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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1592 ~ Jonah warns Nineveh.

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

The wife of a well-known preacher spent many months in bed to rest and get well from a sickness. Although her body had to remain inactive, her mind kept busy thinking about the Scriptures. She kept diaries of her thoughts and prayers, and they were later published in a book. Often, a period of enforced rest gives a person time to think.

God's prophet Jonah was resting now too, although rather uncomfortably in the belly of a great sea creature. Jonah knew he was in dire circumstances. He had tried to escape his mission to get to the great city of Nineveh, capital of Assyria, to warn the people there to repent of their wickedness or that their city would be destroyed by God in forty days.

Jonah had run from God's command, trying to hide in a ship travelling to a foreign place. God had brought a terrible storm around the ship that he was sailing in. To save the lives of the ship's crew, Jonah told them to throw him overboard and the seas would be calm again. The crew didn't want to do this or be guilty of his death. Jonah told them to call on his God to save them just the same as they were praying to their gods as well. As the storm grew worse, the men reluctantly did throw Jonah into the sea and it became calm, just as he said it would.

God had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah and now he was inside it, with the seaweed wrapped around his head. He cried out in distress to the Lord and the Lord answered him.

Jonah was kept alive by a miracle so he prayed and repented.

Jonah knew his Scriptures well as he quoted from four different Psalms to describe his miserable condition. He praised God and promised in the future he would worship Him in the Temple. Jonah compared his own God to false gods, who are useless and worthless. People who pay attention to false gods forsake their own source of mercy and loving-kindness. This is found only in Almighty God.

God spoke to the fish in which Jonah was imprisoned and the fish spat him out on dry land. God has command over all creatures He made and can make any of them serve Him in His merciful plans for His people. God then called Jonah a second time to go to the city of Nineveh and preach repentance to the wicked people there.

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

Nineveh, at that time around 760 BC, was one of the greatest cities of the world. Its stronghold section was about 30 miles long and 10 miles wide. This section was surrounded by five walls and three water canals. The walls had been built a 100-feet high and allowed four chariots to drive abreast along the top. The buildings were decorated magnificently and Nineveh's power and wealth were obvious.

The army of Nineveh was particularly cruel to the people they conquered. The wickedness of the city had risen to the point where God said He would destroy the place if the people didn't change their ways. Although they did in the time of Jonah, the city of Nineveh was eventually destroyed in 606 BC by a group of armies. The Tigris River had a large and sudden flood which carried away part of the city wall, which made it easy to capture at the time.

When Jonah was in trouble with God for his disobedience, God still listened to Jonah's prayers. This story encourages those out of fellowship with God to seek Him in prayer and confess their faults and failings. If we're to gain from our troubles and problems, we must notice the hand of God in them. Jonah's experience encourages others, in all ages, to trust in God as the God of salvation.

When God first called on him to go to Nineveh, Jonah should have prayed for divine help in carrying out his mission. Then he would have escaped discipline and the need to cry out to God for deliverance from inside a great fish.

When it was almost too late, the prophet prayed and God graciously forgave him and rescued him. For believers in Jesus, we're to claim the promise of the 1st epistle of John, Chapter 1, which says: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Jonah arrived in Nineveh and spent the next 40 days crying out to all that he came across that the Lord God of Israel was going to judge the city for its wickedness and the city was going to be destroyed.

Why would God give those cruel people six weeks to repent and change their ways? In the Old Testament book of Ezekiel, Chapter 33, the Lord God said He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but instead, that the wicked should turn from their evil ways and live. In the Epistle 1st Timothy, Chapter 2, God desires that all people should be saved and come to the knowledge of His truth.

Saving people is God's heart desire always, but it wasn't Jonah's. Jonah was doing his job of warning the people but he didn't care for the good of the people. When his job was finished, he left the city and made himself a shelter to watch and see what God would do, now the 40 days was up. It was as though Jonah hadn't heard about the king's orders to the people to fast and pray and turn away from their evil and violent ways.

The people of Nineveh cried out to God to save them. They hoped God would change His judgment and spare them from their destruction, but Jonah didn't. God did see that the people had changed their ways and He was pleased. So He revoked the judgment Jonah had pronounced against them. It was a happy ending for the people of Nineveh.

In a hospital in Australia, an old soldier was dying. A visiting pastor spoke to him and asked him if he'd like to be prayed for. The soldier did and at the end of his prayer, the pastor said: "There is a prayer that's easy enough for anyone to pray. When Peter, Jesus' disciple, was sinking in the waves, he cried out: 'Lord, save me!' He had no time for any more, but it brought the Lord to the rescue. If we can't say any more than that, it will be enough and the Lord will hear us."

The pastor quoted: "He (that's Jesus) said, 'Call on Me in the day of trouble.' If you can just pray that prayer, God will hear you."

The dying man closed his eyes and in his weakness spoke the words, "Lord, save me." There was no doubt that he was heard. He lay back on his pillow with the 'peace of God' showing on his face. And he died soon after.

It was the same for the thief dying on the cross beside the Lord Jesus. He couldn't say much or learn much but he asked in faith and Jesus gave him assurance of his salvation.

It's never wise to put off making a decision to follow the Lord Jesus until the last hours of life. Sometimes death comes so suddenly, there's simply no time to call out. We must prepare ourselves now while we can.

There are four chapters in the book of Jonah. If God had only wanted to save the city of Nineveh, the book would have ended at Chapter 3. Yet when Jonah saw that God didn't destroy the city as He said He would, Jonah became very angry and displeased with God. He didn't see God's purpose to care for those who had repented and turned from their wicked ways. God gave him the explanation that there were 120,000 little children in the city of Nineveh and many animals which weren't accountable for sin and such judgment.

Anger is one of four universal sins: anger, fear, pride and greed. The emotion of anger makes people do and say things that they later regret. How can it be controlled? Stay under the control of the Holy Spirit in prayer and try to resolve your anger quickly. If you don't, your anger will adversely affect every aspect of your life like a poison.

If you hold onto unresolved anger for a long time, it turns into bitterness. It is always far better to forgive and forget the harm others have done to you.

God graciously had a vine grow up over Jonah's shelter to shade him from the sun. Jonah was pleased but then it died suddenly. Jonah had let things be more important to him than people. His attitude had to change. In the Epistle of James Chapter 1, it says: "My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

If anger is a besetting sin for you, pray to the Lord for deliverance. He is able to give you the victory over whatever it is that makes your spirit angry.

MUSIC - [Integrity Music](#).

That was Greg Barnhill singing "God shall bless us."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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