The book of Exodus

The Long Walk to Freedom Study 13 - At home with God (Ch 40)

Introduction

This is the end of a long journey, both for the Israelites and for us! Last week in Ch 33-34 we witnessed how God re-established His covenant with His people, despite the fact they had been unfaithful. Now that God has given Israel a second chance, Moses repeats the instructions for the building of the Tabernacle (Ch 35-39). Ch 39:42-43 draws this section to a close with a blessing which indicates that things seem to be back on track between God and His people. Our final reading in Exodus, Ch 40, begins with the Lord saying to Moses, 'Now it's time to actually build the Tabernacle!' (vv1-16) Verses 17-33 then describe how Moses ordered the tabernacle to be built as per God's instructions. Our attention tonight will be focused on verses 34-38, the final words of the book. As this turns out to be the shortest study in our series, (just 4 verses!) it will give us an opportunity to reflect back on what we have learnt from Exodus as we bring these studies to a close.

Review

On Wednesday night we will watch a video that summarises the book of Exodus in just 12 minutes! But as you read the final words of the book yourself, use the questions below to help you reflect on the ground we have covered so far.

a)	What parts of Exodus have you enjoyed the most? What did you learn from these sections that made them so memorable?
b)	What have you learnt about the character of Yahweh? How have you gotten to know God better through the book of Exodus?

c) What have you learnt about yourself through these studies? (Perhaps as you have been confronted by the attitude and actions of the Israelites).

d)	If a friend asked you to sum up the message of the book of Exodus in just a few sentences, wha	at
	would you say?	

Read and think

- 1. The first half of Ch 40 repeats the detail from the end of Ch 39, which repeats the instructions for the Tabernacle which began back in Ch 35! What is the significance of all this repetition? (Hint check Ch 39:32, 42 & Ch40:16, 19, 21, 23, 25, 29, 32).
- 2. In v34 we are told that the cloud (symbolising God's presence and glory) filled the newly build Tabernacle. This cloud has been a feature throughout the book of Exodus. Complete the table below to track the purpose of the cloud so far. The first block has been done for you

	What happened	What it meant
Ex 13:20-22	The pillar of cloud (and	The cloud was their guide
	fire) went ahead of Israel	(v21)
	as they left Egypt.	
Ex 14:19-20	Once the Egyptian army	
	pursued Israel, the cloud	
	moved between them,	
	separating Egypt and	
	Israel throughout the night	
Ex 16:10-11	As the Israelites were	
	grumbling for food, the	
	cloud appeared in their	
	midst.	
Ex 19:9	When Moses was up the	
	mountain, God came to	
	him in the cloud	
Ex 34:5	When Moses is on the	
	mountain and God re-	
	established the Covenant,	
	God again speaks from the	
	cloud.	
Ex 40:34	The cloud filled the	
	finished Tabernacle	

3.	However, because the glory of the Lord filled the Tabernacle, we read that even Moses couldn't enter (v35). What does this mean for Israel? How do we experience this differently through the gospel (Matt 27:50-51)?
4.	Wherever the Israelites went, the cloud went with them, and they did not go anywhere that the cloud didn't take them (v36-38). What does that tell us about the importance of having God dwelling amongst His people?

Application

Considering that having the presence of God is the greatest privilege and joy for God's people, and that in Jesus we know that even more fully than ancient Israel, how will this truth;

• change the way you pray?

change the way you read the Bible and listen to sermons?

• change your attitude to meeting with other Christians on a Sunday, as God's presence is amongst us by His word and through His Spirit?