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## **Bible Lesson 14 (BTJ)**

### **1. Introduction**

While the Israelites were camped at Mt. Sinai, God, through Moses, gave to them additional instructions for coming to him. God expected these instructions to be obeyed.

God told Moses to go up Mt. Sinai and he would give him tablets of stones with the Ten Commandments inscribed upon them. Moses obeyed God's commandment and went up Mt. Sinai and received the Ten Commandments written in tablets of stone.

While Moses was on Mt. Sinai, God revealed to him how he should build a tabernacle, a holy sanctuary, for his dwelling place. God gave explicit instructions to Moses for building the tabernacle. Every part of the tabernacle, every piece of furniture had to be made according to God's instructions. God would only dwell in the tabernacle if it was constructed according to his commands.

God chose Aaron and his sons to be priests. Aaron was the high priest with special duties. The other priests were lesser in rank and did the work of the ordinary priest. Aaron and his sons did not choose themselves for this work. They were chosen by God to minister to him.

While Moses was still on Mt. Sinai with God, the Israelites became impatient and asked Aaron to make an idol for them. Worshiping idols was strictly forbidden by God. Aaron knew that God hated idol worship. However, he listened to their pleas and made a golden calf for them. Then the Israelites worshiped the golden calf and credited it for their freedom from Egypt.

God was greatly angered by the Israelites' idolatry. When Moses heard how angry God was with the Israelites, he interceded for them. God was merciful to them and did not wipe them out. When Moses saw what they were doing, he threw down the tablets of stone with the Ten Commandments and broke them. He was so angry with the Israelites for their idolatry.

Later, God made new tablets of stone with the Ten Commandments and gave them to Moses for the Israelites. When the tabernacle was completed, God indwelt it and lived among the Israelites in the tabernacle.

### **2. Review**

**Setting:** At home, Oren and his family talked about God giving the Israelites the Ten Commandments.

**Oren:** When God was ready to give the Ten Commandments to the Israelites, why did they have to prepare themselves first?

**Greg:** God is holy and without any sin. The Israelites were sinners who often disobeyed God. God wanted them to think about their sinfulness and his holiness. God wanted the Israelites to be in awe of his purity and holiness. Because God is holy, he hates sin. He cannot tolerate sin because he is totally holy.

**Oren:** Is that why God forbade them to overstep the boundary around Mt. Sinai?

**Greg:** God warned the Israelites to stay on their side of the boundary around Mt. Sinai. If they crossed the boundary and went over to his side, they would be killed, instantly. God is holy, the Israelites were not holy and we are not holy.

**Oren:** When God came down on Mt. Sinai, the whole mountain shook with thunder and lightening and it was smoking. The Israelites also heard a very loud trumpet sound. God's power made these things happen. He created everything and he controls all of his creation. God's awesome power makes people's power and might seem insignificant.

**Greg:** Some of the Ten Commandments are similar to our own standards of conduct. However, there are some differences. Our forefathers taught us that stealing was wrong, but, if no one caught us or knew about it, then it didn't count as stealing. We were deceived. God saw us steal from others. He saw it every time. We sinned against him many times and thought it didn't count. We were deceived.

**Oren:** If we sin only one time, we are condemned for having broken God's laws. God expects his standard to be obeyed all the time. Is there anyone here who has not broken God's law? If we say we have not broken God's law, then we are not telling the truth and that is an act of breaking God's law.

**Greg:** Our forefathers gave us customs for worshiping idols. We believed in various deities and made carvings to represent them. When I was young, my father said, "Respect this carving. It is sacred." I looked at the carving and asked my father, "Who made this? What kind of wood is this?" My father told me that his great-uncle made the sacred carving many years ago from a piece of wood. After he finished carving it, he set it in a special place. Now it was one of our gods. We honored it. We revered it because we thought it had great power.

**Oren:** Where is this idol that you are talking about? I have not seen it.

**Greg:** When you were very young, a fire broke out and completely destroyed the sacred place where the idol was kept. It was burned to ashes so quickly because it was powerless to save itself from the fire. When the object we revered and worshiped was consumed by fire, where was its power to save itself?

**Oren:** Now I fully understand why God forbade idol worship. All gods but him are false. All idols are mere representations of false gods. I think we should despise all the idols which are still in the village. They should be removed because they are useless.

**Greg:** You are right. God hates idolatry so we must get rid of all the idols in this village. They cannot help us or harm us. God alone is the right one to honor and worship. It is senseless and sinful to worship a carving made from wood which God created, yet fail to worship God who has created all things.

**Oren:** I have been thinking. All of us have broken God's commandments and we are guilty sinners. We need God's mercy and grace or we will die in our sins and go to the place of the never-ending fire of punishment. When I think of my sinfulness, I cry within myself, "God, please be merciful to me a helpless sinner." I am glad that I am hearing God's message for us now. God alone knows how he will bring about the Deliverer who will save us from the guilt and penalty of sin.

**Teacher:** Please come to the meeting today. The Bible's story will continue and you need to hear how God kept working through the Israelites so that a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would be born to be the Deliverer. This Deliverer was promised by God who cannot lie. Come and hear more of the great work of God in history.

### **3. Moses on Mt. Sinai**

When God spoke the Ten Commandments to the Israelites on Mt. Sinai, they were frightened by his awesome display of power. When they heard the thunder and the loud blast of the ram's horn, when they saw the flashes of lightning and the smoke coming from the mountain, they were filled with great fear. Then they said to Moses, "We are terrified when God speaks directly to us! We want you to speak directly to us. We will listen to you." Moses answered them and said. "Do not be afraid. God has come in this way to test you. He wants you to fear him. If you fear him, it will keep you from sinning!" God wanted the Israelites to fear him for who he is. If they revered him as they should, they would fear him and that would keep them from sinning against him. God wanted the

Israelites to be holy. He did not want them to live in sin or worship idols.

Later, the LORD said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain and I will give you the tablets of stone on which I have inscribed the instructions and commands so you can teach the people.” God first spoke the Ten Commandments to the Israelites. This time, he wanted Moses to go up Mt. Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments he had written in stone.

Why did God want Ten Commandments to be written in stone for the Israelites? Let’s think about it. God does not change which means his instructions cannot change. He wanted the Ten Commandments written in stone so that no one could change them. He wanted the Israelites to have the tablets of stone in their possession so that they would not forget them. He wanted the Israelites to understand how they applied to themselves. If the Israelites remembered God’s Ten Commandments, it would help them to realize their need for God’s mercy and grace. Without God’s mercy and grace, all people would die in a state of being separated from God and be in that awful state forever.

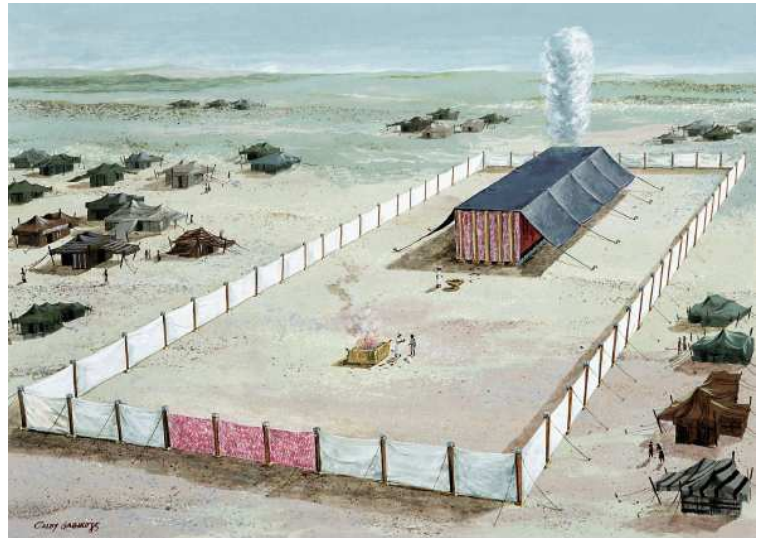
Moses and his assistant Joshua left for Mt. Sinai. Joshua was a young man who helped Moses with his work. He believed in God and trusted God. He willingly helped Moses because he believed in God and worshiped him. Joshua believed that God would do something special sometime and send the promised Deliverer. He knew that God cannot lie, therefore, his promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would be fulfilled. One of their descendants would be the Deliverer who would make it possible for people to be saved from the penalty and guilt of being sinners.

When Moses and Joshua arrived at the mountain, Moses climbed up the mountain as God had commanded him. The glory of God, which rested on the top of Mt. Sinai, appeared to the Israelites down in their camp like a burning fire. As Moses climbed higher and higher, he disappeared into the cloud. Moses remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

#### **4. God Told Moses to Build the Tabernacle**

While Moses was on Mt. Sinai, God told him that he wanted the Israelites to build the tabernacle. He said, “The Israelites are to build me a holy sanctuary, a tabernacle, so I can live among them. This tabernacle and its furnishings must be made exactly according to the pattern that I will show you.” God wanted to dwell in the tabernacle among his chosen people, the Israelites. Even though he is everywhere present, he chose to dwell in the tabernacle among them. The Israelites were to worship God by bringing their sacrifices and offerings to God in this special, holy sanctuary, the tabernacle.

Why did God want a tabernacle to be built among the Israelites? Did God need a house? God did not need a house. Remember, God is spirit and is everywhere present at the same time. He is not like us. We need housing and shelter from the weather. We need places to live in and to be our homes. Since God did not need a house, why did he tell Moses that the Israelites needed to build a tabernacle exactly as he had commanded?



Show #34: The Tabernacle

God wanted the tabernacle built according to his instructions so that the Israelites would come to it to worship him. He wanted them to think about his greatness and worship him. God knew of the Israelites propensity to sin because they were sinners. He knew that unless he provided a way of escape for them, they would all die in their sins and spend eternity in the never-ending place of punishment. God did not want them to die in their sins. He wanted the Israelites to believe in him and to worship him.

God commanded the Israelites to build the tabernacle exactly as he had instructed Moses. There could be no variations to the way it was to be built. Suppose Moses would have wanted to change God's plans, would that have been acceptable to God? No, it would not have been acceptable by God. Just like God rejected Cain's self-effort to sacrifice to him, so too he would have rejected a tabernacle that would have been built according to the ideas of people. People must come to God in God's way to be accepted by him.

God had already instructed the Israelites that they needed to obey him perfectly. If they obeyed him perfectly, he would bless them. Since all people including the Israelites are descendants of Adam with a sinful nature, sometimes people sin against God. How could the Israelites be rescued from the guilt and penalty of being sinners? Could they save themselves by doing something good? No, they could not save themselves. They needed God's mercy and grace or they would die in their sins.

God loved the Israelites very much. Even though they were sinners and sinned against him, he did not want to destroy them. He wanted them to believe in him and be saved from the guilt and penalty of their sin. If he completely destroyed them, how would he fulfill his promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? If the Israelites were completely

destroyed, the Deliverer could not come to save people from their sins. God is merciful and longsuffering and he wanted the Israelites to live and be saved from the penalty of their sins. Therefore, he instructed Moses to have the Israelites build a tabernacle where they could come to him to receive mercy and forgiveness and be saved from the guilt and penalty of their sin.

When God said the tabernacle had to be built exactly according to his plan, he meant that no variations would be acceptable. If the Israelites designed a tabernacle and built it according to their own way, God would have rejected it. He would not dwell with them in that tabernacle. Why? Because it would not have been built according to his instructions. God's way to come to him is the only way that he will accept. That's why the tabernacle had to be built according to his instructions. It was God's plan to live among the Israelites in the tabernacle which had to be built according to his plans.

The tabernacle had to be built so that it could be moved from place to place as the Israelites continued their journey to the promised land. It could not be built like a permanent structure with strong foundations. The Israelites were still traveling to the promised land and would set up camp along the way. When they traveled, they took the disassembled tabernacle with them. When they arrived at a new campsite, they set it up again in the middle of their camp.

### **The Two Rooms**

God told Moses that the tabernacle had to have two rooms. The first room was called the holy place. The holy place was entered from the courtyard and was the place where the chosen priests served God. This room was only used for serving God. Israelites who were not chosen priests were not allowed to enter the holy place.

The second room was called the most holy place. It was smaller than the first room. It was the most important part of the tabernacle. The most holy place was separated from the holy place by a curtain. The most holy place is the room where God resided. God forbade anyone from entering this room except a high priest who would enter it once a year.



Show #35: The two rooms of the Tabernacle

### **The Ark and the Mercy Seat**

Inside the most holy place was the ark of the covenant. It was a box made from acacia wood which was covered with gold on the inside and the outside. It was made so that it could be carried from place to place wherever God led the Israelites.

The lid of the ark of the covenant was made of pure gold. It was called the mercy seat and was the most important piece of furniture in the tabernacle. This is the place where God said he would live and it was the place where he showed mercy to the people.

On the mercy seat there were two cherubim made from gold, one on each end of the mercy seat facing each other. The cherubim faced each other and looked down on the mercy seat. The wings of the cherubim were made so that they stretched toward each other over the mercy seat. The stone tablets inscribed with the Ten Commandments were later placed inside the ark of the covenant beneath the mercy seat.



Ark of the covenant

### **Tabernacle Curtain**

The two rooms of the tabernacle, the most holy place and the holy place, were divided by a thick curtain that hung from the ceiling to the floor. This curtain was made according to God's instructions. It kept people from entering the most holy place where God abode. No one was allowed to enter the most holy place except the high priest who entered it once a year.

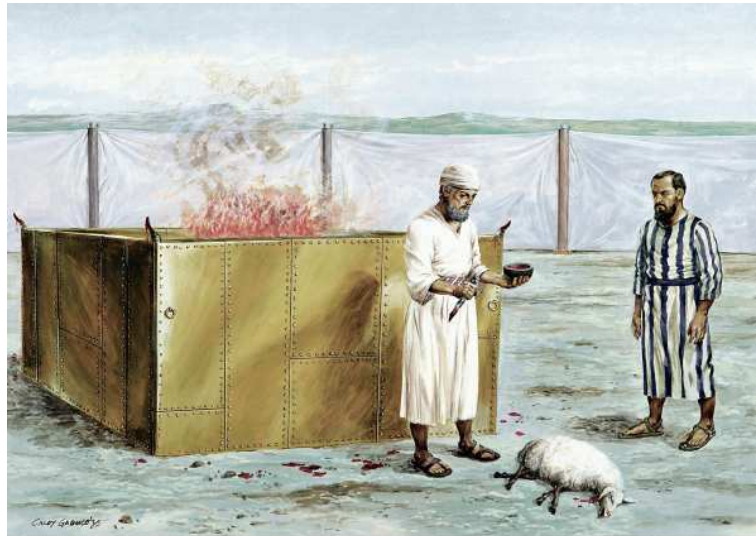
### **Courtyard**

The tabernacle had a courtyard which was enclosed by a fence of cloth curtains which were held upright by posts. It looked like a fence made of cloth. God told Moses how large the courtyard was to be and how it was to be made.

### **Brass Altar**

In the courtyard, outside of the tabernacle, was the brazen altar made of wood and covered with brass. The brazen altar was used for burnt offerings for the Lord. Sheep, goats, bulls or birds could be sacrificed as burnt offerings upon the brazen altar.

When a person brought an animal to the brazen altar to be sacrificed as a burnt offering, he identified himself as the one who needed to die for his sin. He would place his hand upon the head of the animal and kill it. This act demonstrated his admission of being a guilty sinner deserving death, but asking God to accept the animal's death in his place. The animal was sacrificed as the substitute. All those who did this because of their faith in God were forgiven their sins. It was necessary for the person who brought his animal to be sacrificed to God to believe in God and trust him to forgive his sins. If the person's heart was like Abel's when he brought his sacrifice, God accepted it. But if he was not trusting in God like Cain, then God did not accept the sacrifice. Why? Because he did not believe in God.



Show #36: The brazen altar

Did the sacrificed animal actually pay for the sins of the person who offered it? No, the act of shedding the animal's blood showed that the payment for sin is death. It was a figure of reality that showed sin can only be paid for by death. Either it will be the death of the sinner or the substitute that pays for the penalty of sin. This principle of substitution did not originate in a person. It did not come from Moses, Aaron, or anyone else. It was God's way for people to be reconciled to him and have their sins forgiven.

## **5. The Priests: Aaron and his Sons**

God told Moses that he had chosen Aaron to be the high priest and his sons were to be priests. The priests served God in the tabernacle and helped with the sacrifices that people brought to the Lord. God chose Aaron to be the high priest and to do the work assigned to this office. Only Aaron could go inside the most holy place to meet with God once a year on the Day of Atonement. God did not allow anyone except the high priest to enter the most holy place. If anyone else, even another priest, tried to go inside the most holy place to meet with God, he would have died.

Once a year, on a special day called the Day of Atonement, Aaron was supposed to go inside the most holy place to meet with God. God chose this day to be the only time in a

year when the high priest was supposed to enter the most holy place and make atonement for the people.

When Aaron made atonement for the Israelites, he killed an animal and caught its blood in a basin. Then he took that blood and went behind the thick curtain which divided the most holy place from the holy place. Once in the most holy place, Aaron sprinkled the blood upon the mercy seat. If Aaron did everything right, God forgave the Israelites of their sins for the past year.

Do you think the blood of the animals that Aaron sprinkled upon the mercy seat paid for the Israelites' sins? No, the blood of those animals could not pay for their sins. The payment of sin is death, being separated from God. The one who sinned is punished. Sin has to be fully paid, not partially paid. The Israelites who truly acknowledged their sinfulness before God were forgiven their sins of the past year if they came to God in faith by his way. God accepted the blood of the animals as a substitutionary payment because the offerers admitted that they deserved death because they were sinners.

God told Moses everything that had to be done to build the tabernacle. He told him how to build it and what materials to use for its construction. He chose Aaron to be the high priest and his sons to be the priests. Everything about the tabernacle had to be done God's way. It could not be done any other way.

## **6. The Golden Calf**

While Moses was on Mt. Sinai for forty days and nights, the Jews did not see him so they became restless and wondered what happened to Moses. They forgot that he had gone up Mt. Sinai in obedience to God's command. So they came to Aaron and said, "Come on, make us some gods who can lead us. We don't know what happened to this fellow Moses, who brought us here from the land of Egypt."

Aaron heard the people's request and said, "Bring me your gold." The people brought their gold to Aaron and he shaped it into an idol, a golden calf. When the Israelites saw it, they were very happy and said, "Look, this golden calf idol has gone before us and brought us out of Egypt." So soon the Israelites forgot about God's awesome power that saved them from Egypt. They did not think about God.

Aaron saw the exuberance of the Israelites for the golden calf. Then he made an altar and had it placed in front of the golden calf. It would be used to offer sacrifices to the golden calf idol that he had just made. Then Aaron said. “People, listen! Tomorrow will be a festival to the LORD!” How foolish of Aaron to do so! He knew that God alone deserved to be worshiped. He knew that God hates all idols and the practice of worshipping idols.



Show #33: The Israelites worship the golden calf

The next morning the Israelites got up early to sacrifice burnt offerings and peace offerings. Then they celebrated with feasting, drinking, and they indulged in sinful pagan festivities and behavior. They were following the evil temptation from Satan to turn away from God and worship idols. Satan, the enemy of God, wants people to live wickedly. He wants people to follow his wicked ways so that they will die in their sins.

Let's talk about the Israelites' rebellion against God. They quickly forgot how fearful they were when they saw God's awesome power on Mt. Sinai. They did not live up to their promise of doing everything that God had commanded them to do. They did not think about the way God delivered them from the Egyptians. They did not think about God's powerful act of making a dry road just for them in the middle of the Red Sea. They forgot about God and his goodness to them. They lusted for an idol made by human hands and wanted to worship it.

The Israelites should have been repulsed at the idea of worshipping an idol. Didn't they see God's judgments against the false gods of the Egyptians? The Egyptians suffered immensely through the plagues which God caused upon them. However, God was merciful to the Israelites and spared them from those awful plagues.

When Pharaoh and his army pursued the Israelites, who defeated the Egyptian army and rescued the Israelites? Who parted the Red Sea? Who made a dry road in the middle of the Red Sea so they could walk safely through it? Who gave them bread to eat in the wilderness? Who made the quail fly into the camp every evening? Who provided water for them from a large, hard rock?

God did so many good things for the Israelites but they quickly forgot about his love and mercy for them. They lived for the moment just like Esau did. Instead of thinking about the greatness of God, they thought about themselves. Instead of trusting in almighty God and believing in him, they thought about themselves. They wanted their immediate concerns and wants met. They wanted an idol, like the Egyptians had, so they could honor and worship it. Their heart attitude was totally wrong. Did they think God did not see them? Did they think they could get away with such foolish sinfulness? Certainly they knew that God could not be represented by any kind of idol.

#### **7. Moses Interceded for the Israelites**

Moses was still on Mt. Sinai when the Israelites worshiped the golden calf which Aaron had made for them. God saw everything they did and he was angry at them for their exceeding wickedness. He commanded Moses, “Go down the mountain right away! The Israelites have already corrupted themselves. They are worshiping a golden calf idol and saying, ‘This is our god who brought us out of the land of Egypt.’” God was very angry at them.

Listen carefully to what happened next. God was very angry with the Israelites’ wicked rebellion against him. God is holy. He cannot stand idolatry. Even though he had been merciful to them and demonstrated his awesome power and might to them many times, they still lusted for an idol to worship. How foolish and wicked of the Israelites to forget God and worship the golden calf.

God told Moses that he was going to annihilate them because of their great wickedness and make a great nation from Moses descendants. He said, “I will destroy them and make from you a great nation.” What did Moses do when he heard that?

Listen carefully: Moses entreated God and said. “Why are you so angry with your own people? You brought them from the land of Egypt with great power and a strong hand. If they are destroyed now, what will the Egyptians say? They will say the God of the Israelites rescued them so he could destroy them in the mountains.” Moses did not want God to annihilate the Israelites. He wanted God to show mercy and grace to them.

Moses also said to God, “Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. You bound yourself with an oath to them. You said, ‘I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven. And I will give them all of this land that I have promised to your descendants, and they will possess it forever.’ This promise is what you have spoken to them.”

Moses had full confidence that God would honor his promise because he cannot lie. He also knew that God was right to be very angry with the Israelites for their wickedness and rebellion against him. How could they possibly ascribe their deliverance from Egypt to a golden calf? After Moses interceded for the Israelites, God spared them. He did not destroy them.

Let's think about why God did not destroy the Israelites? God had mercy on them because he had made a promise that a descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would be the Deliverer to save people from the penalty of sin. God could not break his promise. He would not do so because he is holy and righteous. God promised a Deliverer, one who would help people escape the penalty of sin which is eternal death.

#### **8. Moses Broke the Two Stone Tablets**

Then Moses, carrying the two tablets of stone, came down Mt. Sinai. Joshua was with Moses and as they approached the camp, they heard the noise of the Israelites worshipping the golden calf as they danced around it. When they came near to the camp, Moses saw the golden calf idol and the Israelites dancing in a festive mood. They were having so much fun as they worshiped the golden calf.

When Moses saw what was going on, he burned with anger and threw down the stone tablets and shattered them at the foot of the mountain. "These wicked people! How can they do this?" he thought. How can they worship a dead object instead of the living God! He took the golden calf idol and burned it with fire. Then he ground it into powder and scattered it over the surface of their drinking water and made the Israelites drink it.

Why did Moses get so angry at the Israelites? He was angry because they had deliberately rebelled against God and worshiped a dead idol. They had turned from the true and living God who miraculously delivered them from Egypt to worshipping an object formed to look like a calf. Think about it. If this golden calf had the power to deliver the Israelites from Egypt as they said it did, why could it not prevent Moses from destroying it? Just like all idols, it could not do any good or bad deeds. It was simply lifeless just like all idols. Much as the Israelites worshiped it, it was powerless to do anything.

#### **9. New Stone Tablets with the Ten Commandments**

Later, God spoke to Moses and told him to cut two stone tablets like the first ones. Moses prepared them then carried them up on Mt. Sinai. Then God wrote the Ten Commandments on the new stones. God wanted the Israelites to have the Ten Commandments with them so that they would remember and obey them.

God showed mercy and kindness toward the Israelites even though they did not deserve it. They deserved death for sinning against God. When God spoke to them at Mt. Sinai, they promised to obey everything God told them to do. Not long after they made that promise, they broke their promise and they worshiped a lifeless golden calf idol. They showed disrespect to God even though he had delivered them from the Egyptian slavery. They should have daily praised God for his goodness to them and talked among themselves about how great it was to have been rescued from Egypt.

Listen carefully: God wants all of us to reject the way that the Israelites acted toward God. He wants us to believe in him and to trust him always.

#### **10. God Indwelt the Completed Tabernacle**

After Moses received the two new stone tablets with the Ten Commandments from God, he instructed the Israelites how to build the Tabernacle. He told them how to do it step by step just like God had told him.

The Israelites worked hard to build the tabernacle according to God's instructions. They did not change God's plans. They followed his instructions and built it just like God told Moses. Should they have decided to change the plans, God would not have accepted their workmanship and he would not have indwelt the tabernacle.

Once the Israelites completed the construction of the tabernacle, God descended into the most holy place and stayed on the mercy seat. A cloud like the one which led them on their journey descended and covered the tabernacle. Now God was dwelling with them inside the most holy place on the mercy seat and that was very good.

Now the tabernacle was totally finished and God lived among them in the tabernacle as he said he would. The Israelites could come to God in the way he carefully instructed Moses. Aaron was the high priest at that time. Once a year he entered the most holy place with the blood of the sacrificed animal and sprinkled it upon the mercy seat under the wings of the cherubim. Then God forgave the Israelites their sins for that year.

This story teaches us that God has designed a way whereby man can come to him. He will accept people who come to him in his way. But, if people want to come to God by their own way, God will reject them just like he rejected Cain's offering. God wants you to believe him and to trust him always. He wants you to come to him in his way. He wants to save you from the guilt and penalty of your sins.

**11. After the Meeting**

**Setting:** After the meeting, John and Martin continued to talk about God's work among the Israelites.

**John:** It is good that we can talk about the tabernacle and help each other understand its meaning. Why did God want the Israelites to have a tabernacle?

**Martin:** God wanted a tabernacle to be built and placed in the midst of the Israelites. He wanted it built in a special way. If they built it as he told Moses, then he would come down and live among them in the tabernacle.

**John:** The tabernacle had two rooms. One was for the holy place and the other one was the most holy place. The most holy place was where the ark of the covenant was kept. It was the place God descended to after it was completed. The most holy place was truly sacred. It was not like the sacred places where we kept our idols. The most holy place truly was sacred because God dwelt there.

**Martin:** Inside the most holy place was the ark of the covenant which was a box made from special wood and covered with gold on the inside and outside. The lid was made of solid gold and two cherubim were on the lid facing each other. This is where God dwelled once construction of the tabernacle was completed.

**John:** God wanted the Israelites to believe in him. He wanted to help them so they would not die separated from him. All this teaching about the tabernacle teaches us that God wants people to believe in him and to trust him. Compared to the deities we were taught to worship, he is much greater in every way.

**Martin:** When Teacher taught us about the brazen altar I thought to myself, "The animal dies instead of the sinner. This is like the other substitutes, like the lamb Abel sacrificed or the ram sacrificed instead of Isaac." I believe God will send us a Deliverer who will help us with our heavy sin problem. We have never found a way to have it resolved. We must continue to learn from the Bible stories so that we can be forgiven of our sins.

**John:** Did you hear how quickly the Israelites forgot about God speaking to them from Mt. Sinai? They forgot that they had promised to obey him all the time. When Moses stayed up on the mountain forty days and nights, they soon forgot about God and wanted Aaron to make them an idol. This was so unreasonable and unthinkable to do.

**Martin:** Aaron sinned by making the idol for them. He should have said, “No, I will not make an idol.” Aaron made a bad choice when he listened to the people. Do some of us act like Aaron? When Teacher is around us we act like we believe in God but when he is gone, do we want to follow our old ways again?

**John:** We must believe in God and refuse to allow the old teachings to overpower our thoughts. When the Israelites said the golden calf idol led them out of Egypt, they were committing a serious sin against God. No wonder God was very angry with them. They credited God’s wonderful and powerful deliverance from Egypt to an idol.

**Martin:** Our forefathers gave us our idols. We believed they made our food grow and made sunshine and rain. Why did we even believe in the power of our idols? I watched one of them being carved from wood which was not sacred. After the idol was carved out of this wood it was sacred. We said to each other, “This is our god. Honor, respect and worship it.”

**John:** Yes, then we acted toward it as though it truly was our god. I’m ashamed that we used to act like that. Idols are lifeless and cannot help anyone. They can do no good nor any harm. It is very wrong to worship an idol.

**Martin:** It is no wonder Moses threw down the first set of stone tablets and broke them. He served God and believed in him. Moses knew that God is the only true and living God. There is no other true deity. But, the sinful Israelites lusted for an idol and they began to worship it. That was following the leading of Satan, not God.

**John:** God showed great mercy to the Israelites. He did not destroy them for their wicked idolatry. Through the Bible stories we have learned, it is evident that he wants people to believe in him. At the same time, it is clear that he will not change his holiness. It cannot change because that is his essence.

12. **Review of the Lesson's Themes**

**God communicates with man:** God wanted the Israelites to build the tabernacle so that he would dwell with them. And, they could bring their offerings for having sinned against him to the tabernacle and sacrifice them there to him. When the tabernacle was finished, God dwelled in it among his people, the Israelites.

**God is holy and demands death for sin's payment:** The brazen altar at the tabernacle is the place where the Israelites were to present their sacrifices of sin offerings. The animal was sacrificed and died in the place of the guilty sinner. God forgave the guilty sinner because he showed his faith in him and admitted that he deserved to die for his sins.

**Man is a helpless sinner and needs God's mercy and grace to be saved:** God wanted the Israelites to know how they could come to him and be accepted. God desired that all of them would believe in him and only worship him.

**God cannot tolerate idolatry:** God wants people to worship and honor him. He hates idolatry because its originates in wicked Satan and is designed to rob God of his honor and glory. Idolatry is always wrong.

**God is loving, merciful, and gracious:** God showed mercy and grace to the Israelites because he loved them. He spared them because he wanted them to live and worship him.

**God is faithful:** Although the Israelites angered God by their idol worship, he did not annihilate them because of the covenant promise he had established with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He promised that the Deliverer would be one of their descendants and could not fail to keep that promise.

13. **Students Practice Telling the Stories**

At the end of this lesson, practice telling the story you have just heard to each other. Everyone needs to practice teaching Bible lessons by telling the stories.

Practice telling the stories of this lesson in pairs. One pair should teach one of the stories in the lesson following this lesson's Table of Contents for divisions in the lessons.

The Table of Contents at the beginning of the lesson lists the stories for each lesson. Some of the stories or sections of a story are short so they should be combined with another section to make the exercise of practicing to teach by using stories a profitable exercise.

When you are teaching a lesson by telling the story, use culturally appropriate questions and illustrations to keep the story interesting and to make the people think about the lesson's meanings. Be prepared to engage the audience with questions which are crafted to bring out how well they understand the meaning of the story. Emphasize the important points when telling the stories.

Use visual aids or objects used in the lesson when you teach a story. Show the pictures at the right time in the story. When illustrations are used, be sure to bring them to a right and logical conclusion. If you do not make the right conclusions through telling the story, people will likely guess what it means and they could easily come to a wrong conclusion.

After you have practiced telling stories to each other, talk about ways to improve your story-telling ability. Be open to critique and be kind to each other as you work together to help each other become master story-tellers. The goal of teaching God's Word via telling Bible stories is not to merely impress your peers; it is the salvation of spiritually lost people.

As you tell the stories ascertain how well you present the stories and the themes. Does your teaching tend to highlight man or does it rightfully focus on God working in history? Do you tell the story so that God is highlighted? Or is man, in a subtle way, the main actor in the story? You need to make sure that the role of God in these stories is the main focus.

## **14. Teaching Tips for Teachers**

### **Lesson Point #3:**

God worked through Moses, his chosen leader, to communicate to the Israelites his will for them. God gave the Ten Commandments, written in stone, to Moses for the Israelites. God does not change which is why the Ten Commandments were written in stone.

### **Lesson Point #4:**

God wanted to dwell among his chosen people, the Israelites, so he told Moses how the tabernacle was to be built. Emphasize that the tabernacle and all its furnishings had to be done just like God said. This is a good time to focus on the necessity of doing exactly what God says, of following his instructions without variation or human amendment.

When teaching about an Israelite bringing a sacrifice to be offered as a burnt offering upon the brazen altar, consider acting it out for the people to see. Explain that you are acting out what you understand happened. Stress that they need to watch each part of the drama.

Build an altar in a place where everyone can see it. Have one person come to the altar with an animal (a toy lamb can be used) and approach the priest saying, “I know that I am a sinner and I deserve to die for my sins. I believe in God and desire that he shows mercy to me and forgives me of my sins. I offer this lamb according to his instructions as a substitute for my death so that I might be forgiven by God and live.

After the drama, discuss step by step what took place and explain every aspect clearly. Give the people an opportunity to ask questions or tell you what they understand from the drama.

### **Lesson Point #5:**

God sovereignly chose Aaron and his sons to be the priests who would minister in the tabernacle. Point out that Aaron did not obligate God to do so, it was God’s choice.

### **Lesson Point #6:**

Stress the unreasonableness of Aaron making a golden calf idol and the Israelites worshiping it. God hates false gods and the idols that are their representations. Emphasize that anyone listening to this teaching needs to guard their minds against allowing other interests to crowd out the teaching. God demands that people worship him.

**Lesson Point #7:**

Emphasize that Moses was not self-centered but fully concerned for the glory and name of God. Moses interceded for the Israelites because he desired that God's glory and name among the surrounding nations would not be compromised. God alone is worthy of our praise and worship.

**Lesson Point #8 and 9:**

Though Moses broke the first tablets of stone with the Ten Commandments inscribed on them, God showed love, concern, and grace toward the Israelites and made new ones for them. Emphasize that God wanted them to know his standard and will for them. Stress that in the same way God wants everyone to believe the teaching they are hearing and know him.

**Lesson Point #6:**

Upon completion of the tabernacle, God indwelt it just like he said he would. God always does what he say. He is unchangeable.

**15. To the Honorable Teacher**

If any part of this lesson is misunderstood, go over that part again. Play that part of the lesson again. Summarize that part briefly for the students then play that part a second time. Then ask questions to ascertain whether or not this part of the lesson is now understood correctly.

Be prepared to use proper illustrations to clarify a given lesson point. Sometimes it is helpful to use a picture and talk about what is portrayed in the picture as you teach.

Stress to the students that the important themes of this lesson must be understood before proceeding to the next lesson.

Simple drama can be useful to make a point clearer in the people's minds. Before using drama, be sure that it is culturally appropriate to do so. If people are not accustomed to understanding simple drama, it may be best to not use it.