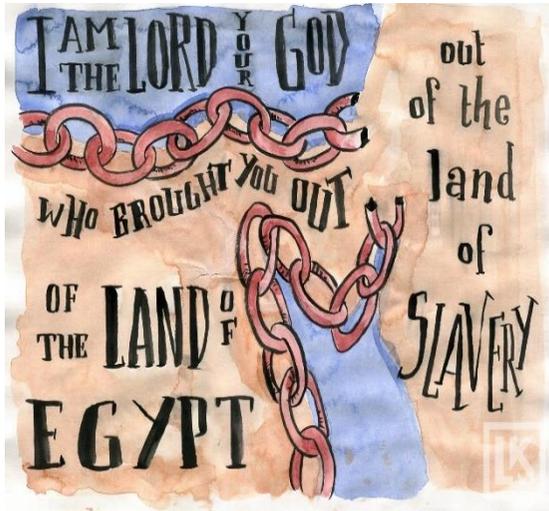


WOOLHAMPTON PARISH

'THE GOD WHO SPEAKS' – YEAR OF THE BIBLE

BRIEF GUIDE TO BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

## EXODUS



The Book of Exodus describes the formation of a people, the People of God.

Under the leadership of Moses, from being cowed

and hopeless serfs in a powerful, well-organised and hostile country a rabble escaped slaves became a coherent nation with a constitution, a protector and a purpose. The covenant made with them by God and the way of life dictated by it would shape Israel down through the ages. *At the breaking and renewal of the covenant, their God revealed himself to them as a loving God of forgiveness who would remain faithful and would continue to save them from their infidelities and rebellions*

This book, fundamental to Israel's way of life, consists of folk history and laws. It is impossible to re-establish the exact historical events of the departure from Egypt, Israel retained

the memory of the "strong right arm of the LORD" which forced Pharaoh to let them go and frustrated attempts to recapture them, but their numbers, their route and the date remain obscure. The most likely Pharaoh of the Exodus is Ramses II (1290-1224 BC), the powerful and long-lived monarch whose monuments are still visible in Egypt today.

*Above all, they remembered their experience of God on Mount Sinai, a manifestation of God described in terms of earthquake, thunder and lightning, when God took them once and for all to himself, giving them a covenant and law by which to live as his own people.*

The earliest code of law, the laws of a nomadic people, still wandering in the desert of Sinai, is laid down in the Book of the Covenant. The *basic aims of these laws are to honour and worship this awesome God and to treat all human beings with respect as his chosen ones.*

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(from *The Bible – A Reader's Guide*, by Henry Wansborough)

**Now read Exodus chapter 3 or chapter 19**

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