

Mission Critikal

#16 – Tent Church Glow

The golden surprise about to be seen couldn't have been imagined by the teens in the Mission Critikal tent church that Sunday morning.

Daenum had just begun his continued lesson about the different ways the Bible writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John told about the life of Jesus Christ. All these were accurate but featured slightly different views of much of what the Son of God did here on Earth.

The flap of the tent was open when a lady's voice asked, "Can we come in?" Daenum stood to his feet and invited Lyla's Mama, her village friend Ruth, and Ol' Tom, as he was known by all the villagers. Ol' Tom was almost completely blind and not able to work with the few village men at the plantation three miles away. The blind man, and two ladies knew the three village teens listening to Daenum's lessons. Dae's teen friend Lenny was also there.

The three adults and four teens listened with interest as Dae spent about twenty minutes teaching what little he knew about the four Gospel writers. He then asked his seven listeners if they had something they'd like to share about God and His goodness.

Mama and Ruth thanked Dae and Lenny for their missionary efforts with the village children. Then Ol' Tom asked if he could share. "Certainly," was Dae's quick reply.

Tom began, "Before I had my accident that blinded me, I heard about a church in a tent. It was a famous tent that God gave the design for. Would you like me to share a little about it?" Everyone said they'd be very interested. So Tom continued.

"Like I said, the design for this tent church came from God Himself. He had Moses teach the people how to build it, and how it was to be used. I guess now that I'm blind, I can better visualize what the insides must have been like. It had two rooms with the smaller room in back, that only one person was allowed in."

"This tent was constructed so that it could be easily taken apart, moved to a new place and then put back together. See, the idea is that everywhere people go or move to, God wants there to be a place they can come to worship Him, just like this mission tent

you've put on this hill above our village. The name of this moveable church was called a Tabernacle. But God made it super clear the Tabernacle wasn't a clubhouse. In fact if the people didn't do things exactly the way He wanted it, God would strike them dead. That was one of the reasons why only certain church men were allowed to go into parts of it and do their part of the ceremonies.

I can just imagine the inside of the Tabernacle, with the table over there with the special candle holder covered with pure gold, and the other important objects in there also. I love to visualize the flickering candlelight making the colored images sparkle on the tent walls. It almost brings tears to my blind eyes to think that God loves His chosen nation of Israelites so much that He prepared a church for them to take everywhere they went."

In a warmer tone of voice, Tom said, "But even more thrilling is that God has provided a way for you and I to worship inside this church, whether it's made of canvas, mud and straw roof, or bricks or whatever. In my way of thinking, God's love blossomed beyond just His chosen Jewish people, to include the rest of the world He called Gentiles."

"During the times the Tabernacle was used, God had many rules and laws the people had to abide by. Yes His love was around, but not as easily seen. The people didn't know about real love – the kind of love that comes from God.

Because of that, God's own Son, Jesus Christ was born in a smelly barn where the humble shepherds, invited by an angel, first came to worship Him, with His mother Mary and Joseph."

Daenum listened as intently as the others did, inside their old tent with tablecloth patches. He certainly didn't think of Ol' Tom as an angel, but there was no doubt this blind dark-skinned Christian was sent by Heaven. Dae reached out and took Tom's hand and urged him to return next Sunday and share more of what he sees in the love and goodness that comes only from God.

The word TABERNACLE means 'to dwell with'. God wants to tabernacle with each of us, placing His glow of hope and truth within us for loving service to Him.