

## Keeping the Promise

Many have seen the Passion Play in the Bavarian Village of Oberammergau. It is usually a once-a-decade spectacular involving practically all 4,800 villagers and much of their livestock. In the year 2000, the community of Oberammergau for the 40<sup>th</sup> time performed the play it has preserved throughout the centuries with singular continuity.

The 1984 presentation marked its 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The eight-hour performance that year ran five days a week for 100 days, beginning May 20. The origin of the play goes back to the time of the Thirty Years War. The European powers were constantly skirmishing across Germany, bringing destruction, famine and plague. Oberammergau records of 1632 reveal that at least 84 villagers died from the plague.

The villagers are said to have sought relief by promising God that they would stage a drama reenacting the life and death of Christ if Oberammergau were spared. It is reported that from that day the Black Death did not claim a single soul in the community.

In 1634, the villagers of Oberammergau made good on their promise and staged the first Passion Play on a stage they put up in the cemetery above the fresh graves of the plague victims. The next Passion Play will take place in the year 2010. Ticket sales start in 2008. Before that, a reservation is not possible.

The villagers kept their word. God always keeps His.

What about you today? In a time of uncertainty, conflict or adversity, have you promised God some action, some behavior change, some new direction for your life? Perhaps it is as simple as following Him in obedience.

He wants you to keep your promise. You will be richer for it.

--Beecher Hunter