



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:
A2232 ~ The Golden Calf.

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

Have you ever seen someone about to make a serious public mistake and wanted to stop them before they embarrassed themselves? In today's *Bible Adventure*, the newly appointed high priest of the Israelite nation did something horrible and we wish that someone could have stopped him so that he didn't do what he did.

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

After the Mt Sinai Covenant had been established between God and the Israelites, God called Moses up to the mountain again to tell him about the details for the building of a Tabernacle as a place for the people to worship Him. God told Moses that He had chosen 2 craftsmen and that He had filled them and their helpers with His Spirit to enable them to do the work just as God had commanded them to do so.

This is an important spiritual truth: whatever God calls us to do, He always gives us the ability and the means to do it. Apart from the natural abilities that we're born with, God provides the necessary things needed to do a project for Him. The Holy Spirit anoints our natural gifts and means so that the work can be done. This pattern of being enabled by the Holy Spirit until a certain task is completed was carried out throughout the Old Testament of the Bible. The Holy Spirit came on certain people at certain times and for certain purposes.

It's only in the New Testament after Jesus' death that the Holy Spirit came to dwell permanently within believers' hearts.

Meanwhile, back at the Israelite camp, the people had grown restless about not seeing Moses for 6 weeks. They imagined that something must have happened to him on the mountain and they feared they wouldn't see him again. In Exodus, Chapter 32, the people sought the help of the second-in-charge and Moses' brother Aaron, to do the deeds that they should never have even thought about. Through their actions, the people showed complete disloyalty to their merciful covenant God. Their faith in Him completely failed. Yet had God forgotten them? No, their daily ration of heavenly manna still rained down on their camp just the same.

If there was one test God gave the Israelite people during those 6 weeks of Moses' absence, it was one of patience. Even though they'd promised to obey all of God's laws going forward, their thinking quickly turned back to Egypt and their old custom of seeing visual representations of idols. This sinful thinking caused them to demand Aaron to help them make their own idol, which he did.

Aaron took the people's gold earrings, which they had brought with them from Egypt, and he melted them down to make a golden idol. The idol he crafted for them was a calf, while maintaining that the name of the Lord was somehow connected with it. What he did was to merge the pagan practices the Israelites were familiar with and the worship of the God that they were just beginning to learn about. Aaron called the people together and he told them that the golden calf was the god that delivered them from Egypt. So the people erroneously offered sacrifices and then engaged in pagan rituals to worship this new calf god. There could be no excuses to justify such a sin.

As with any other sin, the punishment of sin is death, with the only proper response being repentance and sacrifice. Moses could see that the people were out of control and that he needed to take drastic action. So he called the people together to make a decision: they could choose to be for the Lord or against Him.

People to this day are given the same decision to make. Will they be on God's side or Satan's? We can be in the kingdom of heaven, having entered by the narrow gate, or we can be in the kingdom of darkness on the broad way, which leads to destruction. Not making an active choice for one side or the other also sides with Satan because we are all born sinners and in Satan's camp until we're redeemed by faith in Jesus.

Moses called for those who were on the Lord's side to come and stand with him. The Levites stood up with him and Moses commanded them to go through the camp and kill anyone who persisted in idolatry. Three thousand men were killed that day. The Levites put the Lord and His rulership before their neighbours and friends, and for doing so, the Lord blessed them and set them apart to serve Him.

Some people in our modern times think that killing the idolaters was too harsh a punishment for the ugly sin the Israelites persisted in doing against God, but they actually brought the punishment on themselves. Moses gave them a choice to return to their covenant with their God or continue to break it. It's a bit like saying, "One rotten apple will spoil the rest in the barrel." This vile, public sin against God had to be stopped before all the Israelites turned to it and faced God's anger and punishment for their disobedience.

The next day, Moses went up and confessed the people's sins before God, asking for His forgiveness. God certainly held the people accountable for their corruption and He was ready to destroy them for their sin. But Moses' personal intercession on behalf of his people saved them. God declared that the guilty ones would yet be blotted out of His Book of Life. These were the same ones who, on the verge of entering the Promised Land, would deny God's promises and be sent out into the wilderness to die for their sins. Their children, however, would be the ones who would receive God's promised blessings.

What is God's Book of Life? It's a written list of all those who are to receive eternal salvation. Moses had so identified himself with the people that he asked God to blot out his name from the Book of Life in exchange for those who had sinned in worshipping the golden calf. Moses' offer was refused, though, because God did not allow sinful human beings to take someone else's punishment on their behalf. Each person must bear his or her own punishment. But centuries later, the perfect sinless Jesus Christ offered to die for the people of the world and His offer was accepted. Jesus died on a cross to pay for the sins of all people who put their faith in Him.

The Israelites' experiences are a lesson to us today. Even though we might justify our actions through reason or logic, if we're violating God's clear commands, we are sinning against Him. Be sure that God will hold us accountable if we don't repent quickly. God is not to be worshiped with engraved images, because any image we make draws more attention to the work of our hands than the God who made all things.

To attempt to create an image of God to worship will always fall terribly short. The Lord Jesus taught in John, Chapter 4: "God is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." We worship God by believing His Word, obeying it and declaring His greatness to others.

What is idolatry? Idolatry isn't just the making of a golden calf or some other idol object. It's also the raising of a temporary human value to the status of an absolute and eternal value. We're not idolaters because we work hard or we love our families and friends, or have a hobby that we pursue passionately. We are idolaters when we give to our families or careers or country the devotion that belongs to God and to Him alone. Whatever we treat as god is god to us. Whatever we put in the place of God, however noble or praiseworthy it might be, is nevertheless viewed as an idol by the Lord of heaven and earth.

It requires no courage at all to serve idols and our generation is very fond of idols. In your workplace or student training centre, the pursuit of quality human values creates an atmosphere in which idolatrous and false religion flourishes. It creates a religion that evaluates human worth to intellectual or physical achievements of some kind.

The god who rules achievements is a god who judges you solely by the works that you do. Moreover, this god has no memory at all. You're only worth to this god what you do now; exactly that and no more. Past achievements are gone and forgotten. Future dreams are based on our current performance. Worshipers of this god live with an anxious self-preoccupation and the plaguing question: "Have I done enough?" There are rewards for serving the god of achievements but they only last until the worshipper gets old and outdated. And when the worshipper passes away, the god of achievements abandons them altogether at their graveside.

What marks a Christian is conversion from idols to service of the true and living God. When we talk about conversion, we usually have in mind an act or decisive moment when we switched directions. The good news about our Creator God is that He is reliable and He is the truth. He raised Jesus Christ from the dead and will at the right time, raise all true believers in Jesus to dwell with Him forever.

Unlike idols, God has the power to do what He promises. And unlike idols, God never forgets any promises that He makes. He never abandons His worshippers in their distress, and He can be counted on fully to be faithful to them, even when there seems no earthly reason why He should be. At the end of our life's journey, the most precious Scripture to affirm is Deuteronomy, Chapter 33, Verse 27, which says: "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms" (of the true and living God.)

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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