

The Case of the Tent that Had to Be Just So

Exodus 25-31,35-40; Leviticus 8



Story-telling Tips

Ahead of time:

1. Read the Bible verses and story. Pray!
2. Choose story action cues and/or prepare storyboard figures, if using. (Included in Visual Aids book)
3. Practice telling story with the storyboard pictures, timing your presentation. Shorten, if necessary.

During your presentation:

1. Maintain as much eye contact as possible as you tell the story.
2. Put up storyboard figures/add story action cues as you tell the story. Allow the children to help you put them on the board, if desired.
3. Include the children in your story with a few questions about what they think will happen or words/concepts that might be new to them.
4. Watch the kids for signs that their attention span has been reached. Shorten, if necessary.

INTRODUCTION/ LISTENING ASSIGNMENTS

"Our story is called: The Case of the Tent that Had to Be Just So. Here is your listening assignment." Read from Detective Dan's Listening Assignment signs, but questions are summarized below:

Detective Dan's Lesson #1 Listening Assignment:

I need to know:

1. **Who was the tent for? Who told them how to make it?**
2. **Why did it have to be made just exactly like He said?**

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:

Our Bible Verse is Isaiah 6:1-3:

"I saw the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up... Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings... And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

I need to know:

1. **Where did the holy LORD come to meet with the people?**
2. **Could anyone go to meet with the LORD? Why or why not?**

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but two of them are **NOT** in the story. They are: A wagon, a cross, the Ark of the Covenant, God's big rules, an altar, and a camel.

Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.

I need to know:

1. **Which four belong in the story and which two don't?**
2. **Who needed to confess their sins to the LORD? What did He do to take away their sins, once and for all?**

Read the assignment questions, THEN SAY,

"Ok, Deep Down Detectives! Put on your best listening ears and see if you can hear the answers to Detective Dan's questions. When I finish telling the story, we will see if we can answer all the questions."

Read the Bible Truth story, answer questions, present the gospel and lead in prayer.

Answers to questions; the gospel; and, ACTS prayer are included with the story text.

The Case of the Tent that Had to Be Just So *Exodus 25-31,35-40; Leviticus 8*

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics) Numbers correspond to storyboard pictures and placement upon the storyboard. Always feel free to use less pictures, if it's best for your kids. Simply black out the numbers next to pictures you do not plan to use. All pictures are found in the Visual Aids book. Put BG (background) pictures on storyboard ahead of time. SB pictures (listed below in story text) are added to board as you tell the story. These numbers are also found on the back of each picture.

Tip: Stack pictures in numerical before telling story for easy use. Use sticky-back velcro to attach pictures to storyboard felt. Use sticky-tac putty to stick a picture on top of another picture.

Long ago, (SB1) the people of Israel were in big trouble. (SB2) The king of Egypt had made them his slaves. He hurt them and made them work very, very hard for him, doing whatever he wanted them to do.

But the LORD their God saw what the king was doing and He stopped him. Do you know what the LORD did to stop the king?

Can you remember what He did?

(SB3) The LORD sent stinging gnats and biting flies. He sent bouncy frogs and ouchy, itchy boils... and all sorts of other sad things to trouble the king of Egypt and his people until at last they had had enough. "(SB4) Go away! Go worship your God," the king said at last.

"(SB5) Yay, praise the LORD! He's saved us! We're free!" the people shouted. They were so happy!

Tromp, tromp, tromp, Moses led the people of Israel across the dry, deserty wilderness to (SB6) a special mountain called Sinai. There, the LORD told them His wonderful plans.

"(SB7) I am the LORD. I am a holy God. I am good and powerful. I hate sin and I punish it. I have rescued you from the king of Egypt, with my great power," the LORD told them. "I (SB8) am choosing YOU to be My special people. And through YOU, I'm going to bless everyone else on earth."

"I (SB9) am giving you good rules so you can know how I want you to live. If you keep them, I will bless you. The world will look at you and how you live, and they will understand what I am like--good and powerful... HOLY!" the LORD said to them.

"I want you to build Me a worship house, too," the LORD told them. "I want to be near you and have special fellowship with you. But you can't build it any way you please. You have to build it just so—EXACTLY as I tell you to.

A worship house just so....EXACTLY as He told them to make it. That sounds very picky, don't you think so? But the LORD wasn't just being picky. He was LOVING His people. If everything wasn't just so, then there would be BIG trouble. And the LORD told them why. It was something about the way He was.

Can you guess? What about the LORD meant that worship house had to be made exactly right?

"I am holy, but you are not," the LORD told the people. "I hate sin. I punish sin, but I don't want to punish you. I want to LOVE you and be close to you. Only if you make this worship place just right can we have fellowship together," the LORD told them through Moses.

"I'm putting (SB10) Bezalel and Oholiab in charge of building it. I will help them build it just right. They will build it with gifts from the people," the LORD told them.

Everyone was happy to obey. The (SB11) people brought their gifts of silver, gold and bronze, fine fabric and beautiful jewels, and everything else that was needed. Piles and piles of them. Then Bezalel and Oholiab set to work, always following the LORD's "just so" instructions.

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

“(SB12, SB13) Build it like a big tent so it can move place to place with you. You are a traveling people. I want to travel with you,” the LORD told them. So Bezalel and Oholiab built a big tent just like He said.

“Outside of the tent, put a big, bronze altar to burn worship gifts on. The people will bring their worship gifts here to offer up to Me,” the LORD told them. **“Put a big, bronze container filled with water outside the tent, too. This basin will only be used for washing and getting ready for going inside the worship tent,”** the LORD instructed. So, (SB14) Bezalel and Oholiab built a bronze altar for the worship gifts and a bronze basin with water for washing.

“Make two rooms inside the tent, one big one and one small one. In the big one, put a big, golden lamp lit with twelve, bright, shining flames. Put a big, golden table with twelve, little loaves of bread. Put a golden container filled with wonderful-smelling incense. This big room is called the Holy Place,” the LORD told them. So, Bezalel and Oholiab made the big room and the little room in the tent. They (SB15) made the lampstand, the table, and the container filled with incense, just as the LORD told them to.

“Not just anyone can go into the Holy Place. Only men called priests can go in there...and ONLY if they keep My special rules for them,” the LORD warned. **“(SB16)The priests must keep my good rules. They must wash with water from the basin and dress in special clothes of pure white. Each day they will come into the tent to offer the people’s worship gifts and pray for them. I will have fellowship with the people, but only through the priests. It has to be this way because I am holy and you are sinners.”** the LORD said. So Bezalel and Oholiab made the pure, white clothes for the priests.

“The big room of the tent is special, but it is not as special as the little room of the tent. The little room is called the Holy of Holies because it is the holiest place of all. It is the place where I will be with you in a special way,” the LORD explained.

“Make a golden box with beautiful angels on it. Put the big rules I gave you inside of it. This box is called the Ark of the Covenant. Put the Ark in the small room. Make a white curtain. Then use red, blue and purple yarn to make angels on it. Hang up the curtain between the big room and the little room so the little room is shut off from the big room.” the LORD told them. So ,(SB17) Bezalel and Oholiab made the golden box with angels and the curtains covered in angels.

“Not even the priests can go in the little room whenever they want,” the LORD said. **“It is too holy even for them. Only the leader of the priests—called the high priest—can ever go into the small room; and even he can only go in on only one, special day every year wearing very special clothes. On that one day, he will bring a special worship gift and sprinkle it on the golden box. That gift will keep the golden box holy so I can be near you in the small room for another year,”** the LORD told them. **“Make the high priest’s special clothes.”** So, (SB18) Bezalel and Oholiab made the high priest’s special clothes.

“Make sure you do all these things so I can live with you in this special way and so you can be My people,” the LORD urged them. **“I am the holy God, but you are sinners. This is the way I’ve made for you to have fellowship with Me.”**

The LORD helped Bezalel and Oholiab make everything just so until the worship house tent was all ready. Now it was time to USE the worship house!

(SB19) The priests washed themselves and put on their pure, white clothes. They put in place all of the beautiful things that the LORD helped Bezalel and Oholiab make: (SB20) the golden box; (SB21) the special curtain between the two rooms; and, the (SB22) golden candlestick, incense stand and table with the twelve loaves of bread. The candles were lit and the incense began to send out its wonderful smell. Then outside on the altar, (SB23) the priests placed the first worship gifts to the LORD.

Story with lines separating paragraphs (text in bold, optional interaction cues in italics)

What would happen next? Had they really done everything just as the LORD said? Would He come down to the tent to have fellowship with them in a special way?

What do you think?

Yes, He would!

The (SB24) LORD sent fire down to accept the worship gifts on the altar. When the people saw this, they shouted aloud and (SB25) fell down and worshipped. Then the LORD had (SB26) a special cloud covered the outside of the tent and (SB27) filled up the inside with His beautiful, sparkly bright glory. What a wonderful day this was! The LORD's special presence had come to be with them!

From that day, the (SB28) priests went into the Holy Place each day and served the LORD as He told them to. And once a year, the (SB29) high priest would take the special worship gift into the Holy of Holies so the LORD could be there with His people another year.

For hundreds and hundreds of years, that's how the LORD met with His people.... But do you know what? At last there came a very special day when that (SB30) curtain between the small room and the big room was torn in two because it wasn't needed anymore.

What happened? Did the LORD stop being holy? No, He did not. Did the people stop being sinners? No, sadly they did not.

But something DID change that day. Something that satisfied the punishment God's people deserved for their sins. Something that made them look as perfectly good and holy before God, as Jesus, Himself. Wow! What could Jesus possibly do that could make sinners like you and me look purely good and holy as Him?

Do you know what He did?

(SB31) Jesus suffered and died on the cross. He took all of the punishment for the sins of God's people and gave them His perfect record before God. There was no need for a curtain anymore. There was no need for priests with their white, clothes anymore. There was no need for more worship gifts for our sin anymore. Jesus had made the way. He was the final payment for sins. And now the LORD could be with His people in a far better, much nearer place than a worship tent. Do you know where that nearer place was?

Can you guess?

It (SB32) was right in their hearts. Yes, His Holy Spirit would now come and live right there inside of them. Amazing!

And it was through Jesus that the LORD kept His promise to the people of Israel to bless us all. The LORD wasn't just forgiving THEIR sins through Jesus. He was offering to forgive our sins, if we turn away from our sins and trust Jesus as our Savior.

And if we do, His Holy Spirit will come and live inside our hearts, giving us close fellowship with God...no special tent or clothes or priest needed, thanks to Jesus!

And that will be just the beginning. Better yet will be when God's people die. They (SB33) get to live with the LORD in heaven—the special place where God can be known and enjoyed in all His glory. And they will live there with Him, perfectly happy forever. Life with a holy God --so good and so great-- is Perfect Wonderfulness! Ask God to help you become one of His people! He loves to answer this prayer!

Cracking the Case: (story wrap-up for Listening Assignments)

It's time to see how we did with our Listening Assignment.

Detective Dan's Lesson #1 Listening Assignment:

I need to know:

1. Who was the tent for? Who told them how to make it? It was made for the LORD and He told them how to make it.

2. Why did it have to be made just exactly like He said? It had to be made just right because the LORD was holy and the people were sinners.

For You and Me:

The LORD is still holy today. And just like the people of Israel long ago, we are still sinners. We cannot have fellowship with the LORD by ourselves, but we can through Jesus. How? By turning away from our sins and trusting in Him as our Savior. He can be the perfect payment for our sins, too. We, too, can know the fellowship of His Holy Spirit in our hearts! Ask Him to help you. He loves to answer this prayer!

Detective Dan's Lesson #2 Listening Assignment:**Our Bible Verse is Isaiah 6:1-3:**

"I saw the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up...Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings... And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

I need to know:

1. Where did the holy LORD come to meet with the people? In the special worship tent.

2. Could anyone go meet with the LORD? Why or why not? No, only the priests could come into the tent, and only if they followed all of the LORD's rules. This was because the LORD was holy and the people were sinners. Only by keeping the LORD's rules could they come near to Him.

For You and Me:

The LORD gave the people of Israel careful instructions for how to build a worship house so they could meet with Him. He gave them careful rules for how to use it, too. The LORD was so holy and the people were so sinful. Only He could make a way for them to meet with Him. The LORD is still holy today. And just like the people of Israel long ago, we are still sinners. We cannot have fellowship with the LORD by ourselves, but we can through Jesus. How? By turning away from our sins and trusting in Him as our Savior. He can be the perfect payment for our sins, too. We, too, can know the fellowship of His Holy Spirit in our hearts! Ask Him to help you. He loves to answer this prayer!

Detective Dan's Lesson #3 Listening Assignment:

I found six clues, but two of them are **NOT** in the story. *They are: A wagon, a cross, the Ark of the Covenant, God's big rules, an altar, and a camel.*

Hold each of them up for the children to see as you identify them.

I need to know:

1. Which four belong in the story and which two don't? The cross, the Ark, God's big rules, and the altar belong. The wagon and the camel do not.

2. Who needed to confess their sins to the LORD? What did He do to take away their sins, once and for all? All of the people of Israel needed to confess their sins to the LORD. He sent Jesus to be the final payment for the sins of all who would turn away from their sins and trust in Him as their Savior.

For You and Me:

The LORD is still holy today. And just like the people of Israel long ago, we are still sinners. We cannot have fellowship with the LORD by ourselves, but we can through Jesus. How? By confessing our sins to God, by turning away from them, and trusting in Jesus as our Savior. He can be the perfect payment for our sins, too. We, too, can know the fellowship of His Holy Spirit in our hearts! Ask Him to help you. He loves to answer this prayer!

The Gospel (story wrap-up if NOT using Listening Assignments)**Our Bible Truth is:**

Can Anybody Tell Me What the LORD Is Like?

He's Not Like Anyone Else...

He Is Perfectly Holy, Purely Good!

What a lot the people of Israel had to remember to do to keep fellowship with the LORD! How wonderful was the day when Jesus gave up His life as the perfect and final payment for sins, when He suffered and died on the cross! On the third day, Jesus rose from the dead, proving He had beaten sin and death. Now all who turn from their sins and trust in Jesus as their Savior can be saved. God forgives their sins and makes them His people. They can have the fellowship of God's Holy Spirit right in their hearts! And one day, they will go to live with God forever. Jesus can be your Savior, too. Through Him, you can have this special closeness with God, too. Ask Him to help you turn to Him! He loves to answer these prayers!

Close in prayer.

Closing ACTS Prayer

- A** We praise You, LORD. There is no god like you. You are perfectly good and oh so great! You are holy. You hate sin. You love what is good.
- C** LORD, we are not holy like You are. We choose to disobey Your good ways. We need Your forgiveness. We need a Savior!
- T** Thank You for sending Jesus to be our Savior. Thank You for sending Him to make the way for us to know You and be with You, the good and great, one, true God.
- S** Work in our hearts. Help us to turn away from our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior. Help us to want to live Your good way, so that we show others a little bit of Your goodness when they see how we live.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Go to Lesson Plan, p.9 for the script to the rest of the lesson.