



## **BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS**

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

**A2233 ~ Plans for a Tabernacle.**

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

As the Israelites marched through the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land, Canaan, they followed a path set by God Himself, who led by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. However, when the people came to Mt Sinai, they camped there for nearly a year. While here, Moses taught them God's laws so they could understand that God is holy and just and He cannot tolerate sin in His presence. These particular laws governed the Israelites' worship of God, their community behaviour, justice system, their family unit, health management and what foods they could or couldn't eat.

Part of this law was God's command to the Jewish men to appear before the Lord 3 times each year to bring their offerings to Him and remember God's care of them over Israel's past. These times became times of thanksgiving and rejoicing for the people. At the beginning of their religious calendar each year they observed a gathering together known as 'The Festival of Unleavened Bread', which remembered the people's Passover and exodus from Egypt. The 'Feast of Harvest' remembered the giving of the holy law at Mt Sinai, and it became known some time later as the 'Feast of Weeks' because it was held 7 weeks after the Festival of Unleavened Bread celebration.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> gathering, the 'Feast of Ingathering' became later known as the 'Feast of Tabernacles' or 'Booths' to remember the 40 years of desert wandering that the Israelites endured before entering the Promised Land. During that time, they all lived in temporary shelters and could not set up a permanent camp. These 3 festivals were instituted by God long before any of the people owned land to grow their crops and harvest them. God also made many promises to the Israelites about their future in the Promised Land in Exodus, Chapter 23.

After Moses had received God's holy Law on Mt Sinai, Moses told the people all blessings and curses the Lord would bring depending on how the people responded to God's decrees; the people all agreed to them and they answered, "All the words which the Lord has said we will do."

Moses then supervised the sacrifices and offerings to God, which became the official start to the Mt Sinai covenant. Moses had written down God's laws and so he read out aloud the Book of the Covenant for all the people to hear. The people again said that they would obey this new covenant. After this, God requested that Moses come up to Him on the mountain again where he'd first received and written down God's law.

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God gave Moses very specific directions on what to use to make a Tabernacle or worship place for Him. They included how big to make the dwelling and what furniture to put in it. This was the first real structure of any sort to be God's holy place of worship on earth so He could live among His people. The Tabernacle was the forerunner of Solomon's Temple built nearly 480 years after the Israelites had left Egypt and some of the Tabernacle furniture was moved to Solomon's temple after it was built.

The Tabernacle was surrounded by a curtained enclosure which could only be entered by priests and Levites. The tent inside the enclosure had two rooms, one outer and one inner. The outer room was known as the 'Holy Place'. It had an altar of incense, a 7-branched candlestick and a table with 12 loaves of bread, which represented the 12 tribes.

The small inner room, known as the 'Most Holy Place', was entered by the high priest only once a year. In here stood the Ark of the Covenant, or the Covenant Box, which contained a pot of preserved manna, the tablets containing the Ten Commandments and Aaron's rod that God did a miracle through.

The Covenant Box was made of wood but overlaid with gold, both inside and out. The top had 2 golden angels facing each other with their wings outstretched and with them looking down at the mercy seat, which formed a throne for the invisible God, who had promised that He would meet the high priest there. The box had rings on the sides so the priests could carry it on poles when the whole group moved onto a new place.

In Hebrews, Chapter 9, when Moses and the people had finished building this portable structure, Moses consecrated and purified both the Sacred Tent and all the utensils that were used in it, because they were copied from a pattern existing in the heavenly sanctuary. This is why God warned Moses to make the Sacred Tent very carefully.

After its dedication, the Sacred Tent that we call the Tabernacle, was taken into the middle of the marching column whenever the people moved onto another place, with 6 tribes before it and 6 after it. The Tabernacle was placed in the middle of a circle of tribes whenever a new camp was set up. God told Moses that Aaron was to be the Israelites' high priest and that his descendants would be priests after him. Aaron was from the tribe of Levi, the 3<sup>rd</sup> son of Jacob. Others from the tribe of Levi weren't allowed to be priests, but given other duties to perform when moving the Tabernacle from place to place.

The portability of the Tabernacle had some advantages over the more permanent temples that followed. For one thing, it taught Israel to depend on God's leading, because the people were to stay in camp until God's presence as a cloud or pillar of fire indicated that it was time to move on again. How often this is the very case in our own lives, that we need to learn to wait on God and follow Him closely in wilderness situations, as well as in the good times! Later, when Israel had the more permanent structure, the Temple of Solomon, they made the mistake of thinking that the building's permanent location implied God's presence would always be with them, no matter what they did or didn't do. They forgot that the Mt Sinai Covenant was conditional on the people obeying God and His holy Laws.

The Tabernacle in the wilderness and Temple in Jerusalem, apart from both being physical places of worship, both had in common the purpose of being used to symbolise God's ultimate plan of salvation and knowing Him intimately! The sacrifices represented the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus Christ made when on earth much later. The Most Holy Place represented God's throne in heaven where the high priest (who was first a descendant of Aaron on earth but then Jesus Christ Himself later in heaven), entered to make atonement for sinful people before their righteous God.

The Old Testament Tabernacle demonstrates the continuity of God's plan through the entire Bible. There's only One True God, and there's only one true means of salvation for all humanity – and that is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus's one and only redeeming sacrifice offered up Himself as a sinless and perfect offering to His Father to pay for the full penalty of human sin. However, some people never bother to ask the Lord Jesus to be their sin bearer and so therefore, maintain their own sin debt until the end of their lives. Then they discover when it's too late, that their sin has to be paid for and that they can't possibly pay for it on their own. The only destiny left for them is to remain in the fires of hell for all eternity, which is what a sin debt deserves.

But it doesn't have to be that way. God has done everything possible to save us from the fires of hell and His righteous judgement on our depraved and selfish lives. To be saved from this, we only have to turn to Him, admitting our guilt and regret, and inviting His Holy Spirit to take up residence within us. Although you may be 'religious' and called a 'good' person, your works don't make you right with God. When, by an act of your will, you decide to let God in, a personal new relationship begins with Jesus as Lord, the Holy Spirit as guide and comforter and God the Father as our great provider.

When asked if she believed in God, one woman said, "Yes, I believe in a Creator but I don't believe in a God who takes a personal interest in His creatures." That's called 'deism', which thinks that God created the universe and wound it up like a clock before going away and letting it run all by itself. But in Colossians, Chapter 1, it says: "He (that's Jesus) is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

How can we know that the Holy Spirit is with us? There is a good number of Bible verses that remind us that this is so. In 1 Corinthians, Chapter 3, it says to those who follow Jesus and call themselves Christians: "Surely you know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you!"

And in Romans, Chapter 8: "But you do not live as your human nature tells you to; instead, you live as the Spirit tells you to – if, in fact, God's Spirit lives in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him. But if Christ lives in you, the Spirit is life for you because you have been put right with God, even though your bodies are going to die because of sin."

Some Christians don't sense God's presence with them as they go about their daily work. There are some things that we can do to make ourselves more aware of Christ's Spirit being with us. We have to cultivate closeness with the Lord on the basis that He's the most important person in our lives. So as soon as you wake up in the morning, worship Him and send Him a prayer of thanks for His care for you during the night. We mustn't neglect Him by minimising the time we give to reading the Scriptures and praying each day. If we do this first thing in the morning, there is a greater sense of God's presence and leading throughout the rest of the day.

During the day, remind yourself of how He loves us, how I love Him and how much I mean to Him. Continual small prayers in our mind keep us in constant touch. In 2 Chronicles, Chapter 16, it says: "The Lord keeps close watch over the whole world, to give strength to those whose hearts are loyal to him." God also said in Isaiah, Chapter 49, that He would never forget His people.

Down through the centuries, some Christians have practiced the 10-minute evening examination of their conscience and confessed any sins that they know that they have committed during the day. This is the same idea as 'Keeping short accounts with God.' During such a brief period of time, we can still thank Him for His presence during the day and ask Him to help us to see our lives from His point of view.

We should endeavour to remind ourselves of God's promises and His presence. Such meditations will strengthen the faith, hope and love that the Holy Spirit has put within our hearts. While the Israelites could look out their tent door and see God's presence in the camp, doing so may have caused fear – fear of doing something God didn't approve of and possibly being publicly punished for it. For the genuine believer in Christ that fear is cast out by Jesus' great love for us. Our love back to Him will grow as we confirm our loyalty to Him on a daily basis.

In the Bible book of Revelations, Chapter 21, the Apostle John wrote of a new heaven and a new earth because the first earth had passed away. He saw the holy city called New Jerusalem come down from heaven from God. John also heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.” Those who have lived with the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives in this life will be given their never-to-die bodies in the next. This was God’s plan for redeeming people all along – to live and to be with Him forever!

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

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