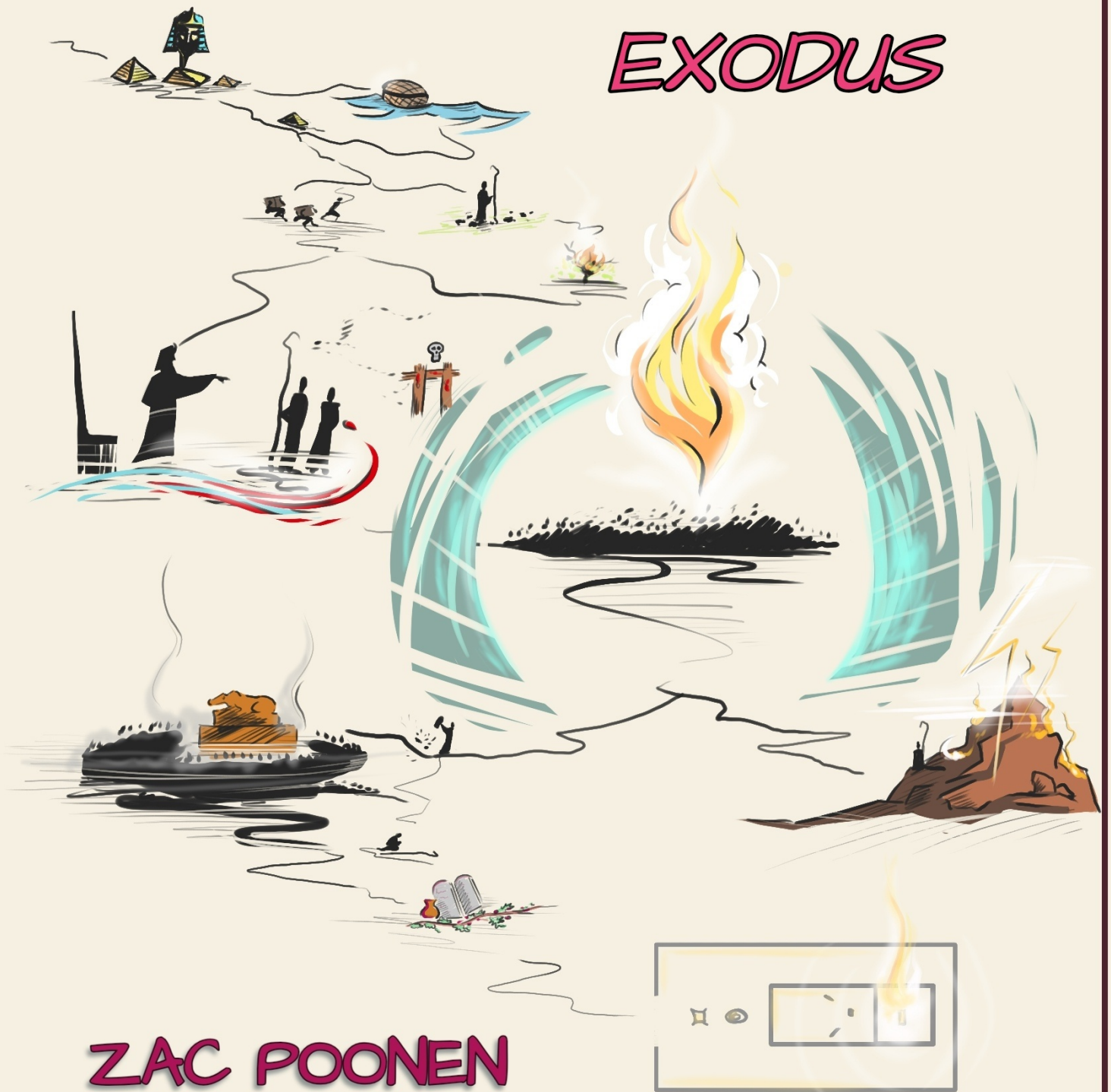


THROUGH THE BIBLE

EXODUS



ZAC POONEN

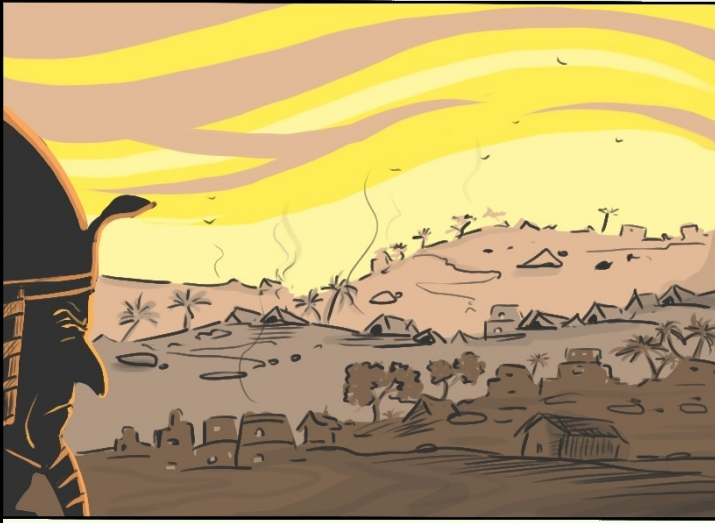
Illustrations by VINAY KURUVILLA

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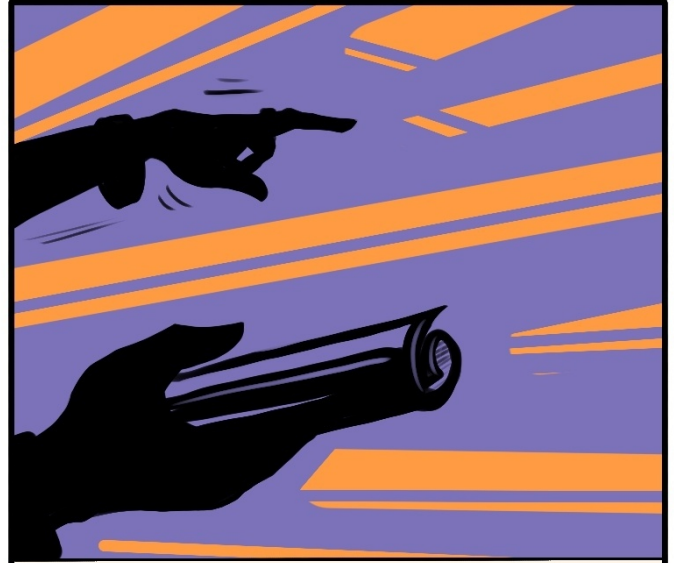
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EXODUS

Exodus deals with the Birth of the nation of Israel. We saw the **beginnings** in Genesis. Now we see it grow into a **full fledged** nation.



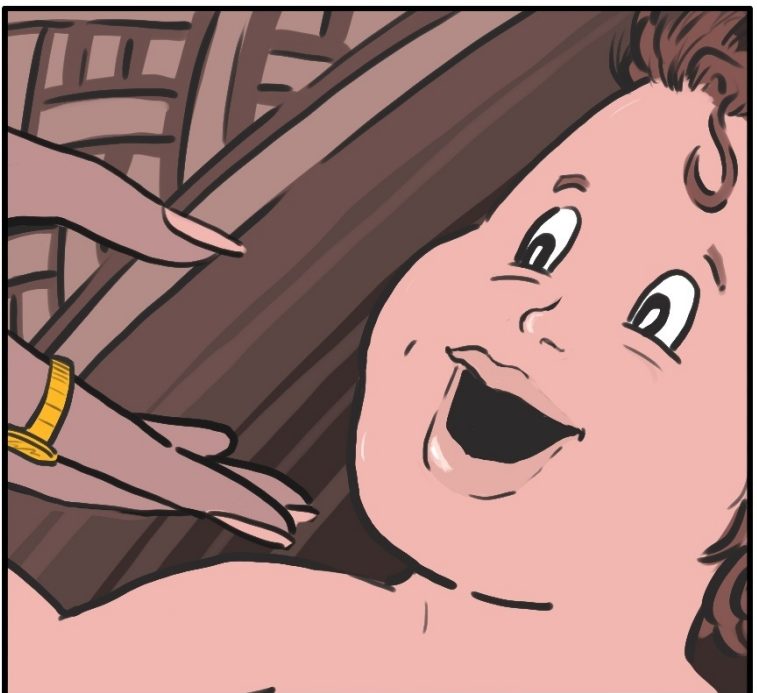
In the first chapter of Exodus, we see Pharaoh was **disturbed** by the Israelites who had become numerous and **afraid** they would rebel.



So he passed an order that all male Israelite children must be killed. Now this scheme originated from the devil. He has **always** sought to destroy the Jews through history. But, like we saw in Genesis, we see here how **God** turns the tables on Satan again



If that order had not been passed, Moses' mother would not have put him in a little basket and floated it down the river



But she did so with a **prayer** to God and Moses was picked up by Pharaoh's daughter and Moses grew up in the palace - the place where God wanted him to be trained in the first 40 years of his life. **All this would not have happened if Pharaoh had not passed that evil law.** So we see God fulfills **His** purposes through using Satan's evil work.

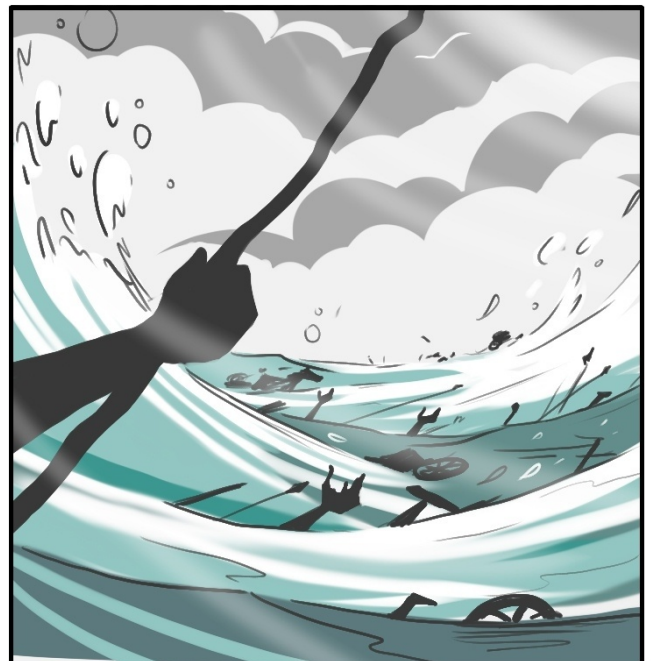
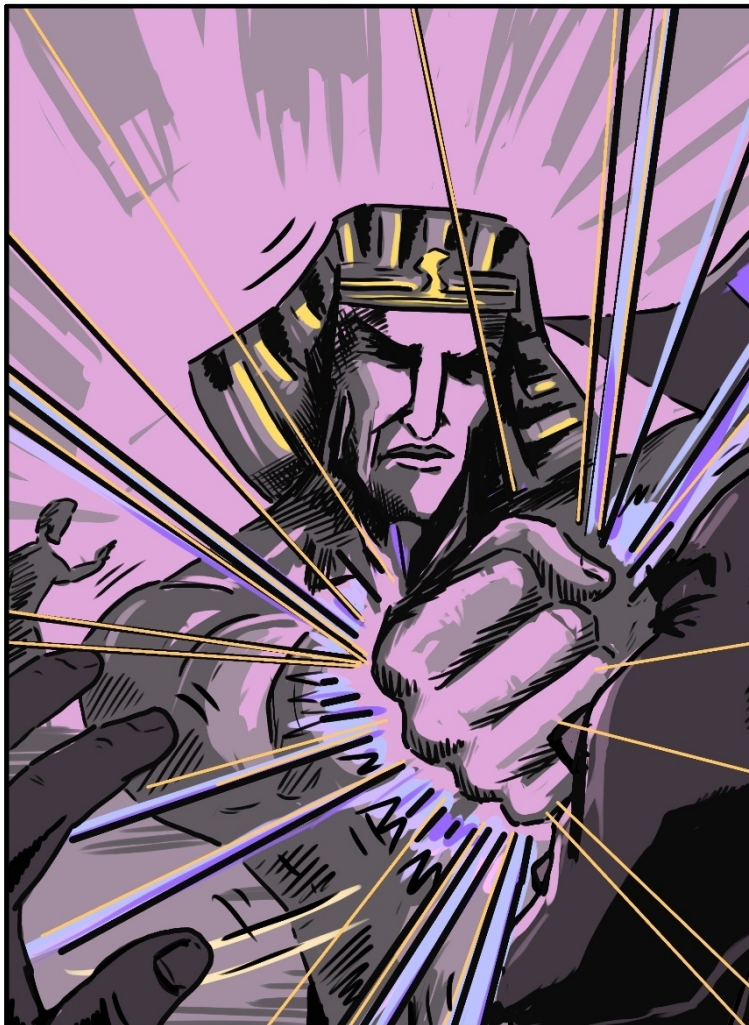


So Moses grew up to be a **mighty** military leader, an eloquent **speaker**, a very rich man mighty in both word and deed. But the **best** education in the most advanced superpower in the world those days, could not qualify Moses for **God's work**.

All his earthly fame and abilities could **not** prepare him for God's task. Today many Christians imagine that they can serve God just because they have **Bible-knowledge, musical ability and plenty of money**. He thought he was ready, but He was **not**! This is the lesson we learn from the lives of Jacob and Moses. 40 years of the best the **world** could offer could **not** prepare Moses for God's service.



God had to take him through **another** 40 years in the wilderness, making him look after his father-in-law's sheep. God **broke** Moses' human strength through this **humbling** experience. At the end of it, this mighty, eloquent man says "I am **unfit**, send somebody else". Then God said "He was **ready**".



But when He was in Egypt Moses **thought** he was ready and tries to deliver the Israelites. He was really **strong** but imagine how **long** it would have taken to kill all the millions of Egyptians at that rate! Moses would have died before that. But **when God had broken him**, all Moses had to do was to lift up his rod over the Red Sea and the whole Egyptian army was destroyed. **That is the difference between man's own strength and what he can accomplish in God's strength**.



This the message from the beginning. You have to be **broken** to build the church. Now Moses was broken and he thought he was not ready but this is when **God called** him to fulfil **His** purposes.



To encourage him, God gave Moses three signs. For the first sign, God told Moses to throw down his staff and it became a snake. This shows us that Satan is **closer** to us than we think, causing **misunderstandings** between husband and wife, between co-workers etc. But he is a **defeated foe!** We need **not** be afraid of him. We are to run away from **temptation** (2 Timothy 2.22) but Satan must run away from us! (James 4.7). In Jesus' mighty name, the very thing that Satan uses to frighten will become a **rod of authority** in our hand. The first thing Moses needed was authority over **Satan** who **actually** was enslaving the Israelites **through Pharaoh**.



For the second sign, God asked Moses to put his hand into his bosom, when he took it out it was leprous. God's servants need to understand that **nothing good dwells in our flesh** (Romans 7.18) If we don't ask God to give us **light** on our spiritual leprosy of **selfishness** and **corruption**, we will go around **condemning** others, as though they had a flesh **worse** than ours. **Nobody** can commit a sin we are incapable of. If we have not done such great sins it is only because of **God's mercy**.



For the third sign the Lord asked Moses to pour some water from the Nile into the ground and it became blood. The Nile was the **precious** god of the Egyptians and a symbol of all that the **world runs after**. We must pour it all out to death. The world is **no longer** like water to a servant of God, but like **blood**, that **no one** would be tempted to drink.



God had **one** man who He had trained for 80 years, who was **absolutely** essential for his purposes. Yet God tried to **kill** him because there was **disobedience** in His own house. He had not circumcised his son. He needed to lead his **home** before leading Israel out.

Such was the man who stood before the world's most powerful man. When we stand before God with a **clear conscience**, what is Pharaoh but **dust with breath in his nostrils**.



If we **don't know** God, the **only** way to survive is to **butter** earthly authorities to gain favour but Paul said "If I seek to please man, I **cannot** be a servant of God. God is looking for men who don't care for man's **approval**, who don't want man's **money** or **backing** from any earthly authority. **God backs them**.



Then God confirmed Moses' words with plagues. Some of them were duplicated by the **tricks** of the Egyptian **magicians**. But their tricks **failed** after a certain point. **Religious** people who have a form of godliness **without** power have always opposed godly men in **every** age just like Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses. (2 Timothy 3: 5, 8)



The **religious false** prophets opposed Elijah and Jeremiah. **Pharisees** opposed John the Baptist and Jesus. Throughout church history, professional preachers **oppose** God's men tooth and nail but God's prophet **does not change** his message to **please** the professional religious **establishment**. He will be **vindicated** like Moses in the **end**.

We then read, in chapter 12 , about the **deliverance** of Israel from Egypt. They were told to use a bunch of **hyssop** and put the **blood** of an **unblemished** lamb on the door to escape the angel of **death**. This is a picture of **faith** applying the blood of **Christ** to our hearts. Hyssop was a common plant , **easy** to find. Faith too, is **easy** to find.



The Israelites left Egypt on the 14th day of the first month of their new calendar and the Lord Jesus was crucified on the **same** day around 1500 years later! How were they delivered? Not by their good life or good works. God checked to see if they had the **faith** to put the blood on the door. When the Israelites dipped the hyssop in blood and put it on their doors they were saying " we **do not trust** in our **good** works but in the **blood** of this **innocent lamb**."



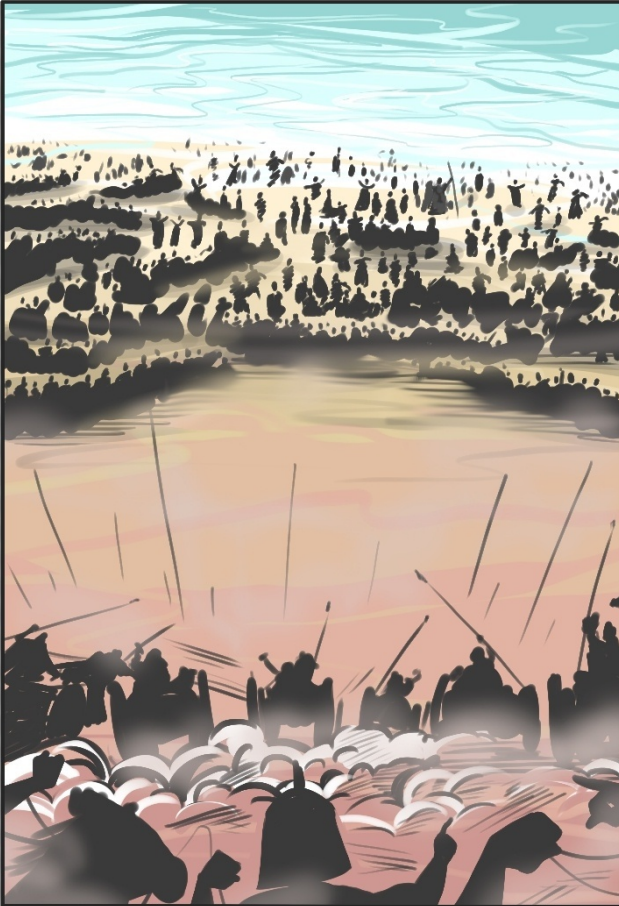
This is the way of salvation. That night the **bad** man and the **good** man who put the blood on their doors were saved **if** somebody in Israel had thought " I've lived a good life. I don't believe God will judge me " and therefore **did not** put the blood on the door , what then? The angel of death would have killed his eldest son as well.



After putting the blood on the door, the Israelites were all commanded to eat unleavened **bread** that night. That is a picture of our **feeding** on **Christ Himself**, the Bread of Life. We must **trust** in His blood but also **feed** on His **Life**! We are reconciled to God through His **death** and saved by His **life** (Romans 5.10). They were instructed to eat the bread in their **travelling** clothes - with a **readiness** to **leave** Egypt away a moment's notice. **That is how we are called to live in this world too** - always ready to go, as soon as Jesus calls us up to meet Him. This world is **not** our home.



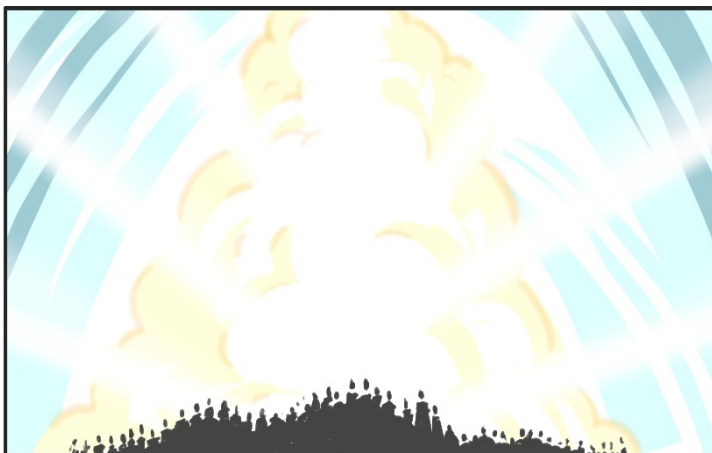
While it is **certainly** wrong for **us** to ask for money from unbelievers , it was **right** for **them** because they had worked for the Egyptians for 430 years without getting their wages. Here we see the **righteousness** of God that catches up.



When the Israelites reached the Red Sea they discovered they were **hemmed** in on **every** side. There was only **one** direction to look - **UP** ! When we are in **tight** circumstances like that, deliverance can come to us from only **one** place - **heaven**. The Psalmist says in Psalm 121 " I lift up my eyes to the hills. Is my help going to come from there? **No**. My help comes from the **Lord** who made heaven and earth. "



The Lord told Moses " *Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord which He will accomplish for you. The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent.* " (Exodus 14: 13, 14) The Lord split the Sea and the ground was not even **wet** on which Israelites walked on through This is a picture of **baptism in water** (1 Corinthians 10.2)



The pillar of **cloud** and **fire** also came down from heaven giving them light and protecting them from their enemies. This is a picture of baptism in the **Holy Spirit and fire**. This was the **3- fold** experience - redemption by the **blood** , baptism in the **water** and in the **Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit was given to **help** the Israelites **conquer** the **giants** and occupy the **God-given** land of Canaan. Today we need the Holy Spirit to conquer the **lusts** in our body which **belongs** to the **Lord**

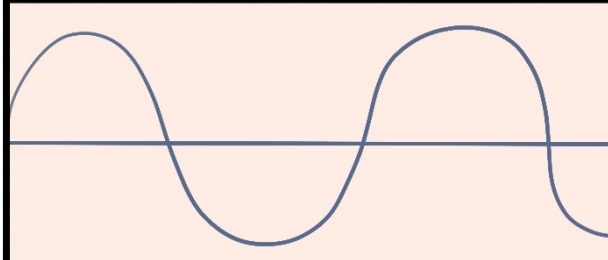




Thus after Moses raised his staff, the waters closed back up and the Egyptian army was **drowned** Psalm 106 : 12 says when the Israelites saw the Egyptians dead , **THEN** they sang God's praises.

This is how the man of **sight** walks. The man of **faith** says " Lord , you prepare a table in the **presence** of my **enemies** " . The new covenant Christian praises God in faith , **before** he sees the answer to his prayer. We are **not afraid** of the defeated foe, Satan or his agents in the world who may **try** to harm us.

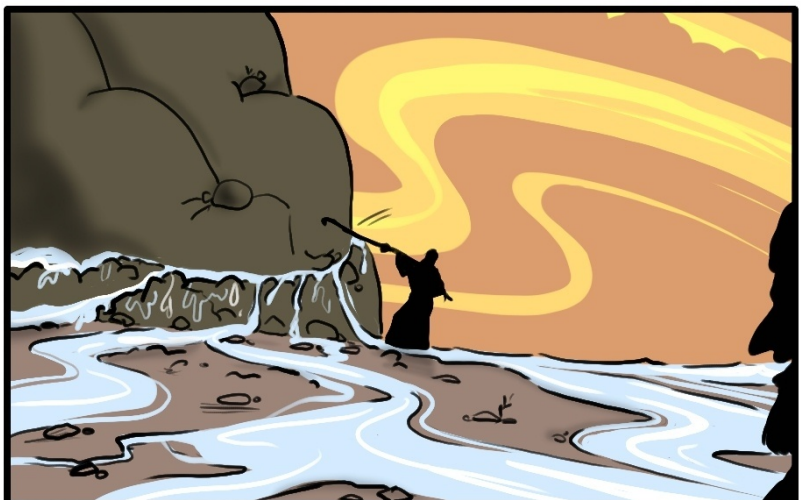
We read of Israel in the wilderness, in chapter 15 onwards. When they came to the bitter waters of Marah, they began to **complain**. They had just **praised** God for delivering them from the Egyptians but **now** started complaining again. The man of **sight** complains again and **again**. The man of **faith** praises and thanks God



Exodus 15 begins with the Israelites praising God and ends with them **grumbling**. This pattern is **repeated** by them in wilderness. The " **sine wave** " in mathematics, that goes **up and down** , is the perfect description of the lives of **most** believers - praising God when we get what we want, complaining when something goes wrong. We praise God in **other** tongues on Sunday but complain and grumble in our **mother** tongue the rest of the week.



Rejoicing in the Lord is His **will** for us. We can only do that by **faith** trusting that God has **already** planned a **solution** for every problem. The solution to the Israelites' problem too was **right there**. The Lord had planted a tree perhaps a **100 years earlier** ! **No** problem can crop up that surprises God who is **silently** planning in love for us ! (Zephaniah 3 : 17)

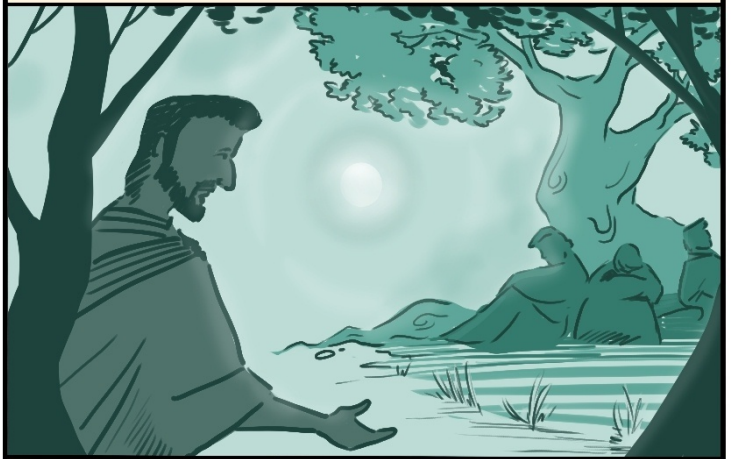


In Chapter 17 we see the Israelites grumble **again** because they had no water to drink. Moses smites the rock and water begins to flow resulting in **many** rivers flowing to satisfy the thirsty millions of Israelites. This is a picture of the **Spirit**- filled life that flows from the " **smitten** rock " , the crucified man, **Jesus** (John 7 : 37 - 39) We must be **broken** by God to be a **blessing**

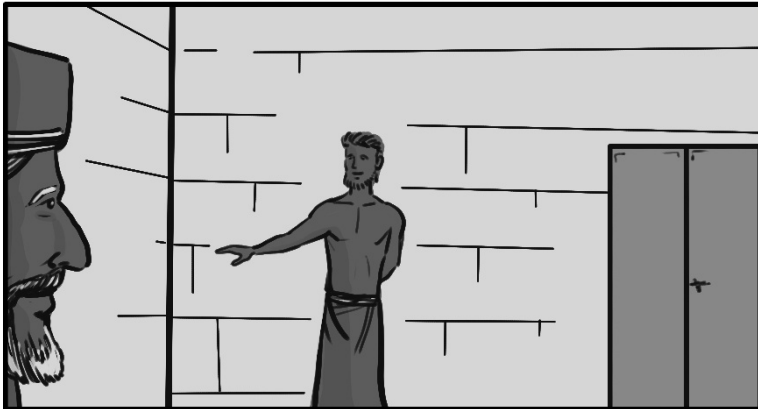


Immediately after the rivers began to flow, Amalek, a picture of the **flesh** came. The flesh and the Spirit are in **constant** conflict. Moses' hands were lifted in **prayer** to God recognizing his **weakness**

But when Moses got **tired**, he needed his hands to be **supported** by Aaron and Hur. We need our **fellow believers**. Aaron and Hur were not as **gifted** as Moses and did not **know God** as Moses did but he **needed** them.



One of the great truths in the Christian life is that **we cannot make it alone**. We need our **fellow-believers** in the body of Christ. Aaron may have been a leader, but Hur was an **unknown** man who never appears again in the Scriptures. Let us not **despise** the **weak, unknown** members of the body of Christ. Even **Jesus** asked stumbling Peter, James and John to hold up His hands in **Gethsemane**. "Even the head (Christ) does **not** say to the feet (the lowest members in the body) "I don't need you" (1 Corinthians 12:21) So the Aarons and the Hurs are to be **immensely** valued in the church.



Immediately after giving them the ten commandments, God gave the Israelites a **beautiful** parable in Chapter 21 to **teach** them the **spirit** in which they were to keep the **commandments**. He speaks of a Hebrew slave who could go free in the seventh year but stays on because he **loves** his master. He continues to serve, **not** out of **bondage** but out of **love**. Jesus said " **If you love Me, keep my commandments** " (John 14 : 15) Not a slavish obedience to the **letter** of the law but joyfully, from the heart, to the **spirit** of the law



In Exodus 15: 26 God promised them something **better** than healing if they kept His laws - **health**. This is one reason He gave them many laws on hygiene. Gluttons have themselves to blame if they fall sick due to overeating. There is **no difference** between a **drunkard** who dies **prematurely** due to **alcohol** addiction and a **glutton** who dies **prematurely** due to addiction to **good food**. God's laws can preserve us in **health**. We wouldn't need to go so often to God for healing if we begin obeying His laws. We will grow old **healthy**.

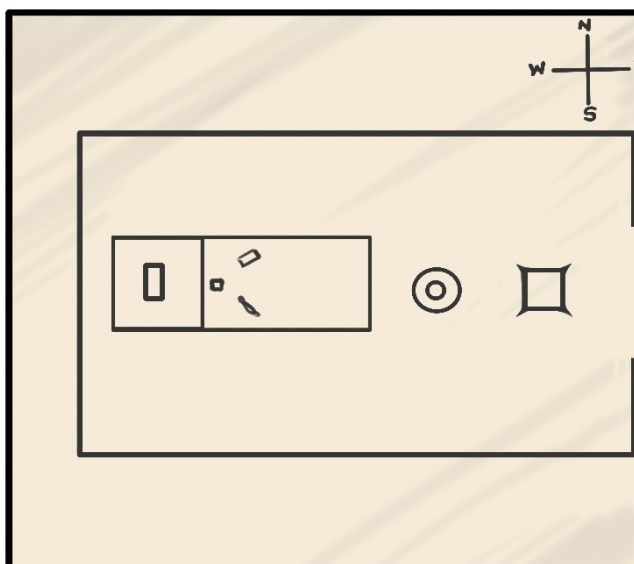


When Moses came back to the camp, *he set matters straight* and led the people *back to God*. Here he asks "who is on the Lord's side?" to *stand with him against sin*. The tribe of Levi alone stood with Moses, killing all the leaders of idolatry, *not sparing their own relatives*. This is the reason why God gave Levites the *privilege* of being His priests. Even today, God appoints, as His representatives, those who will *deal with sin* in the church *ruthlessly*.

In Chapters 32 and 33, we read about the Israelites worshipping a *golden calf* and committing *adultery* in a feast to the idol. Moses being away for 40 days was enough for the people to go *astray*. Aaron was *powerless* to control them. Israel was *preserved* in the ways of God by just *one* man - Moses. As long as he was there in the midst, they feared him and *obeyed* God's laws. This is how it has been through church history. During the 3 years that Paul was present in Ephesus, the *wolves* couldn't enter the church. The moment Paul left, the wolves entered in (Acts 20: 29-31). God is looking for men who can *arrest* the *decay* among His people, like Moses.

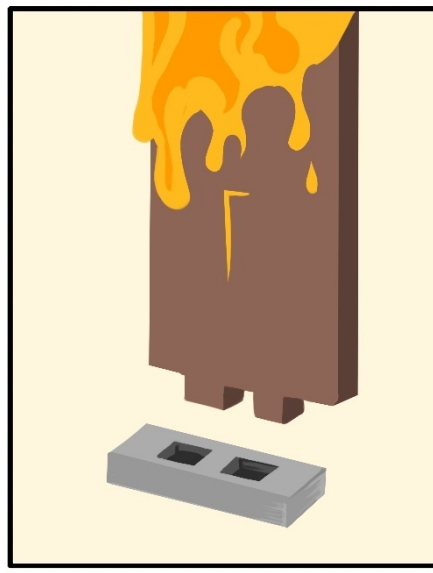
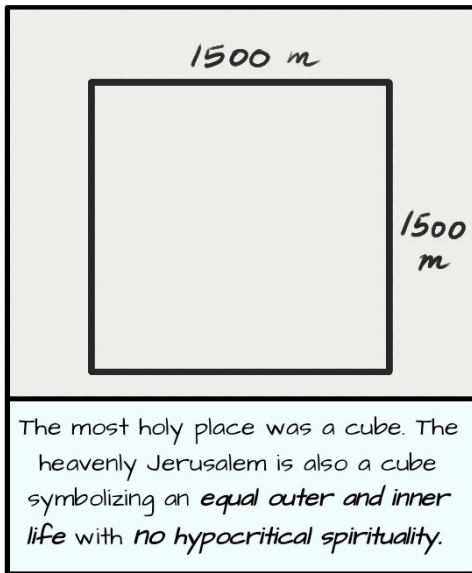


Moses had a passion for the *person* of the Lord and He wanted God *Himself* to accompany them. Then in 33:18 Moses wishes to see the *glory* of God. But Moses would only see a bit of that glory, as God hid him in the *cleft* of the rock. That glory consisted of *God's goodness*. When that glory comes into our lives, we will do *good* to *both* good and evil people.

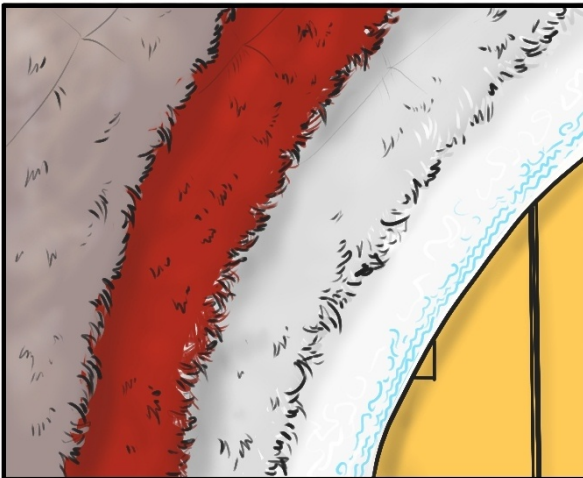


A large part of Exodus deals with the construction of the *tabernacle* of God. This is first of all a picture of *Jesus Himself*, the Word become flesh (John 1: 14) and his *body*, the ultimate Jerusalem, the *church*, the *dwelling place of God*. It is also a picture of each of *us* who are His children, in whom the *Holy Spirit* dwells. God was particular that every part of the tabernacle be made to the *exact* pattern that He gave Moses.

While Moses had seen the construction of the magnificent *pyramids*, he did not modify God's *simple* pattern of the tabernacle to make it *more* appealing. If he had done so, the tabernacle would have been more impressive but the *glory of God* would be *absent*. God's ways are higher than ours. Finally, *God must feel at home in our hearts and in the church*.

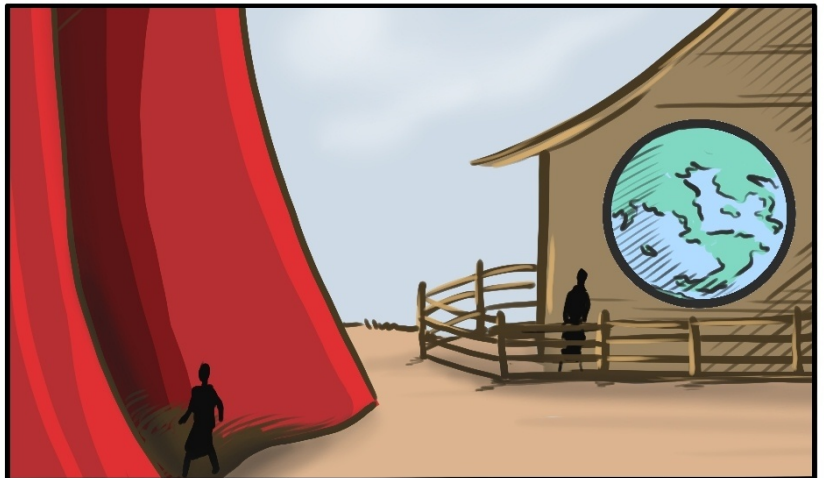


The tent of the tabernacle was constructed with cheap wooden boards overlaid with gold a picture of Jesus being both God(gold) and man (wood).It also symbolizes the members of the body of Christ, although human, have been made *partakers of the Divine nature* (2 Peter 1.4). Each board had two legs that sat in two silver sockets. These sockets speak of the *redemptive* work of Christ , who was betrayed for silver. *Faith* and *obedience* are both required for stability in the desert of this world .



The tent of the tabernacle had 4 coverings.

- 1 The innermost - fine linen symbolizing the righteousness of Christ.
- 2 - goat's skin symbolizing Christ as the scapegoat, who took our sins.
- 3 - rams' skins dyed red symbolizing Jesus , who shed His blood for us.
4. The outermost - badgers' skins symbolizing the reproach of Christ.



The true beauty of the Christian must be *inward*, not outward. Outwardly, the church will always be *misunderstood* and *dishonoured*. Jesus was *despised* and *rejected* by the world. Only those who wanted *godliness* came to Him. People should be drawn to our churches , *not* by our *wordly attractiveness or music*, but rather by our *godly* lives and *fellowship*. Those who belong to Jesus will go *to Him* " outside the camp of this world" and " inside the veil " to fellowship with God (Hebrews 13:13 and 10:19,20)

The bronze laver was a large tub for holding water, made from polished brass which was used as a mirror.



James 1:23-25 says that God's word is like a *mirror*. Christ also washes us with the word of God (as we hear and *obey* it) , so that we can serve Him in *holiness* (Ephesians 5:26).

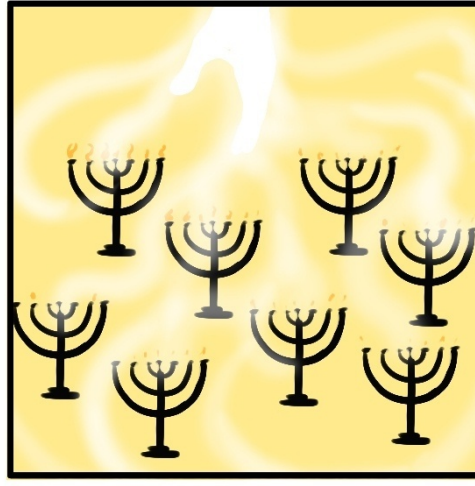


The bronze altar of sacrifice had a *sloping* ramp and no steps going up to it meaning we can go *directly to Jesus*. The altar was made of wood covered with bronze. When the bronze was hot with the altar fires, the charring of the wood *inside* could not be seen on the *outside*.

This symbolized the *inner sufferings of Christ* that *no one could see* (1 Peter 4:1) When we draw near to God, we learn more about these. The greatest of all was the *break of fellowship with His Father* on the cross which was a suffering *far* greater than the nails and the crown of thorns.

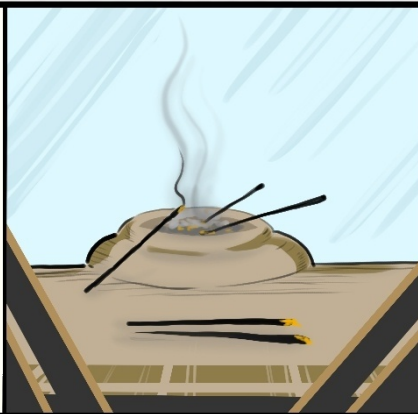


Inside the holy place, towards the northern end, stood the Golden Table of Bread. The Table had 12 loaves on it representing the 12 tribes. This represents *Jesus* as the *Bread of Life* by which we are to live. There were 12 *seperate* loaves because they *couldn't* become *one body* in the old covenant. But in the *new covenant*, we have *only one loaf* of bread, representing *Christ's body* at the Lord's table, in which we can *all* partake, because we are all *one body*, even though we are from many *different* backgrounds.



The Golden Lampstand is a picture of *Christ* as the *light* of the world and also of *us* as the light of the world. The priests ensured the lamp was *kept burning* with *oil* symbolizing our responsibility to ensure that our testimony burns bright, by the *power of the Holy Spirit*. In the old covenant, the lampstand was *only one*, with *seven branches*. But in the new covenant, we see in Revelation that each church was represented by a *seperate lampstand* and that the *Lord* walks among them as the *head of each* seperate lampstand. (Rev 1:20)

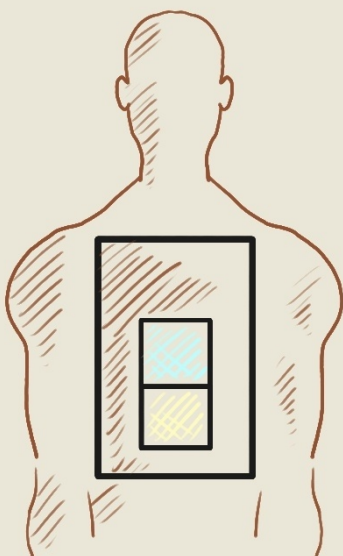
The altar of incense represents prayer in *Jesus' name* (Revelation 5:8). Prayer is an expression of *dependence* on God. This incense was to be prepared in a certain proportion *only* for the Lord and not any man. This means, first of all, we come in the *merit* of the *Lord Jesus alone*. It also symbolizes that we must *never* pray for anything for our *own* benefit, but for the *glory of God alone*.



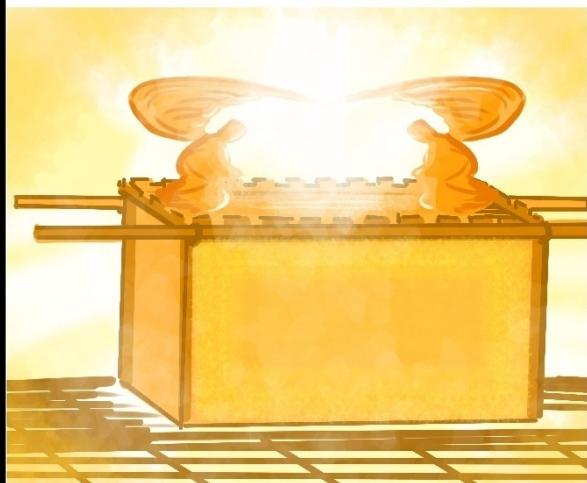
All His earthly life, Jesus attitude was " not My will, but Yours be done ". The veil of His will was torn. We might be *stirred* in *emotion* and *understand* God's will but we will *not* become spiritual till we give up our will to do God's will. This is the *secret* of spirituality.



Jesus has now *inaugurated* this new and living way (not just a door) for us - so that we can *walk on it everyday*. (Hebrews 10:19,20)



The tabernacle (the outer court, the holy place and the most holy place) was a picture of the *body, soul and spirit*. When we read the Word of God, it enters our *soul* (mind and emotions) first. But *if* it *stops* there and does not make us *yield* our *will* in *obedience* to God, then the Word cannot enter our spirit - and we *cannot grow* spiritually. The veil is our human will which must submit to God's will. Jesus came down " not to do His own will, but the will of His Father who sent Him " (John 6:38)



The most holy place contained the golden ark of the covenant with the mercy seat as a lid. This is a picture of Christ, the mediator of the new covenant between God and man. 2 golden cherubs were on it. Cherubs also guarded the tree of life in garden of Eden with a flaming sword which fell on Jesus at calvary and on us as well, since we were crucified with Christ. (Galatians 2.20)

Inside the ark, there were three things kept - the 2 tablets of stone with 10 commandments written on them, a golden pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded. Even though the manna came from heaven, if it was kept overnight, it would stink and breed worms. But this did not happen when placed in the ark !



The symbolism here is this : if God's truth is held only in our minds, it will stink after a while. But if we hold it in humility in God's presence, it will remain fresh perpetually. There is an anointing and freshness when a man who lives in God's presence preaches God's word. The same message, when spoken by another, can be as dry as dead bones. One can have an anointing from heaven and preach powerfully one day. If he loses the anointing the next day, even the very same sermon will be dry and boring. We need to live in God's presence continually.



Aaron's rod was the one that budded when the people questioned the authority of Moses and Aaron. This was kept in the ark as a reminder that God brings resurrection-life out of death, thus bearing witness to His servants. This rod also remained fresh for 40 years, like the manna, reminding us that authority also remains valid only as long as it is exercised in God's presence.



Then we see details regarding the dress of the High Priest, who is a symbol of Jesus, our High Priest.

The first layer was a tunic made of fine white linen symbolizing the righteousness of Christ. Over this was a blue robe with pomegranates and bells at the bottom, symbolizing the fruit and gifts of the Spirit. We need both to serve God effectively.

On top of this was a colourful Ephod with the shoulder plates, a 12 stoned breastplate representing the 12 tribes and the "Urim and Thummim" (exact meaning unknown) which were used to find God's will like traffic lights that told the Israelites when to "stop, wait and go". These 3 items symbolized the God's power, love and wisdom in guiding us.

But on the day of atonement, once a year, the high priest entered into the most holy place wearing only a simple white dress. This symbolizes that when we go before the Lord we go in simplicity, humility and brokenness. Our holy white dress must be worn before God alone. The tabernacle (outer court, holy place and most holy place) signifies three levels we can live at, in the Christian life. Here are six examples of areas where this is expressed -

Forgiven by God	Carnal	Thanksgiving	Born of the Spirit	30 fold	Babies
serving God	Soulish	Praise	Baptised in the Spirit	60 fold	Young men
Fellowship with God	Spiritual	Worship	Led by the Spirit	100 fold	Fathers