficult to see the grace of God in the OT. Here we have some guidelines in helping us to understand these issues better.

First of all, what is salvation? Whether in the OT or NT what does it mean?

Though the term “salvation” could mean different things like deliverance from enemies, blessing and so on, the ultimate meaning is to do with the forgiveness of man’s sins or redemption.

[Ref. : Ps.103:12, Is.1:18, Is.38:17, Is. 44:22, Mic. 7:19] According to these Scriptures, in the OT too, sins were definitely forgiven. That means they were saved! Even the NT talks of Moses, Elijah, Abraham attaining salvation. But then Heb. 10:4, states. “that it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins”. So then how was forgiveness in the OT? To understand this clearly, we need to understand the difference between basis and condition of forgiveness. The real basis of forgiveness is always God’s grace shown through the death of Christ on the cross. Sacrificing animals in the OT was not the basis of forgiveness but the condition for forgiveness.

In the NT also we have conditions like faith, obedience, confession, repentance, baptism, continuing in the light.... The conditions have changed but the basis of forgiveness remains the same, the grace of God! Man’s part in salvation has to do with conditions and not the basis. We can never earn our salvation. It is a gift! God doesn’t forgive us because we are righteous, but because He is gracious! Understanding this brings about the difference between gratefulness and legalism.

In the NT too commandments are stressed. Jn 14:15, 15:10, 1 Jn 2:3-5, 3:24

Law of faith Rom. 3:27

Law of Spirit Rom. 8:2

Law of Christ Gal. 6:2

Law of liberty James 1:25, 2:12

Law of Christ 1 Cor. 9:21

New covenant of law Heb. 7:12, 8:10, 10:28-31

So in conclusion, we are and were always saved by the grace of God (blood of Christ) and the laws serve as a guide to remain saved!

Day 15 : The Ten Commandments [Exodus 20]

The God who redeems a people from Egypt expects such redeemed people to be a holy people.

The most natural background for understanding the Ten Commandments is the typical old world suzerain-vassal relationship. Like the treaty between a king and his humble subjects, the lists of curses and blessings are also given.

Another thing we notice about the Ten Commandments are they are all to do with relationships. The first four are connected with relationship with God, and the last six about relationships with one another. And that is what righteousness is all about. It isn't about religion but about how we treat God and others. In our self-righteous world being religious is very easy, but how we love God and others reveal our hearts. Love (relationships) is the root of Christianity too, loving God with all our hearts, minds, souls and strength and loving our neighbors as ourselves. Loving God and others is the proof of our obedience to Christ.

From v.18-20, we see how the people responded. They responded with fear. They were trembling with fear. This is a sign of their soberness, their broken hearts and their humility.

This is what God is looking for in us. Our broken hearts, see Ps. 51:16-17, Is. 66:2, Is. 57:15 and Phil. 2:12. Our humility is in admitting and realizing our sinfulness and seeing God's holiness.

These are the two greatest lessons we need to understand in our short lifetime! Who is God? And who am I? Seeing God as He is and seeing ourselves as we really are!

That's why in Is.6:1-7, when Isaiah saw God's greatness, His holiness, he was able to see his own sinfulness.

Let us remember that when we fear God, we are beginning to be wise. A fool doesn't fear God (Ps.14:1). Let us become wise by fearing God, because we know that He is great!

Application : Pray through Psalms 51.

"Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling - Ps.2:11"

Day 16 : The Other Laws [Exodus 21]

The Ten Commandments were quite simple and understandable. But in reality our sinful nature is quite complex. Sin complicates life from day one. God created the earth very simple but things keeps changing as sin enters the scene.

So chapter 21 starts with various other laws given. These laws are also called “social laws”. The root of these laws is the holiness of God. His holiness demands justice or righteousness from man’s side.

Many of these laws are to do with the culture of that world and time. To us many of these laws might not make sense, and some might appear to be cruel or inhuman.

This is because we live in a different time. When we learn the culture and times of the ancient world, we will be able to appreciate these laws better.

From these laws we can learn few points :

- These laws were given to protect life. For example, in the laws about slaves, v4, God says the slave can be free after seven years, but his wife and children belong to the master. Now why do you think God said that? According to today’s world that would seem very cruel. But God said that because in that time, the poor was deprived in every way. Even having regular food would be a challenge. But keeping the slave’s family with the master would help to provide for their needs.
- These laws were boundaries. “Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand....” sounds scary, right? But God said it so that the man would know the consequences of doing wrong. That would stop him from doing wrong. These were like preventive measures. You wouldn’t hurt someone, if you knew the punishment!
- These laws were to show the heart of God. It does show how God hates sin and loves the sinner. It does show the grace of God and his justice too.

Application : What are some spiritual boundaries that protects your spiritual life [for ex. with TV, money, kids..... ?

“Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life

- Jude 21”

Day 17 : The Other Laws (cont...) [Exodus 22,23]

The backdrop of some of these laws is the love for one's neighbor. "When he cries out to me (God), I will hear, for I am compassionate" (22:27).

Each Israelite is to reflect the divine love in his own life in the manner he treats his neighbor.

For example a garment taken as surety is to be returned at night so the owner will not sleep cold! (22:27). God teaches the Israelites to think for others. Putting others above ourselves is what it is all about!

We need to praise God for the laws, because they show the heart of God. They teach us to love one another and to love God.

As the psalmist says in Ps.119:103 "How sweet are your words to my taste".

God continues to give various laws to the Israelites. Laws of justice. Justice is something God always upholds and expects.

Denying or perverting justice is something that arouses the anger of the Lord.

Then v.10-13 God gives the Sabbath laws. V.14-19 talk about the various feasts the Israelites were expected to keep. There were mainly three festival where the Israelites gathered together to celebrate.

God wanted his people to celebrate and enjoy the blessings God had given them. This brought in a lot of unity among the Israelites.

They were one in their faith and worship. And years later when the temple was built, it added on to the celebrations.

And these celebrations reminded the people of Israel of the mighty acts of God in delivering them from Egypt into the promised land.

Application : Remember the life in Egypt (before baptism) and the salvation through the power of God and pray through it.

"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile - Rom.1:16"

FEASTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

#	Name	OT Reference	OT Time	Modern Equivalent
1	Sabbath	Ex. 20:8-11; Ex. 31:12-17; Lev. 23:3; Deut.5:12-15	7th Day	Same
2	Sabbath Year	Ex. 23:10-11; Lev. 25:1-7	7th year	Same
3	Year of Jubilee	Lev. 25:8-55; Lev. 27:17-24; Num. 36:4	50th year	Same
4	Passover	Ex. 12:1-14; Lev. 23:5; Num.9:1-14; Num. 28:16; Deut.16:1-7	1st month (Abib) 14	Mar-Apr
5	Unleavened Bread	Ex. 12:15-20; Ex. 13:3-10; Ex. 23:15; Ex. 34:18; Lev. 23:6-8; Num. 28:17-25; Deut. 16:3-8	1st month (Abib) 15-21	Mar-Apr
6	Firstfruits	Lev. 23:9-14	1st month (Abib) 16	Mar-Apr
7	Weeks (Pentecost) (Harvest)	Ex. 23:16a; Ex. 34:22a; Lev 23:15-21; Num. 28:26-31; Deut. 16:9-12	3rd month (Sivan) 6	May-Jun
8	Trumpets	Lev 23:23-25; Num. 29:1-6	7th month (Tishri) 1	Sep-Oct
9	Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)	Lev. 16; Lev. 23:26-32; Num. 29:7-11	7th month (Tishri) 10	Sep-Oct
10	Tabernacles (Booths) (Ingathering)	Ex. 23:16b; Ex. 34:22b; Lev. 23:33-36a; Lev.23:39-43; Num. 29:12-34; Deut. 16:13-15; Zec. 14:16-19;	7th month (Tishri) 15-21	Sep-Oct
11	Sacred Assembly	Lev 23:36b; Num. 29:35-38	7th month (Tishri) 22	Sep-Oct
12	Purim	Est. 9:18-32	12th month (Adar) 14,15	Feb-Mar

Kinds of Offerings in the O.T

#	Name	OT Reference	Purpose	Kind of Offering
1	Burnt Offering	Lev. 1:3-17; Lev. 6:8-13	To atone for basic human sinfulness	A male without blemish from herd or flock of two birds
2	Sin Offering	Lev. 4:1-5,13; Lev. 6:24-30	To atone for a specific sin	Bull or goat or two birds or flour
3	Guilt Offering	Lev. 5:14-6:7; Lev. 7:1-10	To atone for a sin requiring restitution or breach of faith	Same as in sin offering
4	Grain Offering	Lev. 2:1-16; Lev. 6:14-23	To secure good will	Flour, cakes, wafers, 1st fruit with oil
5	Peace Offering	Lev. 3:1-17; Lev. 7:11-21, 28-36	To praise God	Flock without blemish
6	Praise Offering		For a blessing received	
7	Vow Offering		In fulfillment of a vow	
8	Freewill Offering		Spontaneously from a glad heart	

Day 18 : The Confirmation of the Covenant[Exodus 24]

The great event in chapter 24 is the climax of the book of Exodus. Abraham's children were now a multitude the size of a nation. They were now to be bound into covenant relationship with God and were forged into a nation ruled over by God Himself. The confirmation of the covenant made Israel a great treasured possession of Yahweh, a royal priesthood and a holy nation.

Moses was the mediator of the covenant (24:2). A mediator is an in-between person. It was as though Moses was Israel's man to God and God's man to Israel. In the New Testament, Christ takes the role of being a mediator for man. Christ is God's man to us and man's savior to God.

The covenant is confirmed with the people's response, "everything the Lord has said we will do" (24:3). They surrendered to God as their Lord and master. That's what we do at baptism. We respond with the same words, agreeing to obey his words. We submit to the lordship of Christ. The lordship of Christ and the savior-hood of Christ go hand in hand. Christ cannot save those who don't accept Him as Lord.

Is Jesus the Lord of your life? In every area? This is so important, because Jesus cannot save us unless we submit to Him (Lk. 14:25-33) This is what being His disciple is all about!

In the area of relationships, family, health, money career, job and in everything we "must deny ourselves and take up our crosses and then follow Him daily"!

As God in the scripture "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble". It is the humble that receive more grace from God. Submitting or surrendering to God helps us to receive grace from God.

God makes a new covenant with us in Christ's blood (Mt. 26:28), our part is to submit and as the Israelites said we should also say "everything the God has said we will do"!

Application : Which areas of your life need to be renewed by the blood of Jesus Christ? Commit to the Lord what you are deciding in prayer.

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin - 1 Jn.1:7"

Day 19 : The Ark of the Covenant [Exodus 25]

The Ark(Chest), the most important item in the tabernacle and the only piece within the Most Holy place(v.10-22) is also called “the ark of the Testimony” (v. 22), and “the ark of the covenant of the LORD” (Deut.10:8). The ark was a reminder of God’s commitment to fulfill all His promises. The two stone tablets which contained the ten commandments was to be placed in the ark. The ark also contained a jar of manna and Aaron’s rod (Heb.9:4,5).

An Atonement Cover was to be mounted over the golden chest(ark). The chest lid had two cherubim (plural of “cherub”) facing each other on the lid. The atonement cover between the two cherubim is the place where God would meet with His people. There on the day of atonement the high priest sprinkled blood on the lid. The blood then made atonement for Israel’s sin.

The Veil(Curtain) separates The Most Holy Place and the Holy Place which means the way into God’s presence was not yet open. This was because sins separates man from God. The high priest could go through this curtain once in a year, after sacrificing for his own sins. Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross opened the way into the Most Holy place. The curtain was torn at crucifixion (Mt.27:51). So we can approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Heb.4:16).

The Table of the Bread had 12 cakes(12 tribes). This bread (Lev.24:5-9), symbolized God being the source of their spiritual food. It was also called the ‘bread of the Presence’ because it was placed in God’s presence. Also on the table were to be placed golden plates (perhaps for carrying the loaves), and ladles... pitchers, and bowls for drink offerings. Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty” (Jn.6:35). He is the one who sustains us spiritually.

The Lampstand(“menorah”) (v.31-40) had seven lamps and it provided light in the tent which was the only source of light in the Holy Place. The lampstand, which was to burn continually, was serviced by the priests in the morning and at sunset (Ex 27:20-21). Today, Christ is the light of the world (John 8:12), who reveals the way to God (John 14:6, 9), the only source of light. If we remove the lampstand (Jesus) we will be in darkness!

Application : In which areas of your life people can see Christ?

“Let your light shine before men (Mt.5:16)”

Day 20 : The Tabernacle [Exodus 26,27]

The Tabernacle prefigured Christ, who is said to have “tabernacled” (dwelt) (Jn 1:14) among His people. The tabernacle (Ex. 25:9) was referred to by several names: **Sanctuary**, meaning a sacred place (Ex 25:8); **Tent** (26:7, 11-14, 36), because of its tentlike structure; **Tent of Meeting** (27:21), signifying its structure and purpose; **Tabernacle of the Testimony** (38:21; cf. Acts 7:44) and **Tent of the Testimony** (Num. 9:15), meaning the place where the two tablets of the Law were kept (i.e. in the ark, in the most holy place).

The tabernacle was a large tent, surrounded by an outer court—a long, rectangular enclosure 2 1/2 times the size of a volleyball court. It was portable. The walls of the court and the tent was made of curtains. The tabernacle was a sanctuary, a dwelling place for God, consisting of an outer “holy place” and an inner “most holy place”.

During the time in the wilderness, God’s presence was a visible thing, marked by a cloudy, fiery pillar which always stood over the tabernacle. When erected, the tabernacle always stood in the middle of the camp, and the people ranged around it on every side. God chooses to dwell in the center of His people. He is to be the center of our lives. Israel had not yet seen herself as a still-needy people. Yet God began to meet the needs. His provision was in the tabernacle—a tent of worship, which became the only place where Israelites might approach God. (Later it was replaced by a temple, erected in Jerusalem.)

Altar for Burnt Offering. God gives a plan to make an altar for burnt offering overlaid with bronze [27:1-8] and a plan to make the courtyard for the tabernacle [27:9-16]. There was only one entrance[door or gate] to the courtyard, through which a person can come into God’s presence. At the door the bronze altar was placed, on which daily, the prescribed offerings would be laid. This showed that sacrifice was needed to enter God’s presence. That is what Jesus did. He became the sacrifice so that we can enter into a relationship with God. As in Lev. 17:11, “...it is the blood that makes atonement for one’s life”. No one could approach God or receive the benefits of His presence without entering by the door of sacrifice and atonement. Jesus said, “I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved” (Jn. 10:9). Jesus also said “I am the way...no one comes to the father except through me” (Jn.14:6).

Application : Memorize Jn.14:6

“Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me - Jn.14:6”

Day 21 : Priestly Garments [Exodus 28]

This chapter explains, what priests had to wear (v.4), who should prepare those garments (v.3) and why they had to wear (v.2), then also in v.16-43, the details of the garments are given.

Imagine how they would look like with those garments? They would look different from the rest of the people because they were chosen to serve. What did each of these garments represent ?

1. Ephod (v.9-12) It was worn as a memorial stones for the sons of Israel.

2. Breastpiece (v.15-30) God wants Aaron to fashion breastpiece for making decision for Israelites over his heart before the Lord.

3. Other priestly Garments (v.31-43) The other priestly garments include,

- Robe (v.31-35) – Aaron to wear to minister people
- Plate of pure Gold (v.38) – Carry the guilt of community
- Tunic and Turban (v.40) – to give dignity and honour
- Linen undergarments (v.43) – not incur guilt and die

These are the garments priests had to wear when they minister people for God.

Peter reminds us in his first epistle we are royal priests a holy nation. Every Christian according to Bible is a priest.

What are we to wear / clothe ourselves with?

- Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. (Col. 3:12)
- Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature (Rom.13:14).

Application : What spiritual garments can be seen on you?

“... as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience - Col.3:12”

Day 22 : The Consecration of the Priests [Exodus 29]

Consecrated to serve God, would mean that you are being totally set apart to do the will of God. In the case of Aaron and his sons, they were “set apart” to minister daily in the tabernacle and to sacrifice the continual peace offerings

on behalf of the nation of Israel. We are consecrated also as people who accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior to go about learning and doing the “good and perfect” will of God.

The holy characteristics associated with our holy God is described in v.1-9. The priests were called to strive for godly perfection, separation, cleanliness and anointing.

- Are we making effort to be perfect? The only way we can do so is by surrendering ourselves totally to Jesus Christ, and to obey the word of God in our lives. God wanted ram and bull without defects(v.1).
- We are called to be separated for God and our Lord Jesus Christ. He has separated us and “set us apart” for Him. God wanted bread and cakes without yeast (v.2).
- We should present ourselves undefiled, clean before God. God wanted Aaron and his sons to be washed with water (v.4).
- Are we anointed with the Holy Spirit? God wanted the high priest to be anointed with the holy anointing oil (v.7).

We see Aaron and his sons coming forward and their sins being transferred to a scapegoat, which will be offered for their sinfulness (v.10-18). We can clearly understand that the sinfulness of man was transferred to the imperfect sacrifice of animals, which required continual offerings until a perfect sacrifice could be found. Jesus was the perfect sacrifice (Heb.10:9-12) offered to cleanse our sins so that we can come before God sinless. How grateful are we to Jesus who rescued us from being punished for our sin?

Aaron and Christ shared the priestly qualifications of a divine calling and genuine humanity. Unlike Aaron, however, Christ needed to offer no sacrifices for Himself. Only such a perfect High Priest could offer a sacrifice that was wholly and eternally effective. (Heb.5:1-8, 9:11-14).

Application : Praise God for Christ’s priestly ministry.

“Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess - Heb.4:14”

The Priesthood of Christ

One of the most important ongoing ministry of Christ is His priesthood. Here we have a study on the priesthood of Christ.

Heb. 2:17 Human as well as Divine.

This Scripture shows that Jesus is the true mediator and high priest.

Heb. 4:14-16 The Perfect High Priest

His task is to bring the voice of God to man and to usher men into the presence of God. This passage shows how Jesus identifies Himself in Heaven and with men. He faced temptations and pain as every man, yet was without sin. This makes Him able to help us and give grace.

Heb. 5:1-10 Divinely Appointed

A priest is appointed on men's behalf to deal with the things concerning God. The priest must be on with men, able to deal gently (v.2). He is strong but patient. This is what Christ is to us. He is able to understand us and gently lead us back to God.

Heb. 6:19-20 Eternal Priest

In the temple, the most sacred of all places was the Holy of the Holy. It was covered always. It was there that the presence of God was. Into that place only one man could go and he was the High Priest. But now Jesus has opened the way for men to draw closer to God. Through Jesus the Unapproachable can be approached!

Heb. 7:22-28 High Priest who meets our needs

Jesus becomes the guarantee of the better covenant we have. He remains in office forever. He is able to save us completely and he lives to intercede for us. Jesus continues to serve us, He is truly the servant of all servants!

Heb. 8:1-6 Exalted High Priest

There can be no glory greater than that of the ascended and exalted Jesus, who sits at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in Heaven. But yet He continues to serve in the sanctuary. He is a unique combination of majesty and service.

Day 23 : Worship of Yahweh [Exodus 30]

Chapter 30 tells us about the expectations of God in terms of worshipping Him.

The Golden altar of incense (v.1-10) was before the veil that separated the holy place and the most holy place. This was where the high priest burnt incense every morning and at twilight everyday. This altar spoke of daily worship and of prayer (Rev. 8:3-4). This was the place where atonement for sins were made once a year by the high priest.

Atonement money (v.11-16) Each Israelite was ordered to give as a ransom for his soul (for his life) half a shekel, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. The rich were not to give more, the poor were not to give less. This signifies that all souls were equally precious in the sight of God, and that no difference of outward circumstances could affect the state of the soul; all had sinned, and all must be redeemed by the same price.

This atonement must be made that there might be no plague among them, intimating that a plague or curse from God must light on those souls for whom the atonement was not made. A ransom for his soul—What the sincere worshipper thus paid was at once the fruit and the sign of his faith in the goodness of God, who had redeemed him and brought him into the covenant. The payment is rightly called a ransom since it involved a personal appropriation of the fact of his redemption. Today, we are redeemed by the blood of Christ. God paid the price for our souls (I Pet. 1:18-20).

The Bronze Basin [the Laver] (v.17-21) is a large wash basin outside the tabernacle used by the priests to cleanse themselves before performing their duties. It symbolized the need for spiritual cleansing. Today, believers are to be cleansed by the blood of Christ through the waters of baptism to enter into an eternal relationship with God. Also daily we need to turn to God for cleansing. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness(1Jn.1:9).

We can plainly see how careful God was in preserving the sacredness of His worship that He handed down to the nation of Israel through His truth, so as to prevent them from being adulterated by human inventions. It is God who set's apart, God who saves, for He will save men in His own way, and upon His own terms.

Application : Write a letter of confession to God and pray through it.

“The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin -I Jn.1:7”

Work God has made us for a purpose just like God made Bezalel & Oholiab who were given talents to perform all kinds of craftsmanship. This God gave them to build the ark of the covenant and tent of the meeting and other articles in it.

They were also skilled to make garments for the priests. God not only gave talents to Bezalel & Ohaliab but to many others who worked under them. Bezalel and Ohaliab were the leaders and directors.

In the same way God uses our talents to build the Kingdom of God. The gifts of the Holy Spirit includes, prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, contribution, leadership, showing mercy... (Rom.12:6-8). We are also blessed with gifts. God expects us to use it in building His Kingdom.

Rest God was hard-line with observing Sabbath.

- Work takes our mind of God. Our talents are prioritized. We glorify ourselves as we are rewarded for our work.
- Rest focuses our mind on God. Rest is waiting on God. Rest is spending time with God. Rest is talking to God. Rest in God calls for higher faith.

Rest with godliness is the call of today's hard working world.

Ex. 31:17 reminds us of God taking rest. If God did it why not us? What is true rest? Rest is rest from work and not from doing good. God never stops doing good. We see that even on Sabbath Jesus was healing people!

Application : What are some talents / gifts which God has blessed you with?

"We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully - Rom.12:6-8"

In the midst of a high and holy revelation, in the midst of the manifestation of the glory of God, a terrible incident of idolatry was happening.

The Israelites had exchanged the glory of God for an image of a calf. They forgot the God who had saved them. They forgot the great and wonderful miracles of God.

When we read it, it is shocking! How could such depravity break out in the midst of such holiness? How could gratefulness turn into idol worship? The issue was that though they were out of Egypt, Egypt was not out of them! None of us is far from Egypt! This is the truth of every man's heart!

Though we have left the world to be part of His Kingdom, the world continues to attract and tempt us. Where is your heart, today? In which way is the world still part of us? In the parable of sower, Jesus talks of the seeds that are choked by the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth. It is just a matter of time that weeds if not plucked choke us spiritually!

The second part of the chapter deals with the intercessory work of Moses. Here we find an amazing spiritual fact, men may intercede with God for their fellow men. Moses intercedes for the people, he appeals to the covenantal promise God had made (v13).

The Bible says the Lord relented! This shows the tenderness of God's heart, how He does truly love and is willing to relent! Throughout the Bible, we see God always willing to forgive.

But on the other hand sins always have consequences. God is willing to take away the guilt, but the consequence remains. These people had to face many consequences because of their foolish and rebellious act. That is how serious sin is. Sin destroys, it has deep-rooted effects. There is no wisdom in sin. But the grace of God is an amazing gift, it is free but not cheap!

Application : Find out the idols you give more priority to and plan ways to remove them.

“ But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.

.....No immoral, impure or greedy person--such a man is an idolater--has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God - Eph.5:3-5”

God's reaction to the idolatry and reveling of Israel was to tell Moses that He would no longer be with Israel in her journey. He would instead send an angel before them. God calls the Israelites "stiff-necked".

Sin has short term pleasures but long term consequences! The Israelites never guessed how critical their great sin (32:31) was. God was hard-line! Again we see how God hates sins though He loves sinners.

Moses had an intimate relationship with God. It says that the Lord talked face to face with Moses (33:11). This reveals the directness of communication that God had with Moses. This puts Moses in a unique place in the entire Old Testament!

But even such a leader needed renewal! Moses reached a point where he could go no further (v.12-16). Perhaps Moses was burnt out, or shaken up. Maybe he felt as though he needed something new, a new revelation.

He wanted to know the ways of God (33:13) and he wanted to see the glory of God (33:18). And God grants his request.

All of us go through ups and downs in our spiritual journey. There are times when we feel we can do anything and there are times we can't even move an inch. But it is during those low times we need to draw even closer to God, those gardens of Gethsemane! That's the time not to give up but to wrestle and in other words struggle through. Every great man in the Bible went through these kinds of times. And these times reveal our character.

Moses is renewed. After an incredible downfall Moses is back on his feet receiving the second stone Tablets (Ex.34).

We have all started a journey to the promised land. There will be crisis in that journey. There will be mistakes and wrong choices. But where we end is more important. Will we make it to the promised land? Yes, the grace that brought us safe thus far will lead us home!

Application : Think about the grace of God at different points in your life and give praises to Him.

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - Eph.2:8"

God calls the people to give willingly (35:5-9). The people were moved and gave generously. God loves the cheerful giver (2Cor.9:7). The people gave everything needed for the tabernacle.

From gold to bronze, blue to fine linen, goats, ram to all kinds of animals and precious stones. But it says the people were restrained from bringing more because they had brought enough. It was hard for them not to bring. Can you imagine that?

The people including women were willing to work. They were willing to work where they were called to work. The skilled were called to work willingly. Willingness is a matter of our heart! How is our heart in terms of willingly giving?

Just by reading the Bible we cannot imagine the real beauty of the tabernacle. It has to be seen with our eyes. It is the place where God's presence was.

At God's living place, all the best materials were used to build the tabernacle. The ram were the best, gold were the best, bronze were the best, skins and hair were the best, wood were the best, silver were the best.

God was the director. Even the minute detail was taken care of. The people did everything the Lord commanded (39:1,7,21,31). God was the master builder. God is the creator and He is very creative.

Likewise, God has been preparing a much more beautiful place for us in heaven. The Bible says Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us (Jn.14:3,4).

How will that place be? In Rev. 21 it says it will have no sea, a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. Once again God is going to live with us. There will be no more tears, death and pain. We cannot imagine how awesome heaven will be.

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him" (1Cor.2:9).

Application : In what areas of your life, should your giving improve [giving to your spouse, children, ministry, job, contribution...]?

"It is more blessed to give than to receive - Acts 20:35"

Today, we will be reading about some important articles God told Moses to place in the tabernacle and its significance. Moses was particular that the tabernacle will be built exactly how the pattern was shown on the mountain. The Hebrew author calls it a copy or a shadow of things to come (Heb.8:5).

The tabernacle, for the Israelites, was the dwelling home of God on the earth. The exodus could have happened around 1446 BC and we know that Solomon replaced the tabernacle by building the temple 480 years after the exodus i.e., 966 BC (1 Ki.6:1) and ultimately Jesus claimed himself to be the temple (Jn. 2:19) and in him all the fullness of the deity lives in bodily form (Col.2:9).

The Ark (v.1-9) the golden rectangular box that later contained the following three objects (Heb.9:4 / Deut.10:1-5) :

1. Gold Jar of Manna
2. Aaron's staff that had budded
3. The stone tablets of the covenant.

It was to remind the Israelites that God was their provider, that He is holy so needed a mediator and that they must obey the commandment to keep the relationship. Ultimately the ark was lost (Jer. 3:16) and there is a mention about it in Rev.11:19.

The Table / Bread of Presence (v.10-16) This was to keep the offerings and twelve pieces of bread which was replaced every Sabbath to represent that God is the provider for all the tribes. In New Testament Jesus became the real bread who came down from heaven (Jn.6:48).

The Lampstand (v.17-24) It was made in the form of almond, the first tree to blossom during spring. Lamps were to give light to the working priest which was later replaced by the word of God (Ps.119:105) and ultimately by Jesus who is the light of this world (Jn.8:12).

The Altar of Incense (v.25-29) It was placed in front of the ark (Ex.40:5) to offer incense, which was replaced by the prayers of the saints in the New Testament. (Heb.13:5, Rev.8:3).

In one word if you notice Jesus replaced all these articles and also the Spirit prays for us!

Application : Pray for the saints in your ministry / church.

"...always keep on praying for all the saints - Eph.6:18"

In this chapter we will focus on two things, our unworthiness to approach God because of our sins and our worthiness cannot be earned by work alone.

Our unworthiness in front of God The two articles kept outside the Holy place were made up of bronze in contrast to the Holy articles, which were made by gold. It represents our ungodliness and our inability to approach the Holy place.

- **Altar of Burnt Offering** This was kept outside the Holy place and God commanded that the fire must not go out and must be kept burning (Lev. 6:12-13). All the sacrifices were made on this altar and Jesus became the ultimate sacrifice for our sins.

- **Basin for Washing** This was for washing the feet of the priests (Ex.30: 19-20) before they enter the Holy place to let them know that God is holy and they need to be cleansed. God foretold the coming of the one who will cleanse the nation (Zec.13:1). Jesus was called the fountain. In the New Testament, for some it is replaced by the water baptism. As for the church she is continuously cleansed by the word of God (Eph.5:26).

Worthiness cannot be earned by work Though Bezalel was in charge we must understand that lots of people were involved in making the articles for the tabernacle . Those days women used polished bronze sheet as mirrors to look at their beauty and we can see their sacrifice (v.8), the basin was made from their mirrors. But just making the holy articles doesn't make us holy. Neither Bezalel who made the ark of the covenant nor Ithamar son of Aaron who supervised the whole project (Ex.38:21-23) nor the designer Oholiab made it to the promise land.... something to be grasped!

Though God was happy that they did exactly what He commanded yet we shouldn't forget the fact that none of them entered the promise land! Only faith and obedience will help us to enter the promise land.

So let us not place our confidence on the work we do to build the tabernacle (the church of the living God). Let us place our confidence on faithfulness which will qualify us to enter the promise land. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their (Israelite's) example of disobedience (Heb.4:11).

Application : What are somethings that hinders your walk with God?

“let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us - Heb.12:1”

Day 30 : The Priestly Garments [Exodus 39]

In this chapter we will read about the priestly garments (v.1-31) with its purpose and the leadership of Moses (v.32-43). The whole purpose of the priestly garment, the ephod, breast

plate, Urim and Thummim , the HOLY TO THE LORD inscription on the forehead of the priest (v.30) all point towards the following purpose :

1. To let the Israelites know that God is holy and they need a mediator.
2. God's will needs to be sought and He is willing to give answers.
3. He has chosen some special people to serve Him (Levites).

Enquire the Lord (v.1- 41) Ephod was the ritual loin cloth worn by the priest (1Sam.2:18) and in some occasions by the king (2Sam.6:14).The holy breastplate was fastened to the ephod of the high priest which contains the Urim and Thummim (Lev.8:8). [Don't confuse this with the ephod in Judges 17:5;18:14-20, where it was a pagan object associated with an idol].

Now the Israelites enquired the Lord's will through Urim , which means curse (maybe a 'no' from God) and Thummim which means perfect (maybe an 'yes' from God). And the enquiring rights were given exclusively to the high priest (Deut.33:8). God has made a provision to seek His will. But failure to do so always ended in major disaster, which was hard to rectify later.

For example, God commanded Moses that Joshua must enquire His will before making any decision (Num.27:18-21). When Joshua employed this in the matter of Achan (Jos. 7:18) there was joy and when he overlooked in the matter of the Gibeonites(Jos.9:14) there was pain.

Therefore let us make sure we enquire the Lord through the Scripture before we make any important decision in our life. This can save us from lots of trouble because the Lord is waiting to answer and He is god.

Bless those who serves (v.42-43) When the Israelites finished the work, Moses did two things. First he inspected to make sure everything was done according to the direction given by God and then he blessed them. No single person was lifted up, no special awards were given but rather Moses collectively blessed all of them. As leaders we need to bless our Christians whenever they serve God. Bless them in the name of God and they will be blessed!

Application : What are some important decisions you have to make? Have you enquired the Lord's will?

"Be very careful, then, how you live.... understand what the Lord's will is - Eph.5:15-17"

Day 31 : The Glory of the Lord [Exodus 40]

We have come to the last day of our journey through exodus... we see in this chapter God's clear direction in setting up the tabernacle (v.1-15) and Moses' obedience in completing the work (v. 16-33) and the Lord's glory resting up on the tabernacle (v.34 –38). These are three important steps in any covenant with God : 1. Clear direction from God. 2. Obedience from the follower. 3. God's acceptance and guidance.

Think about your relationship with God, you came to know His **command** by someone teaching you the Scriptures, then you decided to **obey** by your repentance and He **accepted** you and His glory rested on you through the Spirit who continues to **guide** you till this day.

God's clear Direction (v.1-15) One thing we notice is that God is pretty clear about what He said. So when people say they are confused about what He says it is only a lame excuse not to obey. If we have a heart of obedience His commands will not be burdensome. (1Jn.5:3).

Then He takes time to explain the details. He explains to Moses, where to put what. He knows in detail even about our life... our hairs are numbered (Mt.10:30). So let us not feel shy to talk to Him about the details of our life when we spend time with Him. He cares about every detail in our life.

Obedience(v.16-33) Moses did everything just as the Lord commanded him and God called him, 'faithful in all his house' (Num.12:7).

Glory of the Lord: (v.34–38) The Glory of the Lord rested upon the tabernacle and from that day God stayed with His people. Can you imagine the one who cannot be contained by the universe decided to dwell among men ? First, He walked with man (Gen.5:24;6:9), then He desired to dwell with men (Ex.25:8) and His glory came to the tabernacle (Ex.40:34), then it dwelt in the temple (1Ki.8:10-11), then Jesus came as the glory of God (Jn.1:14) , He dwells now in believers individually (1Cor.6:19) and in the Church collectively (Eph.2:22) and one day His glory will be revealed in a new heaven and we will be truly dwelling with Him (Rev.21:3).

The book of Exodus started with a gloom and ends with God's Glory. Began with slavery and pain, ends with freedom and joy. So when we go through a gloomy chapter in our life, let us remember that there will be a glorious chapter at the end if we obey Him and submit to Him.

“The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen -Rev.22:21”

Godly Women of Exodus

The Bible is a book filled with God's interaction with men and women. Women also played an important role in the history of Israel and continue to do so in God's Kingdom.

We will look at few godly women mentioned in Exodus who serve as examples for us today.

1. **The Hebrew midwives : Shiphrah and Puah (Ex. 1:15-21)** These women's faith and fear of God is amazing. When the king's word was out, they acted smartly because they feared God. Their names meant "beauty" and "splendor" in Hebrew. These women obeyed the God's command "do not kill" inspite of the king's word "if it is a boy, kill him!"
2. **Jochebed (Ex. 2:1-4)** Moses' mother, Jochebed was a woman of faith. In Heb. 11:23, she and her husband are mentioned. Her faith in God to put her son in a basket of papyrus in the Nile is amazing. How many of us can think of such thing as putting a 3 month old baby in a river and leaving the rest to God? We live in a age where we over-protect and pamper our kids. But Jochebad is a true hero of faith.
3. **Israelite women (Ex.3:22)** God gave the Israelite women the responsibility to ask their Egyptian neighbors for articles of silver and gold and clothing. Ask and it shall be given! Imagine the women of Israel going with faith and asking their neighbors!
4. **Zipporah (Ex.4:24-26)** Here, Zipporah, Moses' wife, does an amazing act of submission to the covenant of circumcision.
5. **Miriam (Ex. 15:20-21)** One of the first woman to be called a prophetess, Aaron and Moses' sister, Miriam led the women in praising God.
6. **Skilled Women (Ex. 35:25-29)** Women with special skills contributed in doing the work of the Lord. God welcomes the skilled hands of men and women alike.

In conclusion, women like men have a special place in the heart of God and in His Kingdom.

Christians and the Old Testament

The Old Testament contains over 600 commandments, which the Israelites were expected to keep. Their obedience to these laws showed their love to God. Most of the laws of OT are found in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

As Christians are we expected to keep the OT laws? Many Christians are confused about this. We will throw some light on this question. We have few guidelines to understand how the OT is connected to us.

1. The Old Testament law is a covenant. The OT is a covenant between Yahweh and his nation, Israel. It was binding laws to the Israelites.
2. The Old Testament is not our testament. Testament is another word for covenant. We are under the New Testament or new covenant initiated by Christ. That means unless an OT law is re-stated in the NT it is no longer binding on God's people (Rom 6:14-15).
3. Some OT laws are not renewed in the NT. For example, the civil laws and ritual laws of Israel are not repeated in the NT. That is why we are not asked to sacrifice animals or stone someone or burn someone.
4. Part of the OT laws are renewed in the NT. Most moral laws are re-stated and renewed in the NT. For example, do not commit adultery becomes don't even look lustfully (Mt. 5:27-28); do not murder becomes don't be angry (Mt. 5:21-23). The NT redefines the laws.
5. All of the OT law is still the word of God for us even though it is not still the command of God to us. The Bible contains all sorts of commands that God wants us to know about which are not directed toward us personally.

In conclusion

- We must see the OT laws as God's fully inspired word for us. We must not see them as God's direct command to us.
- We must see the OT laws as the basis for the old covenant and therefore for Israel's history. We must not see the OT laws as binding on Christian in the new covenant except where specifically renewed.
- We must see God's justice, love and high standards revealed in the OT laws. We must also see God's mercy is made equal to His high standards.
- The OT is progressive revelation of God's word. The NT completes the revelation of God.

