

Coach House Church BEACONS

THE GREAT ESCAPE

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A couple of years ago, just before my friend got married, we went to an "Escape Room" as part of her hen do. If you like solving mysteries and puzzles, you would like the escape room. Let me tell you what it is if you are not familiar with it: An Escape Room is a leisure activity where you pay for someone to lock you in a room especially arranged for this purpose. There you have to find codes and clues hidden around the room and put the puzzle together to be able to get out again. This all has to be done within a certain amount of time. It was good fun, and as a result of us working together we managed to get out.

This game mimics dangerous circumstances from the life of Ethan Hunt from Mission Impossible or James Bond. People like you and me would normally not have to get out of a lab before it explodes or find a code to disarm an atomic bomb before it destroys the world.

In the bible we find lots of examples in which people manage to escape tricky and sometimes dangerous situations in more or less miraculous ways.

If we look at Moses we see that even as a baby, he escaped death because his mother hid him when the Pharaoh of Egypt wanted all male babies from the Jewish community to be killed. Then later in life he escapes to another country after killing an Egyptian defending a fellow Israelite. We find this account in Exodus 2.

Fast forwarding 40 years, Moses comes back to help the Jews escape Egypt after 430 years, most of which was spent in slavery. In this

circumstance God had to use unusual ways to persuade the pharaoh to let the Jews go. Pharaoh was unwilling to let them go because they worked for him, they were his slaves. If you want to read about this account you find it in Exodus from chapter 7 to chapter 12.

Later, Joshua and Caleb escape the soldiers who were looking for them when they were spying the country the Lord promised them, by hiding in Rahab's house. This happened in the city of Jericho and we can read about it in Joshua 2.

Ehud is another interesting character who escaped unseen and undetected after killing Eglon the king of Moab who, at that time, had conquered Israel and was asking them to pay tribute. Ehud was left handed and therefore his sword was strapped on his right hip to which nobody paid any attention. That's how he managed to get in to the king's presence with a sword. He then told the king that he's got a secret message for him. The king asked his servants to leave him alone with the messenger; Ehud killed him then locked the door from inside and got out through the porch. When the servants came to check on the King, they thought he locked the door to have a rest or use the toilet. After a while they realised something was not right. When they got in they found their king dead. This account is recorded in Judges chapter 3.

In Judges chapter 16 we find Samson escaping the locked city of the Philistines by ripping off the gates from their hinges.

In the New Testament, in the book of Acts we read about Peter, Paul and Silas who escaped prison by an angel guiding them out miraculously, or chains falling off them and doors opening - which is equally miraculous.

We can see a thread going through all these escapes which is God's plan. Nothing happens without his control or without him knowing, he is able to fit even people's mistakes into that plan. God's plan weaves lives together in a pattern beyond our understanding. If people are obedient they are able to be part of his plan this even without seeing or understanding the bigger picture. This though, requires faith and absolute trust

God can use extraordinary means to carry out his plan often when we least expect it, when our dependence and attention are focused on Him rather than our problems, he is able to offer help in unexpected ways; He can use our problems and difficult circumstances to build us up in love and knowledge of Him.

From the beginning God's plan was to reunite us to himself. The chasm created by our disobedience has been bridged by the cross where God the Father sent his son Jesus to die, to remove the sin that was separating us from our creator.

I would like to encourage you today to align your wants with God's will for your life. I'll encourage you to quieten your heart and to listen to what God has planned for you. If you are willing to follow and obey the Lord, He will take you on the adventure of your life.

The greatest escape in the whole history was when Jesus conquered the grave. Because of this victory over death, He made it possible for us to escape death as well and join him and the Father in eternity just by believing in the death and resurrection of Jesus.



ALINA ADSHEAD



Coach House Church

leadership@coachhousechurch.org // 0161 432 5604

the coach house church, 222 wellington road north, stockport sk4 2qn