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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2240 ~ A Farewell to Aaron.

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

The Israelites were camped in the Wilderness of Zin, at Kadesh Barnea. The Lord wanted them to enter the Promised Land of Canaan from the east but to do that, they'd have to travel through the territory belonging to Edom, the descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother. Moses sent a delegation to the king of Edom to request permission to pass through there.

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

The Israelites now had to walk a lot further after being denied permission to cut through the country owned by the Edomites. Maps of that time show a network of major roads in that region, with one named the 'King's Highway'. Although the Israelites had a much stronger army than the Edomite kingdom, the Lord told Moses not to attack Edom but to go around its southern border. The Lord didn't want Israel to fight the Edomites or take any of their land, because He'd given that land to Esau and his descendants.

After the Israelites had travelled north-east from Kadesh Barnea a little way, they came to Mount Hor. No one is quite sure where that mountain is today. The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron at Mount Hor near the border of Edom. God told them that Aaron was to die on top of Mount Hor and his son Eleazar would become the next High Priest. All the congregation of Israelites watched the three men climb up the mountain. Sometime later, Eleazar, wearing the High Priest's robes, and Moses, came down from the mountain and the congregation realised that Aaron was dead.

Aaron was 123 years old when he died. His brother Moses and Eleazar his son, were present at his death and they buried him on Mount Hor. The entire Israelite community mourned his death for 30 days. In Numbers, Chapter 20, Miriam died several months before Aaron. This chapter marks the end of the older generation of Israelites except for Moses, Joshua and Caleb. In a few more months, it would be Moses' turn. Between the end of Chapter 19 and the beginning of Chapter 20, 38 years pass, during which time nothing is written.

The Israelites were ready to move on again. However, the king of Arad heard that the Israelites were coming his way, so he came down to fight them near Mount Hor. He attacked them, taking some of them prisoners. Then Israel made a vow to the Lord that if He helped them gain the victory, they would completely destroy their enemy's cities. Arad was a Canaanite area north of the Negev desert, which was part of the Promised Land.

The Lord listened to Israel and He gave them victory over the king of Arad. This was the Lord's battle and the Israelites were assured of victory as long as they did as the Lord commanded. The Israelites did what they promised and they completely destroyed the enemy's cities. Because of the great wickedness of the Canaanite tribes, God intended that they were to be totally destroyed. However, later in their battles with such tribes, the Israelites rarely carried out God's policy of total destruction. As a result, many Canaanites continued living in Canaan and became a major reason for Israel's later fall into idolatry and eventual removal from the land for a period of exile.

The Israelites were now again ready to move on from Mount Hor. They journeyed on in a south-easterly direction on a major road called the 'Way of the Red Sea', and they were very discouraged at such a long detour to avoid Edom. It wasn't long before they fell into the complaining ways of their fathers. But this time, they spoke not only against Moses but also against God, insulting His daily provision of manna as being miserable food.

When they expressed contempt for the manna God was providing, they were expressing contempt for God Himself. Although they didn't know it, they were also showing contempt for God's Son, who likened Himself to the manna, the bread of heaven, which gives life to the world. In John's Gospel, Chapter 6, Jesus said: "I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and are dead." Jesus had told the listening crowd: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life."

God wasn't slow to punish the Israelites. He sent poisonous snakes among the camp and many of them were bitten and died. As God had done when He sent plagues against Egypt, He used natural means in unnatural ways to carry out punishment. These second generation Israelites were quicker to confess their sin than their fathers had been. At their pleading, Moses prayed to God and God responded. He didn't stop the plague or remove the snakes but God told Moses what to do to save the Israelites from the snakes.

Moses made a bronze snake and he put it on a pole. If any person bitten by a snake looked at the bronze snake with faith that God would heal them and save their lives, they lived. In response to their faith, God saved those who looked to the bronze snake. The Lord Jesus referred to this incident in John, Chapter 3, and He used it as an example. He didn't dismiss it as a made-up story or myth. He said: "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man (that's Jesus) must be lifted up (on a cross) that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life."

What lessons can we learn from those ancient Israelites for living out our own lives for God in the 21st Century? The outstanding characteristic of God Himself is His faithfulness. He punished the Israelites when they deserved it but He graciously provided all that was needed. In Deuteronomy, Moses told the people: "And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet." The people should have noticed this and given God much praise and thanks.

God didn't ignore the troubles in the camp or just let matters be sorted out by Moses. Doing that might have led to fighting between the different tribes as in a civil war. The unity between the tribes was held together, even though it seems there was jealousy at times over the role of the priests and Levites. Does God intervene in the affairs of the nations of our times? We certainly see time and again God's punishment for nations that harm Israel. In Zachariah, Chapter 2, it says: "For thus says the Lord of Hosts, ... he who touches you (Israel) touches the apple or pupil of His eye."

If there's one constant theme in the Scriptures that report the journey from Egypt to Canaan, it was the dry desert land that had steep mountains and a great lack of water. When the Jewish people started returning to Israel at the end of the 19th Century, God blessed the land, and through water conservation and the growing of millions of trees, the weather patterns in that area have changed. Israel has now become a productive nation with exports to European countries, and even has a cut-flower industry!

When we consider the Israelite people tramping through the desert back then, we see that they often thought about themselves. Every so often, we need to ask ourselves: is it a love of God that guides our steps or a love of self? We cannot say both, as in time, one will dominate over the other. Remember what Jesus said in Matthew, Chapter 6: "No one can serve two masters ..." You see, Jesus has to be the centre of our life if we're to be spiritually self-disciplined.

If you give self your attention, then self will be drawn to the centre of your consciousness and everything will be arranged around self. So we need to fix it firmly in our minds that we cannot control the major issues of our life unless Jesus is central in it. We are to have one supreme controlling love at the centre of our lives – which is love for Jesus. If you tolerate conflicting loves, sooner or later one will increase and assume control. As a person grows toward spiritual maturity, they speak less and less about self and more and more about the Lord Jesus.

The traditional Christian view is that we draw ethics, values and ideas about how to live from the Scriptures. But at the present time, there have been an increasing number of people who have rejected the external authority of God and the Bible. Instead, they turn to their own judgments and opinions, which may be far from the truth. They don't seem to realise that it's the living out of Jesus' teaching by His true followers that's kept humanity from self-destructing. If we have hold of Jesus and He has hold of us, we have the key to understanding God, the meaning of the universe and our own lives.

When we give our hearts to Jesus in simple obedience and trust, our lives are changed, lifted, redeemed and renewed. He is the one unspent power in humanity and stands in this age as He stood in every generation. Have you prayed that your will and purpose in life might be the same as the divine will of the Saviour's for you? When we make God's kingdom and righteousness our top priority, then all necessary things in life will be added to us. And as we pray more and more for the assurance that His will and ours are not at cross-purposes, with God's will being our guide on all major and minor matters, then we'll also receive all the things we need to live a godly and contented life in the Holy Spirit.

Sadly, for many Christians, possessions are central in their lives. People need to love God for Himself and not for the fear of going to hell or the hope of getting a reward in heaven. Prayer, singing spiritual songs and reading God's Word are the best ways of getting to know God and should be more important to us than having our needs met. When in prayer, we re-adjust our lives to the Heavenly Father's will, to His Kingdom and to His name, and so we gain these benefits: He gives, forgives, leads us, and delivers us! We must always surrender to God's re-adjustment of our priorities, for if we try to get results without it, we'll get nowhere.

We can hinder the time that should be spent with God by recalling all the other things we have to do. We can say, "I just don't have time!" If you're too busy to spend time with God in prayer, you're just plain too busy. What's required is an overhaul of all the other interests that you're giving your time to. Review what is taking up too much of your time and ask for wisdom about what needs cutting out. Without spending time with God and receiving His nourishment for our hearts and minds, we're left powerless and open to spiritual attack. Let us pray for a love of God's truth as expressed in the Scriptures, living within us.

Psalm 119, Verse 11, says: "(Lord) Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against you."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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