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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1828 ~ The Ten Commandments.

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

In today's *Bible Adventure*, the Israelite people arrived at Mount Horeb, which is often called Mt Sinai and the place where God had appeared to Moses in a burning bush. It was here that God had promised Moses that the Israelites would escape Egypt and worship Him there one day on that mountain.

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

The Israelite people camped at Mt Sinai for 11 months and during that time, Moses taught them God's laws for when they would take up permanent residence in Canaan and build houses for themselves. God made a treaty, or covenant agreement, with them. God had previously made a covenant with Abraham as an individual but this time the Mt Sinai covenant was with the Israelite nation as a whole.

God wanted to establish a written standard of righteousness for the Israelite nation, which was at this time about 2 million people. God wanted them to be a holy nation, so the people needed to know exactly what God meant by 'holy.' God also wanted them to know what sinful behaviour was and that sin mattered very much to God. If they were sinful, He in His holiness couldn't dwell among them.

This Mt Sinai covenant was made between Israel alone and God alone. It never cancelled Abraham's covenant, which relied on Abraham trusting and obeying God's commands. But it wasn't Abraham's obedience but rather his faith in the Lord which God credited to him as righteousness. Faith is primary in trusting God and our obedience grows out of faith. Thus God says in the Bible that salvation in Christ comes by faith, and not obedience.

In Galatians, Chapter 3, it says: "Now, it is clear that no one is put right with God by means of the Law, because the Scripture says, 'Only the person who is put right with God through faith shall live'. But the Law has nothing to do with faith."

In time, the Israelites tried to use the law as a means of gaining acceptance from God by earning their salvation and redemption by obeying the law. They'd changed the 'faith' basis of Abraham's covenant to become a 'works and merit' basis in the Mt. Sinai covenant. This means that the people tried establishing and justifying their own form of righteousness through their works but before God, this method is always doomed to failure.

There's only one righteousness that is God's. God's righteousness comes through faith and not by our works. In Romans, Chapter 3, it says: "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe." And this is why Christians are no longer under the law. Jesus has freed them by meeting all the demands of the law and then redeeming us from our wretched, helpless state to become people who can stand boldly in Christ before the throne of their Father God!

Israel's Mt. Sinai covenant made the Israelites into a priesthood nation for God and this covenant was added as a temporary institution until Jesus Christ came to live on earth and introduced His new covenant. Jesus' covenant was and is far superior to all prior covenants, as all who become believers in the Lord Jesus are not under the rule of the Mosaic Law and can find Jesus without becoming a Jew first. The Apostle Paul stated this truth very clearly in the New Testament, but in spite of this, there are still people who insist that the Ten Commandments remain part of doctrine to be observed by Christians in order to please God.

Whether people be Jew or non-Jew, whoever gives themselves to God by asking for forgiveness of all their sins, thanking Jesus for paying their sin debt on the cross and agreeing to follow God's plan for their lives, the Holy Spirit will come and live in them. This is Jesus' new covenant given to both the Jews and non-Jews when He lived, died and rose again on earth.

As a result, the believer in Jesus will grow spiritually by prayer, Bible study and fellowshiping with other believers. And in time, the fruit of the Holy Spirit becomes evident in their lives too. In Galatians, Chapter 5, it says: "But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self-control. There is no law against such things as these." And believers in Christ know that they are to treat other people with due respect and care. It's not for them to steal or tell lies to gain an advantage for themselves.

Let's consider what God taught the Israelites when He established the Ten Commandments as the moral section of the Mosaic Law as recorded in Exodus Chapter 20. The first of the Ten Commandments says: "You shall have no other gods before Me." There's only one true God for all time but at that time in history, which is similar to ours now, the Israelites lived among people who worshipped many gods. If they weren't careful, they could easily slip into worshipping these gods also. Christians are aware that they can make money and possessions into replacements for God in their minds and that these can easily be put ahead of their Heavenly Father. Whatever it is that we love, value and honour more than the one true God, becomes a god to us.

Having the first commandment deal with the object of our worship, the second says: "You shall not make for yourself an idol." This deals with the manner of our worship. Since God has no visible form and is greater than anything that we can imagine, any idol that we make as a substitute for God is an insult to Him. The Lord is a jealous God, but not the way that humans get jealous, but as a reflection of His love for His people and His desire for their exclusive love in return. God's covenant is like a marriage relationship: He doesn't tolerate His bride being led astray.

God divides people into 2 groups: those who hate Him and those who love Him. Every human being falls into 1 of these 2 groups. There's no neutral group in the middle because no one can be neutral about God. To 'hate' simply means to deny Him, doubt Him, disobey Him and be indifferent to Him. Sadly, that group contains the majority of the human race.

The third commandment, “You shall not misuse the name of the Lord,” shows that God’s name stands for His very person and character. Because He is truth, we mustn’t use His name lightly or casually, or swear falsely in a court of law. We can also misuse the Lord’s name when we honour Him with our voices but not within our hearts. We also misuse His name when we engage in any kind of pretend devotion to God. The Lord knows our hearts and He’ll judge us accordingly. The most terrible misuse of God’s name is to deliberately dishonour or insult God. This is known as blasphemy and under the Mosaic Law, was punishable by death.

The fourth commandment, “Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy,” shows how God set aside a day of rest each week. He Himself gave us that example at the end of Creation week. That day is to be devoted to God and not to be filled with the normal activities that take place during the other 6 days of the week. Each person is to set aside a period of time to be dedicated to the worship and service of their God.

The early Christians changed the Sabbath from the 7th day of the week (that’s Saturday) to Sunday, the first day of the week, to remember the resurrection of the Lord Jesus which took place on a Sunday. Sunday soon became known as the ‘Lord’s Day.’ But to the Israelites, the Sabbath has remained a sign of their covenant relationship with God.

The fifth commandment, “Honour your father and your mother,” meant that people were to value, respect and care for the older members of their family. For those living in the same house, this would include obeying them. In Deuteronomy, Chapter 5, God added a blessing for those who honoured their parents, which said: “... so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land,” which was the Promised Land of Canaan.

The sixth commandment, “You shall not murder,” was based on the fact that men and women are created in God’s image. The word ‘murder’ means to ‘kill deliberately’ but this doesn’t apply to animals. Neither does it apply to accidental killing, killing a person in self-defence or prison executioners under direction of their superiors. But it does apply to killing oneself in suicide, as against God’s law. Jesus taught that ‘murder’ was not only an external act, but an internal attitude in God’s sight; as desiring to murder is as bad as doing it physically.

The seventh commandment, “You shall not commit adultery,” meant in Old Testament times that sexual relations between a married woman and a man who was not her husband made them both guilty of adultery. However, the Lord Jesus had a much higher standard for marriage relationships; He enlarged the meaning of adultery to deal with (in certain circumstances) divorced people remarrying. Adultery defiles marriage, which God holds sacred.

The eighth commandment, “You shall not steal,” brings us to the understanding that God owns everything and those who steal are ultimately stealing from Him. When we steal, we hurt our neighbour instead of loving our neighbour, as God commands. Those who steal from someone else are required to restore or compensate the injured party in accordance with the value of the stolen property. Stealing can be less obvious and hidden by withholding wages, not paying a debt or depriving a person of his or her rights.

The ninth commandment, “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour,” teaches that we must not speak falsely or tell lies. God is a God of truth and when we despise the truth, we also despise God Himself. Some people speak falsely in an attempt to benefit their neighbour; such untruths are sometimes called ‘white lies’. Telling lies cannot be justified, as good motives don’t justify wrong actions. Paul put it positively in Ephesians, Chapter 4, by saying: “Speak the truth in love.”

And the tenth commandment, “You shall not covet,” is the only command that deals exclusively with our inner attitudes, rather than our outward actions. God is vitally concerned about our desires, intentions and motives. Before we do something wrong, our mind has already decided to do it. These inner thoughts show how hard it is to keep any of the Mt Sinai commandments. Can any of us say: “I’ve never coveted someone else’s possessions?” None of us can keep these commandments perfectly. In the Mosaic Law, if a person breaks one of the 613 laws given, all of them are rendered broken. James says in his book, James, Chapter 2, “Whoever breaks one commandment is guilty of breaking them all.”

We each need a new heart and that’s what Jesus came to give us. The law doesn’t give us the strength to obey it. Only the Holy Spirit working in our hearts can do that. Only with the Holy Spirit’s help can we overcome the temptations that surely come to us and be victorious over sin.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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