



## **BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS**

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

**A1587 ~ A Great Work for God.**

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*Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.*

Everyone loves to celebrate their birthday, with special food, family and friends. In most countries, there are national holidays and celebrations to remember some special event. God gave the Israelite people seven feasts, or appointed times, for holy purposes that needed remembering each year. At such times, the people come together to worship Him and remember what He had done for them.

The Jewish feast best known to Christians is called 'Passover' and at this time, people remember that the Lord Jesus died on the cross at the same time that the Passover lambs were being killed in the Temple. Christians call their remembrance of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection 'Easter.' As there are different methods of working out the dates, sometimes Easter and Passover aren't celebrated at the same time and can be as much as three weeks apart.

In today's Bible Adventure, an appointed gathering called The Feast of Tabernacles was about to be celebrated. The building of the walls of Jerusalem was just finished and it was time for the Israelites to come together to dedicate them to God. The people came from the cities of Judah to praise God and honour Him.

Tabernacles, which means "temporary shelters", is the last of seven Jewish feasts and is mentioned in the Scriptures more than any of the others. It's the most important and most joyful feast of them all. This celebration reminds the people of the 40 years their ancestors lived in temporary shelters in the wilderness before they entered the Promised Land.

Sometimes this feast was called “The Feast of Ingathering” as by the time of this celebration, all the crops had been harvested and gathered into storage.

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DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound](#).

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When elderly Ezra climbed to the wooden platform to teach the people what the book containing the Law of Moses said, he was helped up by the priests and Levites. Together, they explained to the people all the things God wanted them to do. None of the people themselves had a copy of this book to read, so they needed to be taught.

Those who lived outside Jerusalem and travelled there to celebrate the seven feasts held annually didn't have much help remembering the teaching they heard in Jerusalem's Temple.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the local houses of public assembly called synagogues used in the cities outside Jerusalem for prayer and Scripture reading weren't built until the last century before the Lord Jesus was born. No wonder most people forgot their promises to God and lived to please themselves!

The forgetfulness is part of the reason why Christians are encouraged to read a section of their Bibles every day. If a small portion is remembered and stored in their hearts, their souls will be strengthened by God's truth. This development of a good conscience would remind them not to sin when tempted by Satan.

Ezra came to the part of the book where instructions were given to build shelters for the Feast of Tabernacles. The people went out into the countryside to gather branches to make themselves a shelter in and around Jerusalem. Each day for a week, Ezra taught from the book. The people could see that God had not forsaken them but instead, forgiven them for their many times of breaking His rules.

Under the leadership of Nehemiah and Ezra, the people made an agreement to serve God faithfully and loyally. They agreed to pay a tax to support the Temple's needs for holding worship ceremonies. They agreed not to intermarry with people from other countries. They were to marry from the descendants of the children of Israel only. They also agreed to refrain from buying and selling goods on the Sabbath rest day. And they were to pay a tithe or one tenth of their income to God to show their loyalty and trust in His provision and faithfulness.

From far back in civilization, the kings of smaller cities paid a 'tenth tax' to the regional ruler to show him their loyalty. In return, the regional king was required to protect those who had paid their tithe. In the Bible, it's recorded that Abraham paid a tenth of the spoils of a particular battle to the king of Salem, the city that later became known as Jerusalem.

In the New Testament Scriptures, there's no command for Christians to tithe. Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are asked to be generous and give sacrificially.

In 2nd Corinthians, Chapter 8, the Apostle Paul spoke about the church at Corinth sharing their surplus with the starving Christians in Jerusalem. This sharing with others is sometimes extremely important.

In stories from survivors of the Nazi death camps, an attitude of determined giving was one of the things that distinguished the survivors from those who had perished. If a prisoner was on the verge of starvation, but he had a crust of bread or a scrap of a potato that he wanted to share with his comrade in suffering, he was psychologically and spiritually capable of surviving.

One survivor described it this way: "In our group, we shared everything and the moment one of our group ate something without sharing it, we knew it was the beginning of the end for him."

Most of us don't see such extreme circumstances in our daily lives. But if we have the attitude that "everything I possess is all my own," then we need to think again. God made the world and He owns it. He made the people to be caretakers of His world and to use its benefits for the good of all people. Sharing is the opposite of selfishness and fear.

After the Feast of Tabernacles was over, the people stayed the next day for a solemn closing ceremony. The dedication of Jerusalem's walls is listed in Nehemiah, Chapter 12, and seems to have been held after the seven days of the feast. On this occasion, there was a big procession of priests, Levites and people. Nehemiah divided them into two groups. He led one group and Ezra the other in the opposite direction on top of the wall. They met and gave thanks to God in the Temple. It was a time of great rejoicing and the singing could be heard far away.

Twelve years passed while a lot of organizational work was done for running the Temple smoothly and building many more houses inside the city walls. Nehemiah's role in establishing the people into a nation was finished, so he returned to Babylon to serve the king of Persia again. Would the people remain true to God without Nehemiah's strong leadership to guide them?

It must be noted that although the people lived relatively free lives, they were still a province of Persia. When King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon destroyed Jerusalem, the Jewish people never regained their sovereignty to rule themselves until the modern state of Israel was declared in 1948. They ended up being ruled by Gentiles (or non-Jews) for over 2,500 years. If their loyalty to God had been stronger as the Bible tells us, this may have quite been different.

On loyalty, one writer said: “Christian service is not our work; loyalty to Jesus is our work. The idea is not what work we do for God, but that we are so loyal to Him that He can do His work through us.” ‘Loyalty’ is a word not used very much these days but means being faithful at all times and especially when things are difficult. Pray to God sincerely about your loyalty, and ask Him to help you be loyal and true to Him all the days of your life.

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MUSIC - [Integrity Music](#).

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That was Rick Riso singing “Give unto the Lord glory”

*The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.*

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